

Cooperation between SPbPU and Germany during the pandemic: Successful results against all the odds

The 2018-2020 Russian-German Year of Scientific and Educational Partnerships is coming to an end. During this time, Russian and German partners have held a huge number of large-scale forums, conferences, symposia, workshops and other joint events. As part of the cross Russian-German cooperation year, Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University was both an organizer and a participant in various events. The major ones were the two-day forum [Days of Polytech in Berlin](#), 35th anniversary of partnership between SPbPU and Leibniz University of Hannover, events within the framework of the annual Week of Germany in St. Petersburg, and signing of renewed agreements on strategic partnership.



The coronavirus pandemic has become a real test for international partnerships. During the period of forced restrictions on offline events, the topic of establishing and expanding interuniversity ties was more relevant than ever. Many plans had to be hastily changed, and some events had to be postponed until better times. Read in today's news digest how the cooperation of Polytechnic University with German partners developed.

The 17th Germany Week in St. Petersburg

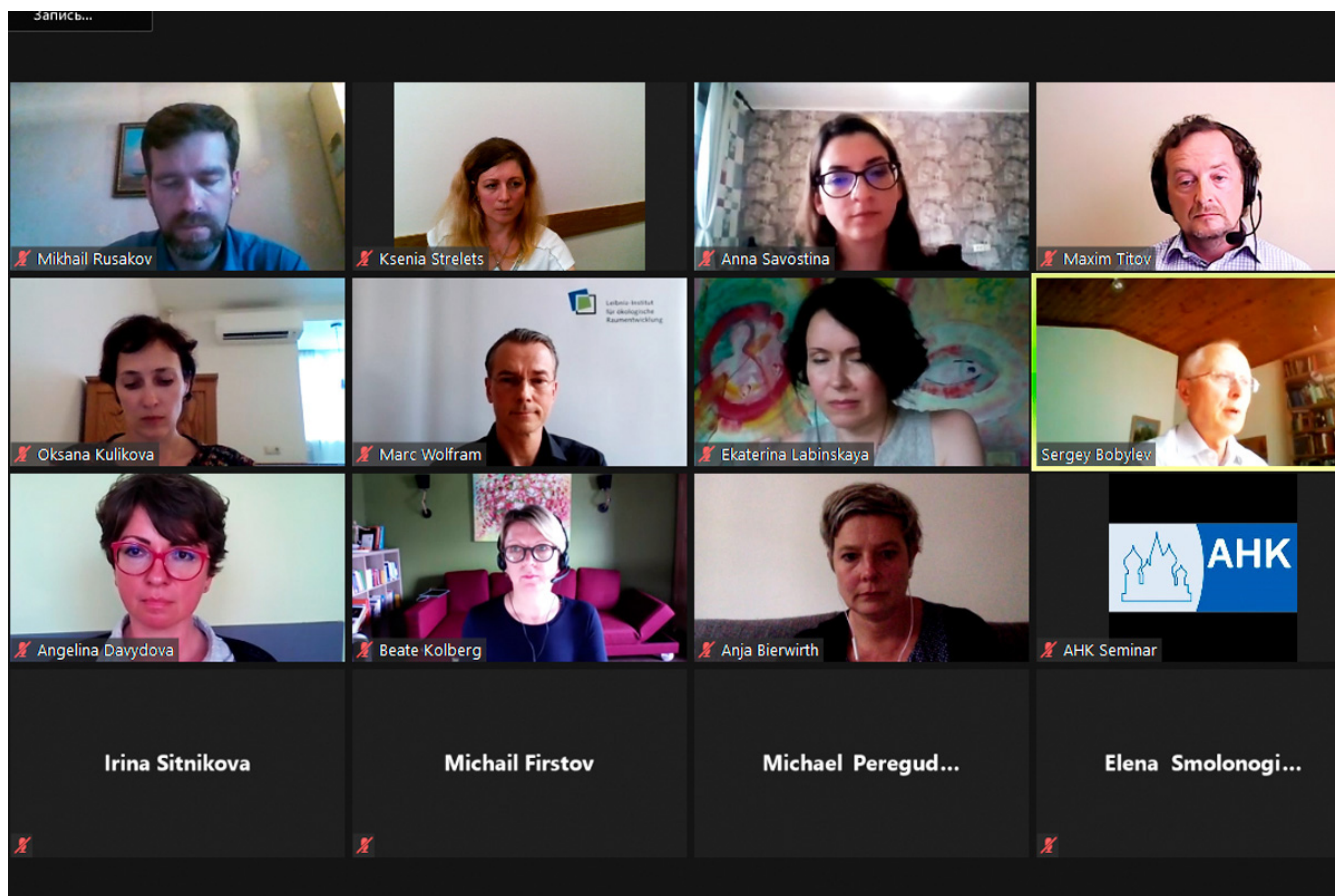
One of the first online events in Russia and Germany, in which Polytechnic University took part, was the [17th Week of Germany in St. Petersburg](#). In 2020, the federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern became its partner. Together with the Information Center of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in St. Petersburg and representatives of partner universities from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Stralsund University of Applied Sciences and Wismar University of Applied Sciences), SPbPU held an online conference, where the participants discussed the specifics of the establishment and development of interuniversity relations between Russia and Germany, as well as presented the practice of successful cooperation. Thus, Polytechnic University and the University of Wismar implemented a joint project in the field of logistics, and are now working on the second joint project in the field of developing entrepreneurial competencies among engineering students; a double degree program has been created and together with the University of Stralsund.



