¡Vámonos! 2026 conference

June 9-11 | Madrid, Spain

Universidad Camilo Jose Cela, Castellana Campus

www.internship-network.org

International Internship Conference

Universidad Camilo José Cela SEK EDUCATION GROUP

Tuesday June 9, 2026

9:00am – Registration Desk Opens. **Location**: UCJC

9:00am – 3:30pm – Pre-Conference Internship Site Visits: ***Experience Madrid through an International Intern's perspective.*** *The day will include visiting three Employers, meeting with international interns and their Managers in situ, traveling by public transport, and lunch.* **Note**: There is an additional fee to participate in the Pre-Conference Workshop. Cost inclusion: Transportation, Lunch, Refreshments.

3:00pm – 6:00pm – EXHIBITOR HALL SET-UP
Location: UCJC

3:00pm – 4:45pm **FREE – Workshop: From Reputation to Reach: Aligning Personal and Professional Brand in International Education:** An interactive session on the intersection of personal and professional brand in international education and why visibility, credibility, and narrative clarity have become career accelerators in today's global landscape. Participants will explore how to strengthen professional presence, clarify what their brand signals to others, and communicate impact in ways that build trust and open doors. The session also includes a transferable intern component: how to help interns articulate their value, build a professional digital footprint, and represent their organization with confidence and integrity across platforms.
Facilitators: Maureen Manning, Founder, **The Global Nexus Collective**; Shaun Morgan, SIO, **UMASS Boston**; Sara Dart, SVP, **Education in Ireland**

5:00pm – 6:30pm – Welcome Address & **Opening Plenary**
Welcome Address by the Conference Hosts at Universidad Camilo Jose Cela (**UCJC)**
Employer Panel Plenary - Presented by **AIFS Abroad.**
Title: ***Beyond the Machine: Why Human Connection Matters in International Internships***
Summary: In a world increasingly shaped by automation, the unique value of international internships lies in their human-centered learning. Technology may transform the nature of work and education, but we play a critical role in designing and protecting spaces where students develop skills that can't be automated. This interactive panel invites participants to explore the most powerful human skills, how educators and mentors can cultivate them in international internships, and where own simple practices frame outcomes for students, employers, and educational organizations.
Location: UCJC – Castellana Campus, Madrid

6:30pm – 8:00pm – NETWORKING RECEPTION. Welcome Drinks and Passed Hors D'oeuvres.
Location: Roof Terrace, UCJC
Attire: Casual

Wednesday June 10, 2026

7:30am – Registration Desk Opens. **Location**: UCJC

8:00am – Exhibitor Hall Opens
Location: UCJC – 2nd Floor

9:00am – 10:15am – Plenary: **¡Vámonos! - *Career Readiness at the Speed of Change***
9:00am Opening Address by Matt Byrnes, Director of the **International Internship Conference**
9:05am Keynote Presentation by Davinder Manhas, Area Director for **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Government of Canada**.
9:15am Panel Discussion. Description*:* ¡Vámonos! is a call to action. In urgent times shaped by geopolitical volatility, labor market disruption, and widening inequities in access to opportunity, career readiness must be understood not as an employability checklist, but as a strategic and moral mandate for higher education. This opening plenary convenes cross-sector leaders to examine what career readiness demands in the current global landscape, and why experiential education, internships, and work-integrated learning are no longer enrichment. They are necessary infrastructure. Together, panelists will explore how institutions and partners can move from isolated excellence to collective transformation, aligning learning with real-world complexity, preparing students for uncertainty, and strengthening professional identity, adaptability, intercultural agility, and civic responsibility. The question is no longer how students access work-integrated learning. The question is whether our systems will move quickly enough to meet the moment.
Discussion Facilitator: Maureen Manning, Chair, International Internship Conference
Location: UCJC – Castellana Campus, Madrid

10:15am – 10:30am – Morning Break.

