



# CREATIVITY - RESPONSIBILITY - COOPERATION CITIES AND UNIVERSITIES FOR THE NEXT WORLD

**11TH** INTERNATIONAL KRAFT  
AND BLUE SKY CONFERENCE  
17-18-19 SEPTEMBER, 2025, KŐSZEG, HUNGARY

**iASK**  
INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES - KŐSZEG

**kraft**  
KREATÍV VÁROS  
FENNTARTHATÓ VÍDEK

**iSES**  
Institute for Social  
and European Studies  
Pápai Károlyi University  
Faculty of Social Sciences

**unesco**  
Chair

**CEI**  
CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE

**VENUE: ZWINGER (CHERNEL STREET 16.)**

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## 11TH INTERNATIONAL KRAFT AND BLUE SKY CONFERENCE

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KRAFT is the flagship program of iASK, which focuses on regional redevelopment and sustainable solutions. In 2025, its mission aligns seamlessly with our European Blue Sky Conference's approach, which represents cross-border, future-oriented, and interdisciplinary thinking. This year's conference builds on the synergy between KRAFT and European Blue Sky: it is both a scientific forum and space for inspiration, where local experiences and global perspectives come together to jointly shape the FUTURE.

The venue of the **11th International KRAFT and Blue Sky Conference** will be the historic *Zwinger* building in Kőszeg – a setting worthy of a conference that places at its center the role of universities of the future, sustainability, current questions of futures studies, and visions of the regions.

Since 2015, the International KRAFT Conferences have been organized in Kőszeg with the aim of fostering dialogue on creative urban development, the knowledge-based society, and sustainability. From the very beginning, a key mission of this series has been the practical applicability of interdisciplinary knowledge. Already in the early years, the call to "*Think outside the box!*" became a guiding motto, expressing the philosophy of both the KRAFT concept and the events at the institute themselves. This year's conference seeks to continue this tradition, firmly preserving the values and mission that have defined the event series from its inception.

The spotlight will be on innovation: innovations in education, new directions in doctoral research, and the universities of the future. These themes provide an excellent framework for the opening day, laying the intellectual groundwork for the two subsequent days of the conference.

The future is not only a mystery or an opportunity – it also carries risks. These risks and challenges will be the focus of a dedicated panel on the second day, bringing together diverse perspectives in a multi-stakeholder dialogue. *Heritage and memory* will be highlighted in a special panel and various strands of the KRAFT Program will be addressed, including *literature, history, music, and regional contexts*. Meanwhile, the *Futures Literacy section* will engage with futures studies, artificial intelligence, and crises of different kinds, with renowned researchers joining from New York, Sofia, Vienna, and Budapest.

The closing day will focus on futures of regions, examining the opportunities of rural Hungary, the regional survey of Kőszeg and its surroundings, and the future vision of the city of Szombathely. Finally, the discussion of the Csallóköz region will continue the mission initiated by the Insula Magna research project.

An integral part of the conference is the showcasing of artistic and cultural elements. On 18 September, the Kőszeg Synagogue will host the Vukán Creative Art improvisation competition, concluding with a true celebration of music: a joint concert by the competitors and jury, offering a memorable experience for both participants and audience. The conference and the Csallóköz Roundtable will be crowned by a performance of the Megyer Dance Ensemble, enriching the event with an artistic finale.

The 11th International KRAFT and Blue Conference, now with a decade-long tradition, continues to pursue its ambitious mission: to connect all those actors – social scientists, policymakers, and researchers – who are both willing and able to contribute to shaping a better, more sustainable, more creative, and culturally richer FUTURE.

