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Europe's international network for higher education professionals

Cultivating an International Partnership Portfolio

First Session in a Series on New Opportunities for International Partnerships in Higher Education

14 October 2021



Joining Us Today...

Meet Your Presenter



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EAB's International Partnerships Team



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EAB

A **Global Approach** to Higher Education Research, Strategy, and Support



We Have Line of Sight into Every Aspect of University Operations

Our expertise cuts across all terrains—academic strategy, student experience, finance, estates, fundraising, IT, and more—to support both specific initiatives and overall goals.



We Harness a Global Network of Sector Leaders

Our proprietary research model seeks out replicable solutions from universities around the world, uncovering innovative strategies where you may not have known to look.



We Offer Unmetered Access to Our Research and Advisory Services

Our partnerships provide everyone on your campus unlimited access to research initiatives, expert consultations, implementation tools, and virtual and in-person events, without per-person fees.

14+

years researching operational, academic, and student challenges

2,100+

institutional partners around the world

26,000+

campus leaders use EAB research and services in their daily workflows



Global Partnerships in Transition

Global Partnerships No Longer 'Nice to Have'

Competition, Resource Constraints Driving Need for Collaboration



Emerging Institutions on the Rise

55% of institutions in emerging economies improved or maintained THE ranking from 2020 to 2021



Biden Administration Resets Perceptions

67% of international students more likely to study in US since 2020 election



Tightening Budgets

Pandemic estimated to have cost US institutions about **28%** of total operating budgets in 2020



First Movers Lock-in Relationships

Institutions seeking 'preferred status' with particular regions, universities

Was There Even an Impact?



Global Partnerships Surprisingly Resilient Throughout COVID-19 Pandemic

PAINS

International travel halted; study abroad cancelled; recruitment slowed



Research conferences postponed; human trials restricted



Pandemic response and financial planning consume strategic efforts



GAINS



Rapid expansion of virtual instruction and experiences; 'digital campus'



Research collaboration moves online; medical, technology projects grow



Knowledge sharing, emergency response deepens ties across campuses

Not Slowing Us Down

'We were pleasantly surprised to establish four new partnerships since the pandemic began, all started with virtual conversations and engagements.'

*Director of Global Engagement
Research University, United Kingdom*



Quick Poll

How has the pandemic impacted your institution's transnational collaborations? *(Choose one)*

- We've seen a significant decrease in international engagements
- We've maintained existing collaborations, but have not launched new ones
- We've maintained and expanded collaborations, but it has been challenging
- We've had more success growing and expanding collaborations than we have on average historically



As poll results come in, share your comments and questions with us using the Chat function!

The Changing Idea of a Partnership

Pandemic Provides Motivation, Cover to Speed Up Partnership Transformation

The Transition from 'Yesterday's Partnerships' to 'Partnerships of Tomorrow'

YESTERDAY ▶

TODAY ▶

TOMORROW ▶



Historic Partnerships

- One-off
- Instructor-led
- Little central involvement
- Siloed
- MOU-driven
- Unmonitored
- Transactional
- Supplemental

Pandemic as Accelerant

1

Revisit and revise strategy given changing global conditions

2

Innovate and deploy new models of collaborations, engagements

3

Sunset and discontinue unviable partnerships, commitments



Future Partnerships

- Integrated
- Strategic
- Highly-coordinated
- Multi-silo
- Targeted
- Long-term
- Essential
- Evaluated