10:30am – 11:15am CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION A

1) **Interning in a Second (Third, Fourth...) Language: Strategies for Success and Lessons Learned for All International Internships**

Does Duo Lingo prepare you for industry lingo? Can ChatGPT smooth over your water cooler chat? Join this session to explore how trends related to language learning and global mobility impact the full range of international internships. Discover and share best practices for students, supervisors and administrators navigating internships in second (or third, or fourth…) languages. Learn how these lessons can strengthen outcomes for all international internship programs—whether inbound, outbound, or virtual. Through collaborative discussion and practical examples, participants will develop actionable strategies for their own contexts while contributing to our collective understanding. Because when it comes to international internships, we can all learn from language.
Presenters: Kate Moore & Fallon Wagner, **Global Career Centre;** Christina Villarreal**, Spanish Institute for Global Education**

2) **International Internships in Japan: Admission System of and Educational Evaluation for International Students**

Japan's declining birthrate has increased reliance on foreign human resources, prompting MEXT to expand international student enrollment and strengthen career support. In response, Mr. Ariga and Professor Kondo have developed a one-year domestic international internship program that enables students from overseas universities to gain work experience in Japanese companies. They will outline Japan's foreign labor situation and visa frameworks, as well as recent trends in the development of international internships. In parallel, Dr. Nakano and Dr. Watanabe have evaluated internship outcomes using the BEVI test, which measures global competencies and internal developmental change. This presentation integrates policy context, program design, and assessment approaches, offering insights into effective models for international internship implementation within Japan's institutional and regulatory environment.
Presenters: Ryoko Nakano, **Osaka University;** Yasuhisa Watanabe**, The University of Melbourne**

3) **Mobilizing Alumni Networks to Strengthen Student Preparation for the Future of Work**

This session explores how mobilizing alumni networks strengthens both student preparation and alumni career development within international internship programs. Through ambassador mentoring, pre-departure support, alumni networking nights, career workshops, and reunion events, alumni play a critical role in preparing students for global internship experiences while continuing to build their own professional skills and networks. These engagements offer alumni opportunities to enhance leadership, grow industry connections, and remain active participants in a global professional community. The session will highlight examples of alumni ambassadors who have supported outgoing students, as well as strategies for tracking alumni trajectories to demonstrate long-term impact. By showcasing scalable, community-driven practices, this session illustrates how alumni engagement creates a mutually beneficial ecosystem that drives career readiness for both students and alumni.
Presenters: Madison Dunn, **Absolute Internship;** Federica Dotoli, **Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore**

4) Strategies for Supporting J-1 and F-1 Interns During Heightened Visa Restrictions

Since January 20, 2025, colleges and universities in the United States have faced greater challenges supporting international students on J-1 and F-1 visas. These changes present new challenges to those who mentor international students—in university study abroad offices, career centers, and faculty. This presentation explores the various ways in which US educators are navigating new obstacles in an era of increasing uncertainty for international students in the US.

Presenters: Terrell Austin & Karen Carter, **Washington Semester Program**, **American University**

5) Industry-driven approaches to higher and vocational education

This Session is comprised of two complementary Presentations:

i) **Vocational education as infrastructure for career readiness: Lessons from Spain's dual VET model**

ii) **Continuous integration of industry needs and professional certifications into the academic curriculum**

Presenters: Leandra Narvala Scialdone Garcia, **Vocational Training Study Centre &** David Martín Moncunill, **Polytechnical School, Universidad Camilo José Cela**

11:30am – 12:15pm CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION B

1) Integration or Isolation? Cultural Intelligence and the Human Side of Internship

Internships abroad can be transformative, yet they often sit apart from curriculum and long-term growth. This session shows how cultural intelligence (CQ) and human-centered pedagogy connect workplace learning, academic reflection, and career readiness. Using CEA CAPA's Global Internship Course, I'll share tools that center self-awareness, intercultural competence, and reflective storytelling—e.g., "My Single Story," guided supervisor dialogues, and storytelling workshops—to move students from self-reflection → skill articulation → self-projection. These practices boost performance and long-term employability by helping students express their value in résumés, interviews, and networks. My lens: a New Yorker who integrated in Seville (since 2004), VP Sales & Marketing at Xtraice, community organizer (Burning Man/Glitteratti), and internship coordinator. Attendees leave with practical models to embed CQ and make internships pathways to lifelong skills.