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### SEPTEMBER 17 /// WEDNESDAY

- 15:00–15:10** WELCOME SPEECHES – **Béla Básthy** (Mayor of Kőszeg),  
**Ferenc Míszlivetz** (iASK)
- 15:10–15:30** FROM LOCAL ROOTS TO GLOBAL REACH: iASK's Vision for Innovation  
and Excellence Through Collaboration – **Tamás Novák** (iASK)
- 15:30–15:50** ALMA MATER EUROPAEA UNIVERSITY – A SUCCESS STORY – **Luka Martin**  
**Tomažič and Ludvik Toplak** (Alma Mater Europaea University)
- 15:50–16:10** NEW DESIGN FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH: Combining Dialogical  
Community Discourse with the Use of Large Language Models –  
**László Komlósi** (Széchenyi University)
- 16:10–16:30** OUR FUTURE WORLD – **Sean Cleary** (FutureWorld Foundation, iASK) [online]
- 16:30–17:20** THE FUTURE UNIVERSITY – **Ferenc Míszlivetz** (iASK),  
**Jody Jensen** (iASK), **Szabolcs Márka** (iASK, Columbia University),  
**Rozita Dimova** (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje) [online]
- 17:20–17:40** **Kata-Lina Varga & Zoltán Mizsei** songs with piano

### SEPTEMBER 18 /// THURSDAY

#### FUTURE RISKS

- 9:00–9:20** CATALYSTS TALK SERIES OF RESILIENCE PLATFORM –  
**Petra Malisan** (University of Udine)
- 9:20–9:40** PRECISION BREEDING. WHERE IS THE LIMIT? –  
**Feríz Rádi** (Pannon Genetic Ltd.)
- 9:40–10:00** YOUTH MIGRATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS:  
A Human Security Lens on Current Dynamics and Future Implications –  
**Elira Luli** (Luarasi University)
- 10:00–10:20** GLOBAL WAR AND PEACE LOCALLY FROM AI TO ENERGY SECURITY –  
**Szabolcs Márka** (iASK, Columbia University)
- 10:20–10:40** HEALTH AND THE FUTURE – **Norbert Lippai** (Markusovszky University  
Teaching Hospital of County Vas)
- 10:40–11:00** THE FUTURE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN PRECISION ONCOLOGY –  
**István Peták** (Genomate Health, Boston-Budapest)
- 11:00–11:20** BEND THE TREND IS A MUST FOR SUSTAINABILITY! –  
**Sándor Kerekes** (Corvinus University)

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**11:20–11:40** FUTURE-RISKS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED CITIES –  
*Feyrouz Ahlam Saidi* (University of Debrecen)

**11:40–12:00** Q&A SESSION, chair: *László Z. Karvalics* (iASK)

**12:00–13:00** LUNCH [Venue: Festetics Palace, Chernel Street 10.]

### HERITAGE AND MEMORY

**13:00–13:20** SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES – Living Heritage –  
*Graham Bell* (Europa Nostra)

**13:20–13:35** KRAFT: BUILT HERITAGE (Kőszeg renewed) – *Tamás Fejérdy* (iASK)

**13:35–13:50** THE VALUE OF HERITAGE IN ARCHITECTURE – *László Gönczi* (FIABCI)

**13:50–14:05** HERITAGE OF NORTH MACEDONIA – *Rubin Zemon* (The Center for  
Advanced Research, Skopje) [online]

**14:05–14:15** KRAFT: LITERATURE (Ágota Kristóf) – *Ágnes Kovács* (iASK)

**14:15–14:25** KRAFT: MUSIC (Sounding City, Vukán Center) – *Zoltán Mizsei* (iASK),  
*Izabella Szász* (iASK)

**14:25–14:35** KRAFT: HISTORY (Methodology of Talking Houses) – *Mónika Mátay* (iASK)

**14:35–15:00** BREAK

### FUTURES LITERACY

**15:00–15:20** RESPONSE GAP – *Charles Vörösmarty* (The City University of New York)

**15:20–15:40** AI FOR THE FUTURE – *László Palkovics* (Prime Minister's Office)

**15:40–16:00** PHYSICS FOR THE FUTURE – *Norbert Kroó* (HUN-REN Wigner Research  
Centre for Physics, iASK)

**16:00–16:20** FUTURES LITERACY – *Roumiana Gotseva* (Center for Strategic Foresight)

**16:20–16:40** DISCOVERING, RECRUITING, AND ENABLING UNUSUAL TALENT LOCALLY  
IN THE AGE OF GLOBAL AI TECHNOLOGIES –  
*Zsuzsa Márka* (Columbia University, iASK)

**16:40–17:00** FRESH WATERS IN A NEW PERSPECTIVE: The Adaptation of the Ocean  
Literacy Framework to Rivers and Riverside Communities –  
*Attila Dávid Molnár* (Plastic Cup Initiative)

**17:00–17:30** Q&A SESSION, chair: *Zsolt Kosztyán* (iASK)

**18:00–19:00** CULTURAL PROGRAM: VUKÁN CREATIVE ART CONCERT  
WITH KÁROLY BINDER [Venue: Synagogue, Várkör 38.]

**19:00** RECEPTION

[Venue: Festetics Palace, Chernel Street 10.]