Not Getting Simpler from Here

Global Engagements Face A Plethora of Pressures that Undermine Success

Common Barriers to Successful International Partnerships



Leadership instability



Inability to evaluate success



Misalignment with mission



Inconsistent funding



Coordination challenges



Cultural differences



Lack of trust



Disconnect from institutional strengths



Reputational ramifications



Regulations and governmental oversight



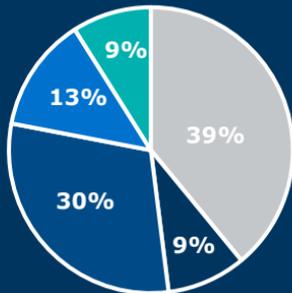
Lack of programme advocates



Activities happen within silos

A Global Reach: Perspectives from Around the World

Geographic Distribution of Research Calls



■ USA
■ UK/Europe
■ Other
■ Canada
■ AUS/NZ

46 institutions

14 countries

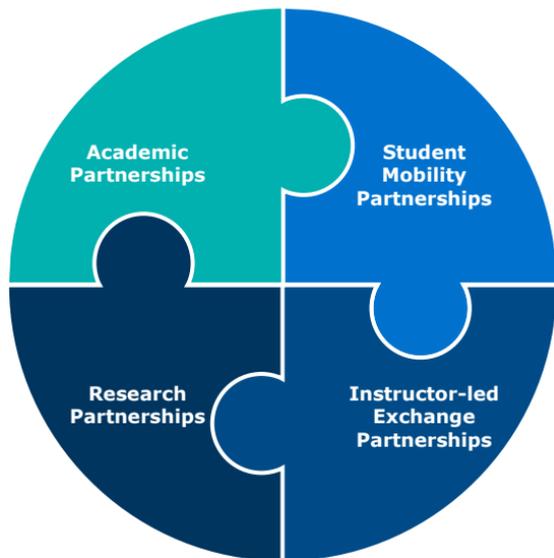
Leaders from Across the University

- Vice President for Global Relations
- Vice President for Research
- Associate Vice Provost for Global Affairs



The Sum is Greater than the Parts

Benefits to Other Collaborations Provided by Partnership Types



- **Academic Partnerships create...**
 - Administrative familiarity
 - Instructor connections
- **Student Mobility Partnerships create...**
 - Student quality reputation
 - Word-of-mouth marketing
- **Instructor Exchange Partnerships create...**
 - Institutional culture understanding
 - Multi-level relationships
- **Research Partnerships create...**
 - Deep, regular collaboration
 - Marketable research outcomes

Increased Trust



Deeper Collaboration



Greater Sustainability



New Opportunities for International Partnerships in Higher Education

Today's Focus



Cultivate an International Partnership Portfolio

- Empower an international strategy champion
- Craft a university-wide partnership plan
- Cultivate institutional strengths and branding

2 November



Identify New Partnership Opportunities and Expansions

- Break into new markets
- Grow existing partnerships into multi-functional collaborations
- Evaluate and communicate return on investment

16 November



Empower Instructors and Unit Leaders to Make Smarter Partnership Decisions

- Incent international activities
- Educate instructors on collaboration risks and pitfalls
- Reduce friction in instructor-led engagements



Cultivating an International Partnership Portfolio

The Need for an Institutional Partnership Strategy

Centralised Coordination Ensures Continuity, Alignment, Efficiency

Without Central Strategy



Partnerships ends with departure or retirement of single instructor



Leaders unaware of existing collaborations, limiting view on potential growth



Partnerships misaligned with institutional strengths or goals



Logistical obstacles stymie promising opportunities



With Central Strategy



University leadership maintains partnership continuity during change



Transparency into existing partnership unearths opportunities for easy expansion, cooperation



Limited resources focused on partnerships with greatest impact to campus



Specialisation reduces administrative burdens, encouraging growth

Quick Poll

What condition most persistently undermines your international partnerships? *(Choose one)*

- Dependency on a single or small group of advocates (continuity)
- Silos and lack of transparency between divisions (coordination)
- Disconnect between partnerships and priorities (alignment)
- Logistical and administrative obstacles (efficiency)
- Other: *succulently describe the condition in the chat*



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Three Pillars of Partnership Strategy



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Ownership



Person and/or office dedicated to developing partnerships, supporting instructor engagements, and guiding campus-wide efforts

Portfolio



Guiding principles to prioritise partnership investment and ensure partnership successes