At the end of August it became known that one more large-scale project was won within the framework of the Erasmus + Capacity Building program, this time with the University of Wismar, on the topic "Waste Management."

Online debate "The City after the Pandemic"

[SPbPU took part in a series of online debates on the topic “The city after the pandemic”](#), held by DAAD and German House of Science and Innovation (DWIH) in Moscow. The Russian-German Chamber of Commerce (AHK) supported the event. Russian and German scientists and experts of various areas of expertise attended the debates, where they discussed how a viable and sustainable city should look like and what conditions need to be created for this.



Online events of strategic partners

Within the framework of the cross year, special attention was paid to sustainable partnerships that have developed since ancient times and demonstrate significant results of successful cooperation between Russian and German universities. During the pandemic, the strategic partner of SPbPU Leibniz University of Hanover organized several events in which the Polytechnic University took part. Thus, representatives of the Polytechnic University shared their successful experience of supporting foreign students in the [virtual discussion “Ways to support international students during the Covid-19 pandemic”](#), and also acted as experts at the [at a seminar on internationalization for Ukrainian universities](#) within the framework of the comprehensive educational project “Management of internationalization processes and the German-Ukrainian scientific and educational partnership.”

Measures for prevention and control:

- ✓ Operational headquarter
- ✓ Remote education
- ✓ Desinfection
- ✓ Thermal imagers for remote temperature measurement
- ✓ Hot line
- ✓ Rooms for temporary isolation of patients
- ✓ Hygienic kit distribution

Measures to support students:

- ✓ Financial Assistance
- ✓ Food and emergency goods delivery
- ✓ Remote administrative procedures
- ✓ Hot line
- ✓ Support to get diplomatic assistance



New online partnerships

The pandemic did not stop the progress of internationalization; on the contrary, it gave an impulse for the development of new forms of cooperation and alternative solutions for productive joint work. For example, the Polytechnic University has intensified its interaction with the Rhine-Westphalia Technical University of Aachen. In the spring took place a [video conference](#), where scientists and experts from SPbPU and Aachen University presented ideas for potential joint projects and discussed plans for developing cooperation. Already in June, [a joint workshop for young scientists on smart robotics in manufacturing](#) took place, namely, “Smart robotics in Production”. In July, colleagues from the University of Aachen [gave a lecture for the students of the International Polytechnic Summer School](#). Cooperation is actively developing; plans include joint project activities for graduate students, the implementation of joint research projects, the organization of internships and much more.



Smart Robotics in Production Workshop SPbPU & RWTH | Introduction

Dr.-Ing. Matthias Brockmann | Managing Director
Cluster of Excellence „Internet of Production“

Digital Conference, June 17th

Cooperation with the Eastern Committee for the German Economy

At the end of June, Vice-Rector for International Relations D.G. ARSENIYEV and representatives of the international services of the Polytechnic University held [online negotiations with representatives of the Eastern Committee of the German Economy](#). The prerequisites for the business meeting were the events within the framework of the “Days of Polytech in Berlin” forum, which took place in February 2020.



Representatives of the Eastern Committee of the German Economy reported on the significant interest of a number of industrial companies in Germany in establishing long-term ties with Peter the Great Polytechnic University.