Presenter: Kevin Whalen, **CEA CAPA**

2) From "Hope It Works Out" to "Here's the Plan": Scaffolding Internship Learning That Works

Internships have the greatest impact when students arrive prepared, engage intentionally, and reflect critically. This session presents a scaffolded model of career-connected and globally-minded learning from the University of Arizona's Public and Applied Humanities Department, integrating "Pre-Internship: Building Career Readiness" and "Internship" courses. Participants will explore how structured preparation, guided reflection, and skill-building cultivate confident, capable interns who can navigate professional environments locally and internationally. To date, this approach has enabled 500+ humanities students to secure internships across the United States and international contexts while supporting meaningful outcomes for host organizations. The presenter will share frameworks and activities that connect academic learning to workplace practice. Attendees will gain strategies to design or enhance programs that strengthen learning, boost organizational impact, and foster scalable, career-connected experiences.

Presenters: Stephanie Springer, **University of Arizona, Tucson**

3) No Planet, No Jobs: Preparing Graduates for the Climate Crisis

The climate crisis is redefining the future of work — and professional education systems are not keeping pace. Employers across sectors increasingly require green skills, ethical reasoning, and systems thinking. Job postings requiring at least one green skill grew 22.4% between 2022 and 2023 (WEF, 2024), while talent with those skills grew only 12.3% — a gap that is widening fast. At the same time, QS projects that US-bound international student enrollments will decline 1% annually through 2030, with skills-based curricula now identified as the key institutional differentiator. Yet professional training systems — companies, internship programs, academic institutions, and vocational training providers alike — continue preparing people for economies that are disappearing. This session explores how intentionally designed international internships and professional experiences can bridge training environments and real climate action, developing green competencies, systems thinking, and social justice — while strengthening the NACE Career Readiness outcomes that employers already recognize and value. Through data, real case studies from Galápagos, Cuba and Europe, and two interactive breakout activities, participants will leave with a concrete roadmap. An urgent invitation: no planet, no jobs.

Presenters: Daniel Ponce Taylor, **IOI Ecuador;** Antonio Gutierrez**, CELEI Granada**

4) The Future of Work is Purpose-Driven: Preparing Students for Careers of Impact

Students are seeking career paths that align with their values while building in-demand professional skills. This session explores how nonprofit internships uniquely cultivate transferable competencies that employers across all sectors now prioritize. We will examine how social impact experiences abroad map onto 21st-century employability frameworks and prepare students for meaningful careers, whether or not they remain in the nonprofit field. Through skills mapping, global citizenship integration, and student transformation stories, participants will gain practical strategies for positioning nonprofit fieldwork as a powerful bridge to career readiness and long-term professional success.

Presenters: Amanda Drobek, **Roots Interns**

5) AI, employability and university-industry connections

This Session is comprised of two complementary Presentations:

i) **How AI impacts students' employability**

ii) **Actions driven by universities to foster university–industry collaboration: Tutor Award and Employment Forum (The Voice of Talent)**

Presenters: Arantxa Padín & Virginia Álvarez, **Professional Career Services, Universidad Camilo José Cela**

12:15pm – 1:15pm – LUNCH

12:30pm – 1:15pm - Lunch & Learn – Drop in for Part 1 of 2 of this Professional Development Showcase

Passport to Self: Reflexive Writing and Making Meaning of your Life's Work. Part 1

During this workshop, participants have an opportunity to engage in exploration through the practice of self-reflexive writing. The framework of *Passport to Self* engages us to ask: *What are our past journeys? What do our passport stamps tell us about ourselves? What facilitates our future journeys?* By situating ourselves in the context of *why we do what we do,* we bring an elevated sense of purpose into our life's work. Participants will gain experience in the self-reflexive process through a series of prompts, enhancing writing skills and broadening perspectives as international educators. The session combines individual writing time, small group reflection, and discussion. *The Global Leadership League Lasso Writer's Circle program* sponsors this session: open to all- no prior writing experience is required.

Facilitators: Dana Tottenham, **Global Leadership League**; Karen Stolley, **Emory University**; Naveen Shah, **Global Career Center**

1:15pm – 2:00pm CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION C

1) Keeping the Soul of In-Person & Lowering the Cost: Launching the Blended Global Internship

A new blended model: 4 transformative in-person internship weeks in London, New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Dublin, Madrid, Melbourne, Bangkok or Latin America, followed by continued remote work with the same host organization. This design cuts program fees by up to 50%, triples applications from under-represented groups, and delivers equal-or-better outcomes (94% participant satisfaction). The session delivers the complete, ready-to-use blueprint—program structure, pricing psychology, and partner onboarding—so universities and providers can launch more accessible, high-impact international internships in 2026–27 without sacrificing the magic of in-person immersion.

