International Scientific conference-SYMPOSIUM

"Navigating Volatility with Meaning: Societal Wellbeing, Education, and Work"

for Academics and Practitioners

12th November 2026
Vilnius, Kalvarijų str. 137E
Room 111

PROGRAM

9:00–9:30 **REGISTRATION**

9:30–9:50 **OPENING CEREMONY**

SMK College of Applied Sciences Director Viktorija Palubinskienė

9:50–11:25 **PLENARY SESSION I: *Meaningful living***

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Inga Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

9:50–10:10 **Meaningful living and societal well-being: elevating the contribution of older adults**
Taina Jyräkoski, *Master in Health Care (Rehabilitation) (Head of RoboAI Research Center, SAMK Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Finland)*
Dr. Mervi Vähätalo *(SAMK University of Applied Sciences, Finland)*

10:10–10:30 **Eating in time: chronotype, chrononutrition and sustainable eating for mental and physical well-being**
Assistant Prof. Dr. Ramona Silvana De Amicis *(Human Nutrition Section, Department of Food, Environmental and Nutritional Sciences (DeFENS), University of Milan, Italy)*

10:30–10:50 **AWE-some: Exploring the relationship between collective musical experiences and social connection** (PRE-recorded)
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Indre Viskontas, MM, PhD *(Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of San Francisco)*

10:50–11:20 **DISCUSSION I**

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Inga Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

Debaters:

Taina Jyräkoski, psychotherapist (*SAMK Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Finland)*

Gerda Asipavičienė, PCC, ACTC ICF *(Lithuanian Chapter of ICF, President)*

Ramona Silvana De Amicis *(University of Milan, Italy)*

11:20–11:25 **BEYOND WORDS: Finding Meaning Through Art:**
What gives meaning to your life when everything around you changes?
PhD cand. Arin Agic *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

11:25–11:45 **BREAK**

11:45–13:10 **PLENARY SESSION II: *Meaningful education***

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Batuchina *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

11:45–11:50 **BEYOND WORDS: Finding Meaning Through Art**
What gives meaning to your life when everything around you changes? Reflection
PhD cand. Arin Agic *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

11:50–12:10 **Fostering boundary-crossing learning in practice-driven education: The role of presence and constructive tension**
Dr. Marieke Veltman *(Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands)*

12:10–12:30 **Fostering entrepreneurial thinking and opportunity creation in the age of AI**
Dr. Gregor Jagodič *(ISSBS Celje, Slovenia)*

12:30–13:00 **DISCUSSION II**

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Batuchina *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

Debaters:

Dr. Marieke Veltman *(Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands)*

Doc. Dr. Tomas Butvilas *(Kazimieras Simonavičius University, Lithuania)*

Dr. Gregor Jagodič *(ISSBS Celje, Slovenia)*

13:00–14.00 **BREAK**

14:00–15:45 **PLENARY SESSION III: *Meaningful employment***

Moderator: Rron Lecaj, MA *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

14:00–14:20 **A qualitative analysis of meaningful work, emotional labor, and employees satisfaction**
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Andreea-Mihaela Barbu *(Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania)*

14:20–14:40 **Meaningful but unsustainable work – when does meaning protect against burnout – and when is it no longer enough?**
Prof. Dr. Aistė Dromantaitė *(Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania)*

14:40–15:10 **DISCUSSION III**

Moderator: Rron Lecaj, MA *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

Debaters:

Prof. Dr. Andrea Barbu *(Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania)*

Prof. Dr. Aistė Dromantaitė *(Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania)*

Rita Karabanovienė *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

15:10–15:30 **CLOSING**

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

1. **Post-Digital Participatory Media Practices for Fostering Engineering Master Students' Artificial Intelligence Competency: A Comparative Study of Selected Countries**
   Parulkumari Bhati *(United World Institute of Management, Karnavati University, India)*, Dr. Jelena Zascerinska *(Centre for Education and Innovation Research, Latvia)*