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### SEPTEMBER 19. ///FRIDAY

#### FUTURE VISIONS FOR REGIONS

- 9:00–9:30** BUILDING THE FUTURE ON CULTURE: Innovations and Research after Veszprém-Balaton 2023 ECoC – **Alíz Markovits** [Veszprém-Balaton 2023 JSC], **Linda Katona** [iASK, ELTE Doctoral School of Sociology]
- 9:30–9:50** TRANSITION TO A KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY AND ECONOMY – Illusion or Reality in the Hungarian Countryside? – **Balázs Barta** [Pannon Business Network]
- 9:50–10:10** SZOMBATHELY 2030 – **Adrienn Bokányi** [City of Szombathely with County Rights]
- 10:10–10:30** KŐSZEG 500 YEARS – **Béla Básthly** [Mayor of Kőszeg]
- 10:30–10:55** IASK KŐSZEG-RESEARCH – **Szabolcs Morvay** [iASK], **Éva Stefánich** [iASK, ELTE Doctoral School of Sociology]
- 10:55–11:20** FUTURE UNDER CONSTRUCTION: International Synergy Campus – **Zoltán Nyul** [Ministry of Construction and Transport]
- 11:20–12:00** CITY & REGION: Cooperation for the Future – Roundtable discussion – Chair: **Ferenc Mislivetz** [iASK]  
**Alíz Markovits** [Veszprém-Balaton 2023 JSC],  
**Balázs Barta** [Pannon Business Network],  
**András Nemény** [Mayor of the City of Szombathely with County Rights],  
**Adrienn Bokányi** [City of Szombathely with County Rights],  
**Béla Básthly** [Mayor of Kőszeg]
- 12:00–12:40** LUNCH [Venue: Zwinger, Chernel Street 16.]
- 12:40–13:00** TWIN ISLAND – Insula Magna – **János Bogárdi** [iASK]
- 13:00–13:20** TWIN ISLAND – Csallóköz – **Szilvia Néveri Varagya** [Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra]
- 13:20–14:05** CSALLÓKÖZ ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION – Chair: **Szilvia Néveri Varagya** [Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra]  
**Kálmán Pongrácz** [City Council of Nagymegyer],  
**Gábor Somogyi** [Csallóköz Territorial Tourism Association],  
**Magdolna Mészáros** [Megyer Dance Ensemble]
- 14:05–14:25** MEGYER DANCE ENSEMBLE [traditional folk dance from Csallóköz]

**INVITED SPEAKERS AT THE 11TH INTERNATIONAL KRAFT AND BLUE SKY CONFERENCE**

**BARTA, BALÁZS** earned his PhD at the University of Sopron, Institute of Engineering and Manufacturing Sciences. After nearly a decade of leadership experience at multinational corporations, he founded Pannon Business Network in 2006, focusing on applied research and development. Within PBN, the Digital Innovation Hub emphasizes manufacturing digitalization and multidisciplinary research on humanoid robots for social purposes.

**BÁSTHY, BÉLA** is the Mayor of Kőszeg since October 2019. He had previously served as Deputy Mayor and Member of the Vas County Self-Government Office from 2006 to 2019. As a former language teacher and interpreter, he collaborated in several cross-border projects and international cooperation initiatives.

**BELL, GRAHAM** is Director of the Cultura Trust, a UK-based NGO dedicated to European cultural heritage. He founded the Hungarian Renaissance Foundation for the Built Environment (MRA). He is a board member of Europa Nostra and serves on the advisory panel for Europe's 7 Most Endangered Monuments. He also contributes to the joint Europa Nostra-ICOMOS initiative responding to the European Green Deal, and sits on the advisory board of the New European Bauhaus, while representing the Climate Heritage Network. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the European Federation for Architectural Heritage Skills, Chair of the UK-based Bakelite Design Trust, and advisor to the National Trust, Future for Religious Heritage, and the Foundation for Jewish Heritage. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.