Presenter: David Lloyd, **The Intern Group**

2) Small Center, Global Impact: Scaling Career Readiness through International Internships

In line with the IIC 2026 theme *Momentum toward the Future of Work*, this proposal highlights how the **OU in Arezzo Internship Program** has evolved into a scalable and inclusive model that serves students across all majors, despite operating from a small international center, in a small size Italian city. In a landscape where students cannot wait for *future-ready* opportunities, our approach emphasizes career readiness, active learning, and global-local partnerships that prepare students to thrive in the modern workplace.

Presenters: Lucio Bianchi, **University of Oklahoma, Arezzo, Tuscany, Italy;**

3) Partners in Student Preparation: Employer Insights into Internship-Readiness

How do students' expectations before an international internship compare to the realities they experience abroad? This session examines the role of the pre-departure process in shaping student expectations and explores how those expectations play out during their internship abroad. Drawing on feedback from host supervisors in Spain, we will discuss common challenges, cultural adjustments, and strategies Spanish employers use to align company objectives with student learning goals. Attendees will gain practical insights on the pre-departure process and fostering stronger partnerships with international hosts.

Presenters: Kristine Barer, **WorldStrides Higher Ed;** Isabel Torrecillas Jimenez**, EUROACE**

4) Internationalization strategies for global learning and engagement

This Session is comprised of two complementary Presentations:

i) **International ecosystems: Making industry and academic connections abroad**
ii) **Internationalization at Home: Building an international mindset**

Presenters: Elena López & Mafe Teneche, **International Relations Department, Universidad Camilo José Cela**

5) Mentored Micro-Internships: Scaling Career-Ready Experiences for Global Students

Mentored Micro-Internships transform traditional study abroad and experiential learning programs by delivering career-ready, skills-based internships in a condensed, two or ten-week format. Students engage in real-world projects with mentors and pre-defined company on-site visits. This approach expands access to internships, making them scalable, flexible, and financially viable for universities and students. Participants leave with actionable insights, tangible project outcomes, and certificates of completion. This session will showcase how to design, implement, and scale these micro-internships, offering practical tools for institutions, advisors, and employers to create transformative global learning experiences.

Presenter: Jes Black, **Studykai International Education**

2:15pm – 3:00pm CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION D

1) Posts with Purpose: Blogging for Reflection, Readiness, and Reach

While the word "blog" might feel a bit 2010s, digital storytelling is more relevant than ever. Active reflection through blogging can be used as a multitool for maximizing student and program success. This session highlights innovative approaches to integrating blogging into a program to deepen cultural learning, enhance employability, and center student stories to resonate with multiple stakeholders. Through examples and adaptable frameworks provided, participants will learn strategies for designing meaningful blog prompts that connect to their curriculum and catalyze development of transferable skills and global competencies. Additionally, the session will cover how to leverage blog content for recruitment, stewardship, and impact reporting. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to implement reflection through blogging into an international internship program to help inspire globally-minded, career-ready students.

Presenter: Stephanie Spirk, **University of Pittsburgh**

2) ¡Vámonos! From Coursework to Workplace: Building Collaborative Support for Language-Required Internships in the Age of AI

¡Vámonos! From Coursework to Workplace: Building Collaborative Support for Language-Required Internships in the Age of AI

This workshop explores how institutions, providers, and employers can robustly prepare and support students completing international internships with a professional language component or requirement in the age of AI. Together, we will work through a four-phase collaborative support framework that addresses 1) Pre-Placement Readiness; 2) Placement Process Approaches; 3) Language Proficiency on the Internship Site/Professional Skill-building; and 4) Post-Internship Preparation for the Workforce. Through guided solution-driven case analysis, this workshop explores real challenges while also mapping solutions to strengthen the future of global work.

Presenters: Kelly McGee, Jon Hutchinson & Rocio Persson, **EUSA Academic Internship Experts**

3) Experiential Learning for the Future of Work: Community-Led International Internships that Build Skills and Purpose

International internships must move beyond placement logistics and deliver real career readiness. This session highlights a community-led model for global experiential learning that strengthens student skills, expands access, and prepares participants for the future of work. Drawing on United Planet's two decades of experience in 40+ countries, the session outlines how internships grounded in local collaboration build adaptability, communication, cultural intelligence, and purpose. Real examples from virtual and in-person programs show how community partnership creates stronger outcomes for students and host organizations. Attendees will gain practical tools and guidance to design community-centered global internships that meet workforce needs and support meaningful student growth.