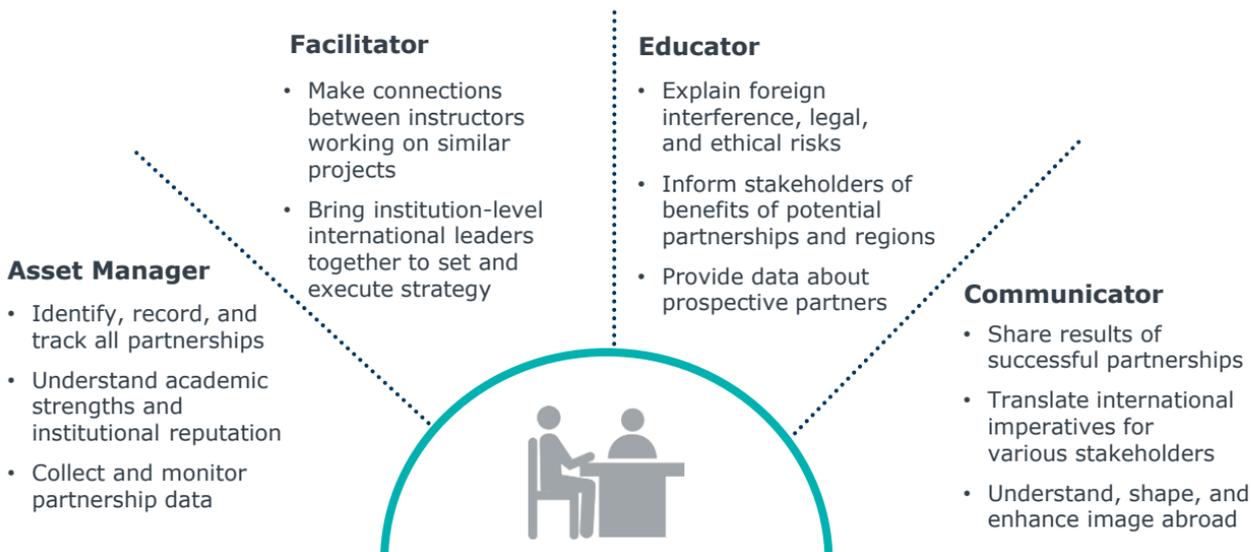
Branding



External marketing to attract partners and encourage engagement

An Advocate for International Engagement

Four Key Responsibilities to Drive Success



“ In the past, the agreements we signed did not progress due to lack of ownership/sponsorship at our partner institution. Past agreements that once showed little progress and most of our new ones are moving forward because of our work to get buy-in from specific people at partner institutions.”

*Meena Saxena, Director of International Linkages
NMIMS*

Three Models to Drive International Strategy



1

Embedded within Units

Position
Location

- Champion integrated in each unit and coordinates international activities for respective unit

Coordination
Responsibilities

- Champions work together to drive institution-level goals for internationalisation

Model
Advantages

- Requires fewer resources and buy-in than executive-level position
- Allows for increased focus on international activity in given units

2

Coordinates Across Units

- Supports, but does not directly oversee, broad portfolio of international activities

- Coordinates efforts between various units and convenes leaders to promote collaboration

- Able to focus efforts on strategy rather than time-consuming operations
- Possesses broad outlook on institutional strategy

3

Directly Oversees International Activities

- Oversees majority of international activities, including operational and strategic activities

- Manages a dedicated unit with staff that execute international activities

- Possesses authority to design and hold international engagements accountable
- Manages international partnerships resources directly to incentivise certain outcomes

Insights from Early Adopters

Four Lessons Learned from Seasoned International Champions



Hire a champion with administrative experience

- Look for administrative as well as academic qualifications
- Examples include running a campus international unit or serving as international dean



Set your champion up with the tools for success

- Give champions a title and access that provides them authority and credibility
- Compile data and context on the state of existing partnerships for champion to get quick start



Create a structure that easily interfaces with partner institutions

- Understand how partner institutions structure their international office
- Create parallel structures that can easily work with partner institution offices



Collect forward-looking metrics to understand partnership performance

- Track data including mutual students exchanged, grants applied for, and new collaborations formed as result of original partnership
- Include qualitative factors that highlight partner reliability

Access the International Strategy Champion infographic [here](#) to learn more.