**BINDER, KÁROLY** is a pianist, composer, and university professor who heads the Jazz Department at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music and is a former researcher at iASK. He has performed in numerous international and domestic concerts and composed over 300 pieces. His work has been honored with several awards, including the Erkel Ferenc Award and the Artisjus Lifetime Achievement Award.

**BOGÁRDI, JÁNOS** is a senior fellow at the Centre for Development Research at the University of Bonn, senior scientific advisor at the Institute of

Advanced Studies Kőszeg (iASK) and research professor at the Ludovika University of Public Service. He served till his retirement from the UN as Director of the United Nations University (UNU) Institute for Environment and Human Security and as Vice Rector a. i. in Europe.

**BOKÁNYI, ADRIENN** is the Councillor for Economic Affairs of the Municipality of Szombathely City with County Rights. She chairs the Economic and Legal Committee and has played a key role in shaping the „Szombathely2030” development strategy, which includes pioneering a green hydrogen ecosystem and positioning the city as a knowledge-based industrial hub.

**CLEARY, SEAN** is Chairman of Strategic Concepts (Pty) Ltd., Managing Director of the Centre for Advanced Governance, Founder and Executive Vice Chair of the Future World Foundation and Chairman of Atlantic Holdings (Pty) Ltd. He also serves on the international Advisory Board of iASK.

**DIMOVA, ROZITA** is a former senior research fellow at iASK. She is research fellow at Centre for Advanced and Interdisciplinary Research, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius. She is a member of American Anthropological Association, Society for the Anthropology of Europe, among others. Her areas of research are: Climate and eco activism in the Balkans related to the water systems, as well as the role of national, local governments, political representatives, UNESCO and the European Commissions responsible for and involved in legal and political regulations for protecting the Balkan lakes and their environment.

**FEJÉRDY, TAMÁS** is affiliated with the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg (iASK) and the UNESCO Chair at Kőszeg. He is an award-winning architect and heritage conservation engineer, honored with the ICOMOS Piero Gazzola Prize. From 1976 to 2013, he worked at Hungary's central institution for heritage protection. He served as the Chair of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2002/2003.

**GOTSEVA, ROUMIANA** is a futurist, action researcher, and artist whose work focuses on anticipation, incipience, and transformation. She has broad international consulting experience in strategic

foresight and futures literacy, working across countries for Fortune 500 companies and inter-governmental organizations such as UNESCO, Climate-KIC, Resilience Frontiers/UNFCCC, FAO, and the European Commission. Founder of the Center for Strategic Foresight and member of the Supervisory Board of International Asset Bank AD. A life-long learner, she has completed the post-graduate program in Studies of the Future at the University of Houston and is currently pursuing her doctorate in Creative Anticipation and Organizational Change at Hult Ashridge Business School, UK.

**GÖNCZI, LÁSZLÓ** is an architect specializing in building construction and urban planning, and the founder of Metropolis International Ltd. He has been an active member of the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), based in Paris, since 1995, and has served as President of its Hungarian Chapter since 1999. Under FIABCI Hungary's leadership, he has organized the Hungarian Real Estate Development Award since 1997, with the support of the most prominent organizations in the construction and real estate development sectors.

**JENSEN, JODY** is the Director of Transdisciplinary Research and Collaboration at iASK. She is a senior research fellow at HUN-REN Institute of Political Sciences. She was the Director of the MA Program in International Relations at the Corvinus University of Budapest, and International Studies MA Program at the University of Pannonia Kőszeg Campus where she was awarded a Jean Monnet Chair in European Solidarity and Social Cohesion (ESSCO). She is the Director of International Relations at the Institute for Social and European Studies Foundation (ISES, a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence) which she helped to found. She teaches in Hungary and abroad. She works regularly for the European Commission. Her areas of research are prefigurative and subterranean politics, global inequalities and new social and political movements, particularly in East and Central Europe and the Balkans, and studies complexity as it translates to social phenomena and change.