Presenter: Jill Tracy, **United Planet**

4) Education and Health: Experiential learning pathways for global employability in two regulated professions in Spain

This Session is comprised of two complementary Presentations:

iii) **From local classrooms to global schools: Rethinking teaching internships for international employability**

iv) **Undergraduate clinical rotations in Spain and double degree programs with employability pathways**

Presenters: Encarnación López, **School of Education, Universidad Camilo José Cela;** Antonio Carrera, **School of Health, UCJC**

3:00pm – 3:15pm – Afternoon Break

3:15pm – 4:00pm CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION E

1) Low Barriers, High Impact: A Scalable Blueprint for Community Engagement through Mentored Internships

How can institutions foster meaningful student–community connections and hands-on learning when barriers to access are high and scalability is essential? This session shares actionable strategies drawn from the University of Vermont's *Communities of Practice (COP)* program, a cohort-based mentored internship model that has engaged over 1,000 students in community-driven internship projects co-designed by faculty mentors and local employers. Presenters will outline key features—professional mentorship, low barriers to access, and intentional community partnerships—that make the model replicable across disciplines and institutions. Participants will explore data on student skill gains, employer satisfaction, and program sustainability, and leave with a practical framework for adapting COP program principles to their own contexts.

Presenters: Sophia Trigg & Kelly Bureau, **University of Vermont, Burlington**

2) One Year of Entrepreneurially Redesigning the Career Center & Internship Ecosystem.

One year ago - at the 2025 IIC conference - I had just been hired at Columbia College (SC) with a provocative opportunity: to treat the university career center like an early-stage startup in desperate need of product-market fit, customer obsession, and rapid iteration. Having never worked inside a career center—only having built and scaled multiple ed-tech ventures—I was given an unusual mandate: apply entrepreneurial thinking to radically redefine the career-preparation and internship experience for students, employers, faculty, and the career center staff themselves. At that time, I shared thoughts, ideas and concepts that we were going to attempt. This session presents the one-year results (via data and anecdotes) of our career center start-up at Columbia College.

Presenter: Mason Gates, **Columbia College**

3) Connected from Anywhere - Making Hybrid Internships Truly Global

International internships now take many forms—traditional in-person, fully remote, and hybrid—and AIFS Abroad has observed that hybrid placements can offer unique opportunities for students to integrate professional experience, academic study, and cultural immersion. By balancing on-site and remote work with coursework in the local language or culture, students gain flexibility while deepening their connection to both work and their host city. In this session, I'll share stories from hybrid placements and guide a discussion on how these structures can actually deepen students' engagement, learning, and sense of belonging abroad. We'll also explore strategies to ensure hybrid experiences complement traditional internship models, support student reflection and wellbeing, and foster meaningful career and global learning outcomes

Presenter: Anna Gomez, **AIFS Abroad**

4) Building Trust with Host Companies

International internships now take many forms—traditional in-person, fully remote, and hybrid—and AIFS Abroad has observed that hybrid placements can offer unique opportunities for students to integrate professional experience, academic study, and cultural immersion. By balancing on-site and remote work with coursework in the local language or culture, students gain flexibility while deepening their connection to both work and their host city. In this session, I'll share stories from hybrid placements and guide a discussion on how these structures can actually deepen students' engagement, learning, and sense of belonging abroad. We'll also explore strategies to ensure hybrid experiences complement traditional internship models, support student reflection and wellbeing, and foster meaningful career and global learning outcomes

Presenter: Cristina Serrano Baixauli, **The Learning Abroad Co.**

4:00pm – 5:00pm Student Plenary. *Reality Check: What Interns Really Wish You Knew About Career Readiness*

Description: Internships and work-integrated learning are often positioned as the bridge between classroom learning and career outcomes. But what actually makes that bridge hold? This panel offers a candid, student-led reality check on what's working, what's not, and what needs to change if we want to build career readiness at scale. Students will share what helped them grow professional confidence and clarity, what barriers limited learning or belonging, where support structures broke down, and what they wish institutions, internship providers, and employers understood about mentorship, feedback, and professional development.