Written in the Stars or Just the Sand?

Fundamental Questions in Devising an International Portfolio Approach



**Dating Up
or Down?**

What is the desired balance of peers in the portfolio in these categories: true, aspirant, and trailing?



**Among Friends
or Blind Dates?**

From where top-priority partnerships originate: the existing base of partners or net-new pursuits?



**Old Fashion or
Going Dutch?**

Which institution pays for initial engagement costs: one institution, both, or neither?



**Head or
Heart?**

Where is the priority in new partnership pursuits: collaborating with specific institutions or entering specific regions?

Quick Poll

Which fundamental question is the toughest for your institution to answer? (*Choose one*)

- Balancing portfolio partners among true, aspirant, and trailing peers
- Prioritising among existing partners or pursuing new ones
- Determining who will and how much to invest upfront
- Deciding to pursue specific institutions or establish a regional foothold



As poll results come in, share your comments and questions with us using the Chat function!

Building a Partnership Pyramid

Monash's Global Office Modifies Support Based on Portfolio Layer

Monash University's Pyramid Partnership Portfolio



Branch Campuses



- Targeted research and geopolitical interests
- Guided by centralised international strategy

Networks of Excellence



- Institution to institution(s) agreements around key capability clusters
- Driven by disciplinary, topical interest, and institutional alignment

One-to-One Academic Collaborations



- Supports top layers
- Staff help facilitate collaborations

50

Full-time staff dedicated to internationalisation



5

International Campuses



100+

Partners in North America, UK, New Zealand, and Asia Pacific region



Maintaining Flexibly Across Evolving Engagements

Alberta Shifts Partnerships Across Priority Tiers Based on Evolving Goals

The University of Alberta's Spectrum Partnership Portfolio



Priority Partners

- Multi-level, institutional collaboration
- Possibility to shift over time
- Centralised identification of strategic value



Goal-Accomplishing Partners

- Formalised institutional collaboration
- Complementary disciplinary area
- Opportunity to become priority partner



Ad-hoc Engagements

- Often individual instructor agreements
- Organic development from bottom-up
- Centralised support without identification



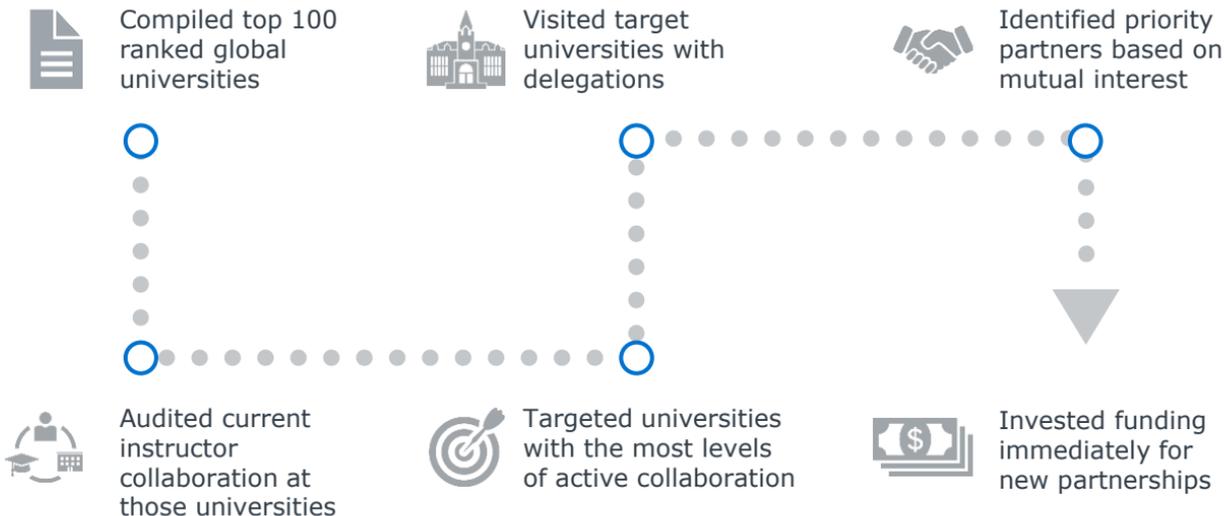
Scoring System and Chart Mobility

Alberta's scoring matrix uses quantitative data points resulting in a partnership score out of 24. The quantitative score and qualitative information are used to assess partnership strength. A successful goal-accomplishing partner could potentially reach the status of priority partner.