**KATONA, LINDA** is a staff member at iASK and the project manager coordinator of the Kraft Research Group within the institute. Since 2022,

she has been a doctoral student at the Doctoral School of Sociology at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. Her research focuses on the development and formation of regional identity.

**KEREKES, SÁNDOR** is researcher at iASK, former Vice-Rector of the Corvinus University of Budapest, one of the founding professors of the Department of Environmental Economics and Technology. Lecturer at the Neumann János University, ELTE, Corvinus University and MATE Kaposvár Campus, also a supervisor at the doctoral schools of the two last mentioned institutions.

**KOMLÓSI, LÁSZLÓ** is the head of the Doctoral Program in Business Administration Sciences at the Doctoral School of Regional and Business Administration Sciences of the Széchenyi István University. His research areas include organizational communication and cognitive linguistics.

**KOSZTYÁN, ZSOLT TIBOR** is an iASK researcher. He is Full Professor and Head of the Department of Quantitative Methods at the University of Pannonia, also serves as Senior Research Fellow with the MTA-University of Pannonia Budapest Ranking Research Group. A dual PhD holder (Economics & Business, Information Technology) with habilitation in 2014, his research centers on operations research and mathematical modeling in complex management systems; he has led multiple projects and published extensively.

**KOVÁCS, ÁGNES** is a literary historian, researcher at iASK, and a member of the Agota Kristof Research Group. She defended her doctoral dissertation in 2011 at the Doctoral School of Literary Studies at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). Her research interests include literary theory, contemporary Hungarian literary history, and the relationship between literature and mediativity.

**KROÓ, NORBERT** is a physicist and former Vice-President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His research spans material sciences, optics, neutron physics, and science policy. He has authored over 250 scientific papers, seven books, and holds 40 patents. He previously served as President of the European Physical Society and the Hungarian Physical Society and has advised the EU and several European governments. Since 2021, he has been Executive Chairman of the iASK Advisory Board.

**LIPPAI, NORBERT** is the Director General of the Markusovszky University Teaching Hospital of County Vas and former Director General of the Ferenc Csolnoky Hospital in Veszprém County.

**LULI, ELIRA** is a Lecturer and Researcher at “Luarasi” University and a Visiting Lecturer at Tirana (State) University, with diverse expertise in academia, civil society, and public administration. She received her International Relations and Political Science doctorate from the European University of Tirana in 2017 and was awarded a George C. Marshall Center Alumni scholarship in 2022, after completing a Group research Project on the topic Democratic Backsliding and Security Governance. In July 2024, she finished her post-doc Research Fellowship at the Institute of Advanced Studies, under the general project topic “EU and Western Balkans”.

**MALISAN, PETRA** is Program Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair on Intersectoral Safety for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience at SPRINT-Lab, University of Udine (Italy). She earned her PhD in Environmental and Energy Engineering Science at the University of Udine. Her work focuses on defining and applying methods for safety and risk analyses, and she has collaborated with the National System of Civil Protection (National Fire Corps and Civil Protection of Friuli Venezia Giulia), providing scientific support and developing methodologies for emergency scenario analysis with particular attention to safety management.

**MÁRKA, SZABOLCS** is a member of the iASK Advisory Board. He is the Walter O. LeCroy, Jr. Professor of Physics at Columbia University and the head of the Columbia Experimental Gravity Group. Prof. Márka graduated from Kossuth Lajos University and earned his PhD from Vanderbilt University. He was among the first to detect cosmic gravitational waves, and his extensive research spans from astrophysics to biophysics.

**MÁRKA, ZSUZSANA** is a scientist at Columbia University's Astrophysics Laboratory, where she works on the LIGO [Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory] project, which announced the first direct detection of cosmic gravitational waves in 2016. Her research focuses on the joint search for gravitational waves and high-energy neutrinos.

**MARKOVITS, ALÍZ** is the CEO of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture program. As a former development manager at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Kőszeg, she gained experience in planning, implementing, and monitoring regional development projects. One of her key tasks was to put into practice the Kraft concept developed at the institute, specifically the “Creative City – Sustainable Region” project.