Facilitator: Shaun Morgan, SIO, **UMass Boston**

Location: UCJC – Castellana Campus, Madrid

NETWORKING EVENING

LOCATION: *Mercado San Miguel*

Time: 7pm – Late

Description: Experience Mercado de San Miguel – one of the city's finest examples of cast-iron architecture located a stone's throw from Plaza Mayor. Situated in the heart of the area known as Madrid de los Austrias (Hapbsurg Madrid), it welcomes over 10 million visitors a year. Inside, you can sample the finest products from different parts of the country, ranging from tapas prepared with the freshest fish and seafood from the Galician coast to a wide variety of gourmet cheeses from all over Spain, without forgetting meat, fruit, vegetables, cakes and an endless range of options at the 30 stands that make up the market's fleet.

The market also boasts fixed and temporary stands with: El Señor Martín, Martín Tenazas (Lobster House), Baolé, Crab Crab Crab, Pinkleton & Wine, Daniel Sorlut, La hora del Vermut, El 19 de San Miguel, Felixia, La Casa del Bacalao, Morris, Mozzarella Bar, Más Gourmets / Carrasco Ibéricos, Arzábal Croquetería, La Pizzeta, Ahumados Domínguez, Las brochetas de Alcaravea, La Spritzeria, Cervezas Damm, Albóndigas San Miguel, Fuerza: la Hojaldrería, Sr. Chan, Sra. Lee, Hermanos Pollo and Tatún.

Thursday June 11, 2026

8:00am – Registration Desk Opens. **Location**: UCJC

8:30am – Exhibitor Hall Opens. **Location**: UCJC

9:00am – 10:00am – **Plenary**: **Practical and Comprehensive Training: *The Pillars of Higher Education in the New Educational Framework*.**
Description: The session aims to address key questions around how higher education must adapt to a rapidly changing world, including: The need to prepare students for increasingly multicultural and international academic and professional environments; The impact of artificial intelligence on education and employability; The development of key transversal skills (adaptability, critical thinking, digital literacy, intercultural competence, lifelong learning); The evolving role of universities in bridging academic training and employability; The challenges of aligning curricula with a constantly shifting labour market.
Moderator: Eva Cano Fernandez, **UCJC**
Panelists: Stephano Visintin, **UCJC**; Guillermo Delso, **SEK Education Group**; Alberto López, **Fulbright Commission**; Federico Morán, **Madri+d Knowledge Foundation**
Location: UCJC – Castellana Campus, Madrid

10:00am – 10:30am – Morning Break

10:30am – 11:15am CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION F

1) **A Decade, Three Hundred Journeys: Transforming Overseas Internships into Engines of Employability- Singapore University of Social Sciences as context**

This presentation continues a multi-year research data research I have presented at previous International Internship Conferences, reflecting my sustained commitment to advancing the scholarship and practice of international internships. Building on a decade of data from over 300 placements through the Overseas Internship model at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), this study focuses on outcome, examines how structured design, reflection, and partnership transform overseas internships into drivers of employability and global agility. Using mixed-methods research, including student reflections, employer feedback, and longitudinal tracking, it identifies success factors, emerging trends, and institutional impacts. The session invites participants to explore actionable, evidence-based frameworks for scaling quality international internships worldwide.
Presenters: Jessica Xue, **Singapore University of Social Science**

2) **What Drives Student Satisfaction in Global Work Experiences? Findings from Multi-Country Data**

This session presents findings from multi-year evaluation data to reveal what truly drives student satisfaction in international work experiences. Moving beyond geography, the analysis shows that destination is not a predictor of quality; instead, factors such as supervisor engagement, clarity of project work, and alignment between sector and student expectations shape outcomes across regions and disciplines. The session highlights differences between fields (e.g., Business/Engineering vs. Creative/NGO), explores how funding and support models influence perception, and identifies hidden patterns that matter for equity and access. Participants will gain a data-backed framework for designing more satisfying, scalable, and impactful global internships, along with practical strategies universities, employers, and providers can apply immediately.
Presenters: Edward Pitcher, **CRCC Asia**

3) **Preparing a Global Workforce by Promoting the Value of International Internships**

