

FOREWORD

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the second 2026 edition of the SGroup Newsletter.

As summer unfolds across our campuses, it offers a valuable moment to reflect on recent achievements and look ahead to new opportunities for collaboration.

In this edition, we share updates on key activities and highlight opportunities to collaborate and engage within the SGroup community.

We would also like to remind you that the SGroup Newsletter is not only a source of information on events, opportunities, and developments within our community, but also a platform for members to share their upcoming activities. We therefore encourage you to share this edition with colleagues and departments within your institution who may benefit from its content. We also warmly invite you to contribute by sharing with us opportunities and events open to participation from other SGroup members to strengthen collaboration and knowledge exchange across the community.

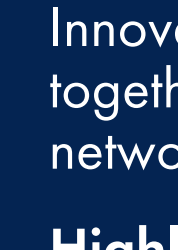
The next edition will be published in September 2026. To ensure that your information is featured, please submit relevant information on opportunities and invitations open to SGroup members via [this form](#) by **1 September 2026**. Eligible submissions may include new project ideas or initiatives such as conferences, seminars, winter schools, and staff weeks for which deadlines fall after 1 October 2026.

Thank you for your continued engagement with the SGroup community. We wish you a restful summer.

Communication Working Group

Contact us

Stay connected with us



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Rua do Campo Alegre 820 | 4150-171 Porto, Portugal
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We invite you and your colleagues to follow SGroup on social media for the latest updates, news and opportunities

Save the date

SGroup Annual Meetings 2026



13-15 October 2026



Silesian University of Technology, Gliwice, Poland



Registration



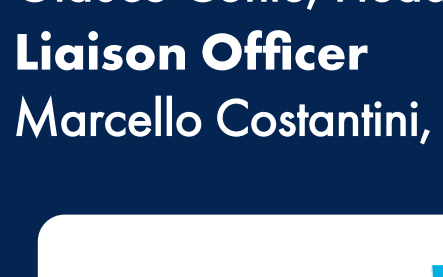
Deadline: 21 September 2026

Join the SGroup Annual Meetings 2026, hosted by the Silesian University of Technology (SUT), under the theme “Disruptions and Innovation in Global Higher Education.” The event will bring together colleagues from across SGroup for strategic discussions, networking, and collaboration.

Highlights include:

- Liaison Officers Meeting
- Professional Development Session for Liaison Officers
- Strategic Reflection on the Future of Higher Education
- AI4UNI Project Workshop
- SGroup General Assembly and Internal Business Meeting (including Presidential Elections)
- PhD CUP Final
- Networking activities and Gala Dinner

Founded in 1945, [SUT](#) is one of Poland’s leading technical universities, recognised for excellence in engineering, innovation, and applied research. Located in southern Poland, the vibrant city of [Gliwice](#) offers a unique blend of history, culture, and modern university life. We look forward to welcoming you there.



Save the date

Professional Development and Strategic Reflection



14 October 2026



Gliwice, Poland

On 14 October, the morning programme will feature a dedicated Professional Development Session on Artificial Intelligence for Liaison Officers, providing practical insights and tools to support their daily work and strengthen their role within the SGroup network.

The afternoon programme will be dedicated to a strategic reflection on the evolving challenges facing higher education and the opportunities they present for international collaboration.

Do not miss it!

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome two new institutions to the SGroup network, following their approval through a recent circular vote.

Università degli Studi "Gabriele d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara (Italy)

Founded: 1960 (established as a free university in 1960 and officially recognised as a state university in 1982)