Crafting a Map to Expanded Collaborations

Sydney's Partnership Portfolio Builds on Top of Existing Engagements

The University of Sydney's Prioritisation Process



Your Reputation Proceeds You



International Branding Essential for Early Partnership Conversations



For me, the partnership was a no-brainer. We had complementary disciplinary strengths and great student interest. However, when I went to the instructors, they scoffed, saying, 'Aren't they just a basketball school?' They didn't realise what else the partner had to offer.'

*Head of Global Affairs,
English Research University*

Benefits of Robust International Branding



Attract best-fit partners



Showcase expertise



Indicate commitment



Debunk misconceptions



Your Reputation Precedes You

Conducting an International Branding SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Highly rated academic programmes
- Well-published/well-funded research disciplines
- Coordinated outreach and inbound inquiry process

S

Weaknesses

- Mismatched institution-to-programme rankings
- Highly domestic/regional student population
- Reputation of being 'difficult to work with' abroad

W

Opportunities

- Testimonials about active, successful partnerships
- Diversity of interests among students, instructors, and staff
- Funded programmes that could lead to larger engagements

O

Threats

- Overcoming the perception of misaligned institutional priorities
- Separating national challenges from institutional capabilities
- Promoting institutional sustainability during a downturn

T

Key Components to Successful Web Branding

Emory University Screenshot

Global Faculty Engagement & Expertise



Top Countries

Country	Count
China	24
India	24
United Kingdom	21
Germany	20
Canada	17
France	17
Spain	16
Ethiopia	15
Italy	15
Mexico	12

Engaged Faculty: 939 Engaged Faculty, 169 Countries Engaged

International Students: 3,126 International Students, 222 Countries Represented

International Scholars: 1,044 International Scholars, 81 Countries Represented

Alumni: 5,274 Alumni, 168 Countries

Agreements & Partners: 163 Partners, 184 Agreements

EMORY UNIVERSITY

EMORY UNIVERSITY *Global Services*

- Global engagement map
- Country operational guides
- Travel etiquette guidance
- Full list of partner institutions

Other Example Webpages


INDIANA UNIVERSITY
IU Global

- Registry of agreements
- Partnership proposal option

UC DAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Global Affairs

- Seed funding application info
- Global connections database

 **THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY**
Global Engagement

- Partnership impact statistics
- Official visit request form

Use **EAB's International Partnerships Website Audit** to improve your international web presence with examples by topic area. 

Quick Poll

Which component of international and transnational partnership strategy is most important for your institution to focus on over the next 12 months? *(Choose one)*

- Establishing ownership and responsibility over partnership management
- Discerning our portfolio strategy
- Improving our reputation and branding abroad
- Making the case to internal stakeholders about the need for changes to our partnership approach



As poll results come in, share your comments and questions with us using the Chat function!

Next Steps and Opportunities

Today's Focus



Cultivate an International Partnership Portfolio

Available Resources:

- [How to Create an International Strategy Champion](#)
- [Evaluate the Effectiveness of Your International Partnership Web Presence](#)
- [Key Takeaways about the Pandemic's Impact on Partnerships](#)

2 November



Identify New Partnership Opportunities and Expansions

Panel with Q&A featuring:

- Dora Longoni (University of Padua)
- David Ouchterlonie (University of Nottingham)
- Tayyeb Shah (University of Western Australia)
- Marcelo Tavora (Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná)

16 November



Empower Instructors and Unit Leaders to Make Smarter Partnership Decisions

Interactive session on:

- Incenting international activities
- Educating instructors on collaboration risks and pitfalls
- Reducing friction in instructor-led engagements



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