2. **Beyond Values: Financial Sustainability as a Missing Dimension of Inclusive Higher Education**
   Dr. Jevgenija Dehtjare, Dr. Kristīne Užule *(EKA University of Applied Sciences, Latvia)*

3. **Competencies of a Communication and Marketing Specialist in a Changing World**
   Dr. Jurgita Macienė, Dr. Kristina Kulikauskienė *(Šiauliai State Higher Education Institution, Lithuania)*

4. **Linking School Culture to Teachers' Occupational Well-Being in Early Childhood Education Settings**
   Dr. Jūratė Česnavičienė (*Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania*), Dr. Stasė Ustilaitė *(Vilniaus kolegija / Higher Education Institution, Lithuania)*

5. **Mapping the Intellectual Landscape of Upskilling and Reskilling in the Digital Era**
   Laaouina Kaoutar *(Cadi Ayyad University (UCA), Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Laboratory for Studies on Resources, Mobility, and Attractiveness (LERMA), Morocco)*

6. **The Social and Cultural Activities of Musicians in the Lithuanian Diaspora: Community Impact and Personal Experiences**
   Dr. Vaiva Jucevičiūtė-Bartkevičienė *(Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania)*

7. **Addressing Staff Shortages in Outpatient Care: What Keeps Medical and Dental Assistants in Profession? – MFA ZFA-Kompass**
   Denise Leonhardt, Ulrike Fettke, Christian Aschenbrenner, Anette Sawellion-Zimmermann,
   Sabine Ittlinger *(Rosenheim Technical University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Applied Health and Social Science, Germany)*

8. **From Cultural Memory to Meaningful Ageing: Cognitive Resilience and Social Participation Among Older Adults in Türkiye**
   Dr. Bilal KILINÇ and Prof. Dr. Ayşe CANATAN *(Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Türkiye)*

BEYOND WORDS: Finding Meaning Through Art

Artistic Researches

1. **Movement Design in Suspended Time. Asanas, Spatial Forms and the More-than-Human Body**
   PhD cand. Gerda Liudvinavičiūtė *(Vilnius Academy of Arts, SMK College of Applied Sciences)*

2. **Intuition and Accidentality: Toward the Method of Getting Lost**
   Gabrielė Vingraitė & Žydrė Jankevičienė *(SMK College of Applied Sciences)*

Photography Exhibition "Where are you, Füsun?"

PhD cand. Arin Agic *(SMK College of Applied Sciences, Lithuania)*

Organizing committee:

Dr. Inga Ižd onaitė-Medžiūnienė (Lithuania)
Dr. Aleksandra Batuchina (Lithuania)
Dr. Andželika Bylaitė (Lithuania)
Dr. Dalius Gudeika (Lithuania)
Rron Lecaj (Kosovo, Lithuania)
Žydrė Jankevičienė (Lithuania)
Aliona Markauskienė (Lithuania)
Rita Karabanovienė (Lithuania)

Scientific committee:

Prof. Dr. Kaltrina Kelmendi (Kosovo)
Prof. Dr. Antigoni Sarantaki (Greece)
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Andreea-Mihaela Barbu (Romania)
Doc. Dr. Indrė Viskontas (JAV)
Dr. Dimitra Metallinou (Greece)
Dr. Eirini Orovou (Greece)
Dr. Magdalena Korzyńska-Pietas (Poland)
Dr. Katarzyna Wiśniewska (Poland)
Dr. Maja Brkljačić (Croatia)
Dr. Roberto Volpe (Italy)
Dr. Inga Ižd onaitė-Medžiūnienė (Lithuania)
Dr. Aleksandra Batuchina (Lithuania)
Dr. Andželika Bylaitė (Lithuania)
Dr. Sonata Čerkauskaitė (Lithuania)
Dr. Dalius Gudeika (Lithuania)
PhD cand. Florentina Pilnaitė (Lithuania)