Website: www.unich.it

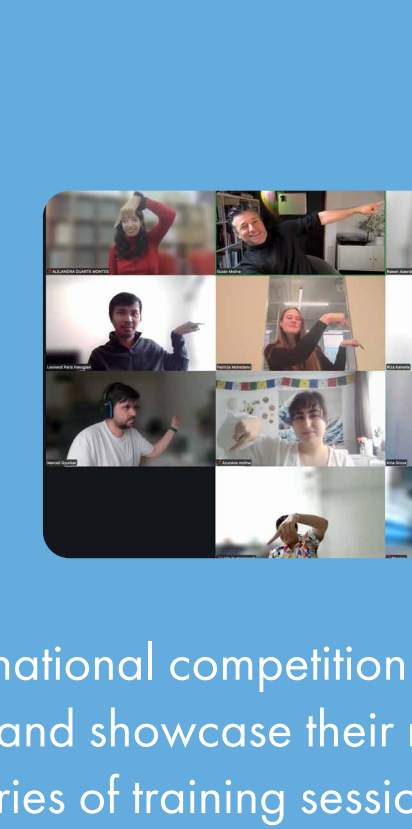
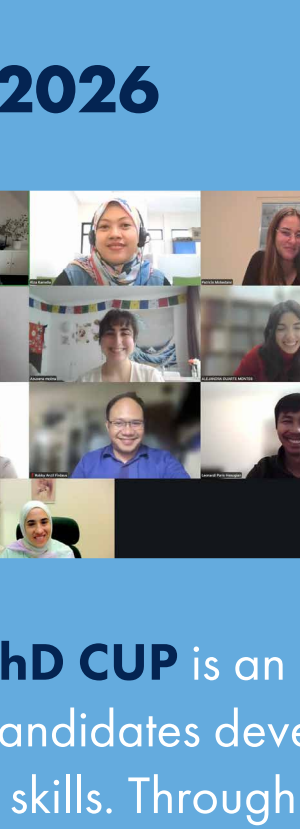
With campuses in Chieti and Pescara, the Università degli Studi "Gabriele d'Annunzio" is a dynamic Italian university offering a wide range of programmes across the sciences, humanities, social sciences, medicine, engineering, and economics. The university is strongly committed to research excellence, internationalisation, and collaboration with partners across Europe and beyond.

General Assembly Representative

Glauco Conte, Head of International Relations Department

Liaison Officer

Marcello Costantini, Associate Professor



Çukurova University (Turkey)

Founded: 1973

Website: www.cu.edu.tr

Located in Adana, Çukurova University is one of Türkiye's leading public research universities, recognised for its strong academic profile, vibrant campus life, and significant contributions to research and innovation across a wide range of disciplines.

General Assembly Representative

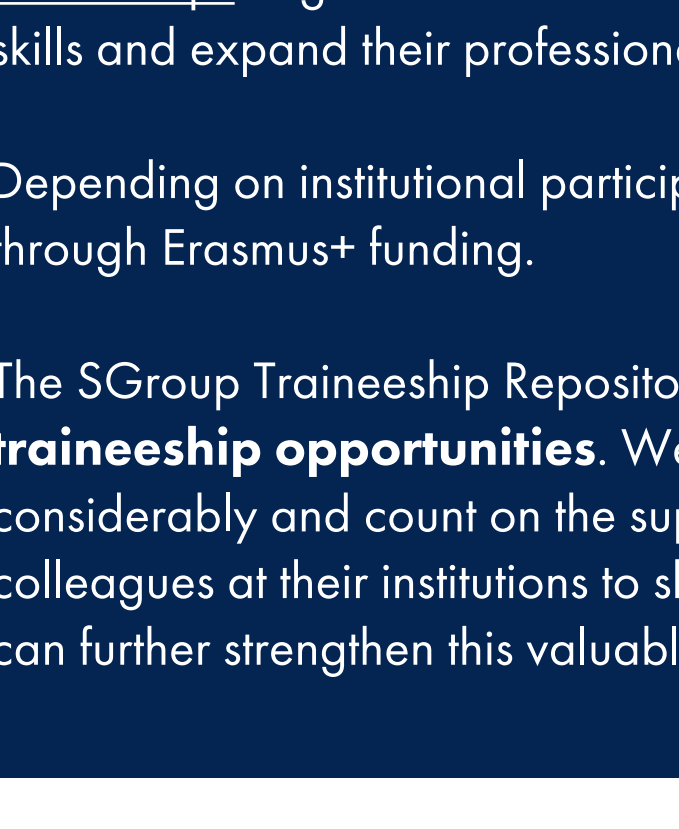
Prof.Dr. Bahattin Karademir, Head of International Office

Liaison Officer

Seher Özer Ütük, Internationalization Coordinator



ICON PROGRAMME



* Photos by grantees [Sarmad Maqsood \(KTU\)](#) and [Sofia Ghoten \(U.Porto\)](#) who completed mobilities in Canada and New Zealand!

The **ICON Programme** continues to support international collaboration and staff mobility across the SGroup network and partner institutions worldwide. Since its launch, the programme has provided valuable opportunities for professional development, knowledge exchange, and the strengthening of institutional partnerships.