When students weigh internship options, international opportunities often lose to domestic positions that feel safer, more straightforward, or more career relevant. Yet international internships develop precisely the skills—adaptability, cross-cultural communication, creative problem-solving—that employers increasingly value. How can we bridge this perception gap and reposition global experiences as a top student choice? In this session, presenters from WorldStrides Higher Ed and Wellesley College will share strategies and tools for positioning international internships as viable, valuable choices for students. We will examine what influences student decision-making, explore how participants articulate skills gained while abroad, and analyze data from NACE and the Forum that supports (or challenges) promotion efforts. Collaborative discussion and idea sharing will leave attendees with tangible takeaways to implement on their campuses.
Presenters: Michelle Dippold, **WorldStrides Higher Ed;** Lorraine Hanley**, Wellesley College**

4) **Skills in Motion 2.0: Humanizing Sustainability Through Internship Experience. A Guided Micro-Model with Employers, Interns, and Providers**

Sustainability has become a saturated topic in international education, yet internships offer a powerful, and often overlooked, space for real long term behavioural change. This session presents a guided micro-model that will be developed over several months with just three actors: a host employer, an intern, and international education providers. Instead of discussing sustainability abstractly, in this session, the group explores how everyday decisions, workplace interactions, and guided reflection naturally shape sustainable habits and career-ready skills. During the conference, we will share real stories, insights, and interactions from this living experiment, and engage participants in designing their own human-centered internship model where sustainable behaviours emerge organically, but intentionally, through work, guidance, and community.
Presenters: Carmen Chamorro, **AIFS Abroad;** Daniel Ponce Taylor**, Intercultural Outreach Initiative**

11:30am – 12:15pm CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION G

1) Short Term Programs in Asia: Scalable Model for the Future of Global Learning

Short-term programs in Asia offer dynamic, scalable pathways for global learning, immersing students in some of the world's most dynamic and fast-growing innovation hubs. This session will highlight program models developed in collaboration with two university partners currently running short-term experiences across Asia. Participants will explore how to design, implement, and scale these programs to meet diverse student needs while advancing institutional priorities and expanding access. Drawing on examples from programs in Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and additional locations, the session will provide practical insights into building high-impact learning experiences that strengthen global competencies, foster industry-aligned skills, and deepen cross-cultural engagement. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to develop short-term programs that prepare students for future workforce demands and broaden participation in global education.

Presenters: Madison Dunn, **Absolute Internship;** Jeffrey Tsang, **Michigan State University**

2) Bettering Humanity Through International Internships and Professional Development

This session will highlight an innovative internship fellowship program model that prepares students with high financial need for post-graduation success. The program combines meaningful international internships with intercultural learning, career support, and community service to create a true wraparound global professional development opportunity. The session will demonstrate how the program brings together existing university resources and uses a strong university-internship provider partnership to increase access and deliver transformational experiences for students of many academic and personal backgrounds to help them become ethical, globally minded changemakers.

Presenters: Christopher Nischalke, **Pennsylvania State University;** Xena Pulliam**, Connect-123**

3) Interdisciplinary Collaboration to Imagine the Global Workforce of the Future

The evolving, problem-driven nature of work demands students who thrive in complexity and cross-disciplinary thinking. Current internships often remain siloed, ignore transferable critical-thinking skills, and are hampered by dispersed institutional entry points that blur costs and responsibilities. In this session, educators from liberal arts and business discuss strategies for maximizing the potential of interdisciplinary internships to allow for integration across disciplines. We highlight a practical approach that begins with a collaborative tie at any level, then moves toward understanding partner needs and identifying how our pedagogical goals and the skills we aim to develop can support those needs.

Presenters: Christine Wegner & Dr Pingchien Neo, **University of Florida**

4) Global Reels: Emerging Trends and Urgent Opportunities in International Internships for Film & Entertainment Students

Exploring ways to help students studying the cinematic arts gain hands global experience. The audience will learn that internships are imperative for all students. As creative entrepreneurs, cinematic arts students (film, TV, animation, games) need to understand the business of entertainment. Also, it is vital for a school or department to have a dedicated person helping students obtain internships.

Presenter: Kellie Brook Malone, **University of Southern California, Los Angeles**

12:15pm – 1:15pm – Lunch

12:30pm – 1:15pm - Lunch & Learn – Drop in for Part 2 of 2 of this Professional Development Showcase

Passport to Self: Reflexive Writing and Making Meaning of your Life's Work. Part 2

During this workshop, participants have an opportunity to engage in exploration through the practice of self-reflexive writing. The framework of *Passport to Self* engages us to ask: *What are our past journeys? What do our passport stamps tell us about ourselves? What facilitates our future journeys?* By situating ourselves in the context of *why we do what we do,* we bring an elevated sense of purpose into our life's work. Participants will gain experience in the self-reflexive process through a series of prompts, enhancing writing skills and broadening perspectives as international educators. The session combines individual writing time, small group reflection, and discussion. *The Global Leadership League Lasso Writer's Circle program* sponsors this session: open to all- no prior writing experience is required.