**MÁTAY, MÓNIKA** is a historian and researcher at iASK, as well as the editor of the Talking Houses series. She is an associate professor with habilitation at the Institute of History of the Faculty of Humanities at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. Her research focuses on modern European social and cultural history.

**MÉSZÁROS, MAGDOLNA** Choreographer, dance teacher, and leader of the Megyer Dance Ensemble and the Little Megyer Dance Ensemble in Nagymegyer (Slovakia).

**MISZLIVETZ, FERENC** is the founder and director of the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg (iASK) and a Jean Monnet professor. He elaborated the innovative regional development concept, called KRAFT program (Creative Cities, Sustainable Region). He is the co-founder of the Institute for Social and European Studies Foundation (a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence). He has served as the President of the Social Sciences unit of the Hungarian UNESCO Committee and holds a UNESCO Chair in Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainability in Kőszeg. His research interests include democracy, civil society, Central-European and European Studies, globalization and sustainability. iASK has won two prestigious FIABCI awards for the city dimensional real estate development of the historic town of Kőszeg.

**MIZSEI, ZOLTÁN** is a music researcher at iASK and an associate professor in the Department of Church Music at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music. His main research areas are musical heritage and soundscape. He developed a research-based creative-musical training method called Sounding City.

**MOLNÁR, ATTILA DÁVID** is a Hungarian-born educator, river cleanup expert, co-creation trainer, and award-winning scientific and environmental filmmaker. He is co-founder of the river cleanup

initiative Plastic Cup; Chairman of Filmjungle.eu/ Természetfilm.hu Society; and initiator of the River Litter Lab and the Popular Science Video Workshop. He holds a doctorate and two MSc degrees (in filmmaking and molecular biology). He is also Project Manager in the Aquatic Plastic project (Danube Region Interreg Programme) and Head of the River Monitoring Unit and Shipping Unit of the Plastic Cup initiative.

**MORVAY, SZABOLCS** is a lead researcher at the iASK KRAFT Research Group and an assistant professor at Széchenyi István University, where he teaches regional economics. He is also a member of the Hungarian Regional Science Association. His research areas include culture-based urban development.

**NEMÉNY, ANDRÁS** has served as Mayor of Szombathely (a city with county rights) since October 2019.

**NÉVERI VARAGYA, SZILVIA** is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Central European Studies, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia, and a former Robert Bosch Scholar, Fulbright–Schuman Scholar, and iASK Research Fellow. Her transdisciplinary research focuses on sustainable regional development, strategies for the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, the social resilience of local communities, tourism, and cultural heritage preservation.

**NOVÁK, TAMÁS** is a diplomat, scholar, and project leader with over two decades of experience in research, teaching, and international relations. Since 2018 he has served as Science and Technology Diplomat at the Consulate General of Hungary in New York, fostering U.S.–Hungary scientific cooperation, supporting startups, and founding the Neumann Series on Pure and Applied Sciences. Formerly associate professor at Budapest Business School and research director at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, he specializes in global economic analysis, innovation, and international development. He holds a PhD in International Relations from Corvinus University of Budapest. He is the Head of International Relations at iASK.

**NYUL, ZOLTÁN** serves as Deputy Secretary of State for Above-Ground Works at Hungary's Ministry of

Construction and Transport. He oversees high-rise construction and has represented the Ministry as a speaker at leading industry events like the Construction Industry 2022 and Construction Industry 2024 conferences.

**PALKOVICS, LÁSZLÓ** is the Government Commissioner for Artificial Intelligence. He previously served as Minister of Innovation and Technology (2018–2022) and later as Minister of Technology and Industry (2022). Trained as a mechanical engineer, he has held leading positions in both academia and industry, including at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics, the Institute for Computer Science and Control (SZTAKI) of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and Knorr-Bremse. His professional focus lies in innovation policy, higher education, and industrial R&D. He played a key role in shaping Hungary's Artificial Intelligence Strategy and advancing technological modernization. His contributions to engineering and innovation have been recognized with numerous prestigious awards, including the Széchenyi Prize and the Gábor Dénes Prize.