ICON 2025–2026 in Numbers

- 64 applications received
- 18 SGroup member universities involved
- 18 grants awarded

Grant Recipients

The Americas

- Antonino Interdonato (University of Messina)
- Elena Martín Izquierdo (University of León)
- José Jiménez (Universitat Politècnica de València)
- Marina Quintero (University of Cantabria)
- Marleen De Troch (Ghent University)
- Sarmad Maqsood (Kaunas University of Technology)
- Sebastian Vajda (Babeş-Bolyai University)

Asia & Pacific

- Aleksandra Rybak (Silesian University of Technology)
- Andréa Chane (University of Rouen Normandy)
- Antony Alava (Universitat Rovira i Virgili)
- Chao Ji Hyland (TU Dublin)
- Florence Le Bars-Tosi (University of Lille)
- Ivana Adamiková (University of Ostrava)
- Sofia Castro (University of Porto)

Africa

- John Kouraklis (University of Westminster)
- Maryanne Wamahiu (University of Bayreuth)
- Miguel Rocha (University of Minho)

Networking Grant

- Patrícia Spadaro (UNESP)

PHD CUP 2026



The **SGroup PhD CUP** is an international competition designed to help doctoral candidates develop and showcase their research communication skills. Through a series of training sessions, participants learn how to present complex research ideas clearly and effectively to a broad audience.

PhD CUP 2026 in Numbers

- 48 doctoral candidates selected
- 16 member universities represented

Participating Universities

Institution	Candidates
University of Lille	7
University of León	6
Universitat Rovira i Virgili	6
Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember (ITS)	4
Babeş-Bolyai University	3
Kaunas University of Technology	3
Ghent University	2
University of Catania	2
University of Liège	2
University of Malta	2
University of Maribor	2
Silesian University of Technology	1
University of Split	1
University of Szczecin	1
University of Westminster	1

The top 10 will be announced in July. The top 5 finalists will be invited by their home institution to travel to Gliwice, Poland, to present their pitch during the Annual Meetings. Please note that, as established in the PhD CUP call for applications, all travel, accommodation, and subsistence expenses must be covered by the home institution.

We congratulate all selected participants!

TRAINEESHIP REPOSITORY

Contribute to the growth of the SGroup Traineeship Repository by sharing it within your institution.

Academic staff, researchers and professors can promote international traineeship opportunities and connect with talented Master's and PhD students across the SGroup network by submitting positions to the [repository](#).

Master's and PhD students are encouraged to explore available [traineeships](#) to gain international research experience, develop new skills and expand their professional networks.

Depending on institutional participation, opportunities may be supported through Erasmus+ funding.

The SGroup Traineeship Repository currently features **30 active traineeship opportunities**. We would like to increase this number considerably and count on the support of all Liaison Officers to encourage colleagues at their institutions to share new opportunities. Together, we can further strengthen this valuable resource for the SGroup community.

A LOOK BACK AT OUR RECENT ACTIVITIES

SGroup BIP in Valladolid

25 - 29 May 2026

University of Valladolid, Spain

The 12th International Staff Week at the University of Valladolid featured a significant new development: the integration of a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) designed in collaboration with SGroup. Three SGroup member universities—Kaunas University of Technology, Le Havre Normandy University, and the University of Ostrava—were represented at the event.

Think Tank Academy Spring Conference in Kaunas

20 - 21 April 2026

Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania

This hybrid event brought together colleagues from across the SGroup network for two days of discussions, collaboration, and knowledge exchange under the theme “Disruptions and Innovations in Global Higher Education”.

BIP on Doctoral Education in Lille

29 June - 3 July

University of Lille, France

The University of Lille welcomed PhD candidates from across SGroup for the Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) on Doctoral Education. The programme mainly fostered collaboration, knowledge exchange and international networking, highlighting the importance of innovation in doctoral education.

MEMBER NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The latest projects, events, and opportunities from SGroup member universities, relevant to the entire network and submitted through our newsletter [contribution form](#).

- [BIP on Inclusion in Rouen](#)
- [International Doctoral Week 2026 in Gliwice](#)
- [KTU Marks the 10th Edition of its International PhD Summer School](#)

2026

SGroup Calendar Highlights

July 2026	August 2026	September 2026	October 2026	November 2026	December 2026
• Confirmation of PhD CUP Top 10 • Preparation for the Annual Meetings	• Preparation for the Annual Meetings	• EC meeting online	• Annual Meetings in Gliwice	• SGroup Café • EC Meeting • Office closed	• EC Meeting

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