Facilitators: Dana Tottenham, Global Leadership League; Karen Stolley, Emory University; Naveen Shah, Global Career Center

12:15pm – 1:45pm POSTER SESSIONS

Poster Session Topics:

1) *Rising Rhythm of Asia: Why Asia is winning the race for Global Talent.* – Daniele Cosentino, **Intern in Asia**
2) *Innovative Models for Short-Term International Programs.* – Chris McKenzie, **Global Career Center**
3) *Career Horizons Abroad: Empowering students with real-world skills.* – James Jagger, **CEA CAPA**
4) *Equity Across Borders: Host-Site Practices and Student Inclusion in International Internships.* – Kelly Hunnings, **Dublin Business School**

1:45pm – 2:15pm CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION H

1) Stories and Data: Understanding Student Transformation through Faculty-Led Global Internships

This session shares insights from a doctoral case study examining faculty-led international internships in Singapore, South Africa, and Ireland, complemented by a separate quantitative assessment using the NACE Career Readiness Competencies. Through interviews, reflections, and field observations, the qualitative study reveals how students—particularly in engineering—develop adaptability, intercultural fluency, and professional identity through guided global work experiences. Quantitative results provide parallel evidence of growth in communication, teamwork, and global fluency, illustrating how both data types inform program design. Participants will explore how combining narrative evidence with measurable outcomes enhances institutional storytelling, deepens collaboration between faculty and career services, and strengthens efforts to design inclusive, data-informed internship programs that prepare students for a globally interdependent workforce.

Presenter: Pingchien Neo, **University of Florida**

2) Visas, Vision, and Value: Reimagining Cultural Exchange for Global Workforce

Across sectors, internships are often viewed as vital yet inconsistently impactful learning experiences. This session explores how well-structured and personalised internships can transform short-term placements into long-term professional growth. Drawing from research and global practice, including ECCEDU's decade of experience, we examine what differentiates meaningful, intentional internships from routine ones. Participants will gain first hand insights and practical frameworks for designing internships that are outcome-oriented, inclusive, and sustainable. Through real case examples, we highlight how clear learning goals, mentorship, and immersion to the real work environment enhance employability and satisfaction for students and employers alike. The session invites open discussion on the new models of practical engagements with industries in higher education.

Presenters: Binnur Yaman & Monika Zizkova, **European Centre for Career Education (ECCEDU)**

3) Innovative academic models for global career readiness: Two bilingual programs at UCJC

This Session is comprised of two complementary Presentations:

v) **Three verticals. One vision. A unique employability model by UCJC**

vi) **International relations and employability in a globalized economy**

Presenters: Iván Sosa, **Business & Technology, Universidad Camilo José Cela;** Sergio Castaño, **International Relations, UCJC**

2:15pm – 2:45pm – Afternoon Break

2:45pm – 4:00pm – **Plenary**: ***Rupture or Transition? Career Readiness at a Crossroads***

If ¡Vámonos! is a call to action, the closing question is this: what kind of moment are we being called to respond to? Is this a period of transition, where higher education and employers can refine, adapt, and scale what already works? Or are we living through a rupture, where geopolitical volatility, technological acceleration, labor market disruption, and widening inequities have fundamentally changed the conditions of career readiness and require a new operating model?

For our annual debate-style closing plenary, we're bringing together cross-sector leaders for a structured, high-energy exchange. Two debaters will argue that we are in a transition and that the path forward is evolution, alignment, and scaling proven practice. Two will argue that we are in a rupture and that incremental reform is insufficient, calling instead for redesign of how learning connects to work, how opportunity is funded, and how outcomes are measured. The session concludes with audience participation and a moderated synthesis focused on actionable next steps. The goal is not to "win" the debate, but to sharpen our collective thinking about what the moment demands, and how we move forward with urgency, strategy, and integrity.

4:00pm – 5:00pm – Farewell Toast

Location: UCJC