**PETÁK, ISTVÁN** is a physician-scientist and molecular pharmacologist who has pioneered precision oncology for over 30 years. He is the co-founder of Oncompass Medicine (Budapest) and Genomate Health (Cambridge, MA), and has authored more than 200 scientific publications. His team achieved the first prospective lung cancer treatment based on molecular profiling in 2003 and introduced multigene testing in 2008. Since 2016, he has been driving AI innovation in precision oncology. He received the 2012 Dénes Gábor Innovation Award and currently teaches at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Széchenyi István University, and Semmelweis University.

**PONGRÁCZ, KÁLMÁN** is a Municipal Representative of Nagymegyer (Slovakia), Member of the City Council, Chair of the Committee for Culture, Education and Social Organizations, and Member of the Finance and Municipal Asset Management Committee.

**RÁDI, FERÍZ** defended his PhD dissertation at the Biological Research Centre in Szeged. In 2022, he was elected Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Hungarian Plant Breeders Association,

and in the same year he became a member of the Rector's Advisory Board of the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He was awarded the title of "Young Breeder of the Year" and was elected as a public body member of the Plant Breeding Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He is currently the President of the Association for Innovative Agricultural Biotechnology and, since 2020, owner and Head of the Breeding Department at Pannon Genetic Ltd.

**SAIDI, FEYROUZ AHLAM** holds a PhD from the University of Debrecen, Hungary [Institute of Earth Science, Department of Social Geography and Regional Development]. Her research focuses on the intersection of urban and social studies, economic geography, and globalization, with particular emphasis on small and medium-sized towns, regional development, and spatial planning.

**SOMOGYI, GÁBOR** is the President of the Csallóköz Territorial Tourism Association, Managing Director of the Thermalpark Aquatic Leisure Centre in Dunaszerdahely [Slovakia], and President of the Slovak Association of Aquatic Leisure Facilities.

**STEFÁNICH, ÉVA** graduated in law at the Péter Pázmány Catholic University, Faculty of Law and Political Science. She worked in regional administration after graduating from university, she joined iASK in 2020. Éva Stefánich started her doctoral studies in 2022 at the Interdisciplinary Social Research Doctoral Programme of ELTE, the title of her research is "Examining the development possibilities of the Creative City - Sustainable Region [Kraft] Program".

**SZÁSZ, IZABELLA** is an economist and cultural manager, Head of the George Vukán Creative Art Centre, and cultural relations manager and event organizer at iASK.

**TOMAŽIČ, LUKA MARTIN** is an Associate Professor of Law and Vice-Dean for Research at Alma Mater Europaea. He is a full member and Vice-President of the Slovenian Academy of Legal Sciences. He has cultivated an extensive academic background and professional experience spanning law, applied philosophy, and international relations.

**TOPLAK, LUDVIK** is a Slovenian law professor and academic administrator, and former politician, ambassador, and member of the Parliament. He is the Rector of the Alma Mater Europaea university and former rector of the University of Maribor. He is a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts.

**VARGA, KATA-LINA** is a Hungarian actress, artistic director, director, acting teacher, translator, and lecturer.

**VÖRÖSMARTY, CHARLES J.** is a professor at the City University of New York. His research focuses on developing computer models and geospatial datasets to study the interactions between the water cycle, climate, biogeochemistry, and anthropogenic activities. He has made significant contributions to raising global awareness about water issues.

**ZEMON, RUBIN** is an ethnologist and socio-cultural anthropologist, and the Director of the Center for Advanced Research. He was a research associate at the Institute for Social and Humanistic Research "Euro-Balkan" in Skopje, a University Professor at the University "St. Apostle Paul" in Ohrid. He was appointed Director of the Institute for Social and Humanistic Research at the Euro-Balkan University in Skopje. He is an expert for the Council of Europe and OSCE / ODIHR for various missions and projects related to national minorities and multiculturalism, in European countries, especially in South-Eastern Europe. He is a former Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg.

**Z. KARVALICS, LÁSZLÓ** is a senior iASK researcher, a historian and information society scholar. Doctorate from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences [MTA]. His work focuses on urban and regional development, particularly in the areas of smart cities, attraction planning, knowledge governance, and cultural heritage.



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The conference will be held in English on Wednesday and Thursday,  
and in Hungarian on Friday with English simultaneous interpretation provided.