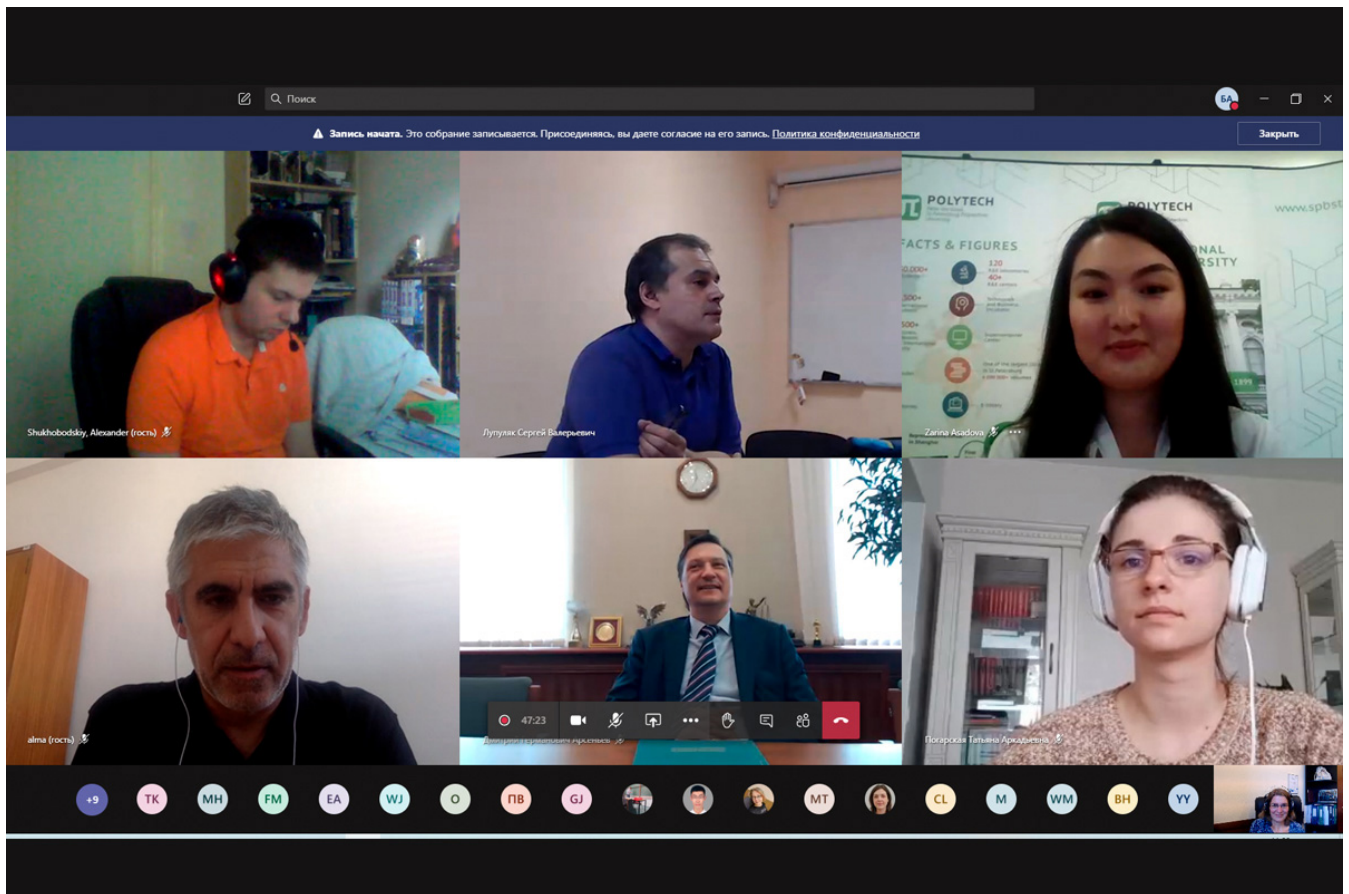
New contracts and partnership agreements

During the 2018-2020 Russian-German Year of Scientific and Educational Partnerships, several important agreements were signed: an updated strategic partnership agreement with the Technical University of Berlin, an updated comprehensive partnership agreement with the Munich University of Applied Sciences. During the pandemic, cooperation agreements continued to be concluded: for example, in the spring of 2020, a trilateral partnership agreement was signed between SPbPU, Munich University of Applied Sciences and Strascheg Center for Entrepreneurship. Also, last spring, Polytechnic University extended a cooperation agreement with one of its key partners, i.e., the Brandenburg Technical University of Cottbus-Senftenberg.

Students and teachers

More than 30 students from German partner universities took an active part in the International Polytechnic Summer School, which also took place online this year. For example, more than 20 students from the Technical University of Berlin took part in the [virtual ECMI Simulation Week](#), an event for young mathematicians from

all over the world, which took place within the framework of the International Polytechnic Summer School.



In the context of the pandemic, lectures and workshops with the participation of foreign teachers were transferred to the online format. For example, Professor of the Technical University of Berlin, a strategic partner of SPbPU, Wolfgang MÜLLER has been a visiting professor at SPbPU for several years and, despite closed borders, continued to work online and became a speaker at the [International Summer School Conference “Topical Problems of Mechanics”](#). In the new fall semester, 23 foreign teachers from Germany will start working at Polytechnic University.

“Despite the difficult epidemiological situation and the lack of opportunities to organize mutual visits, Polytechnic University remains in touch with German partners, and our active joint work continues. From the end of September to June 2021, a large-scale project will begin, i.e., the Year of Germany in Russia, which is designed to give new impetus to cooperation between Russian and German partners in the field of culture, education, civil society, science and economics. Undoubtedly, Polytechnic University plans to take part in the events of the Year of Germany in Russia with its projects. SPbPU and German colleagues are looking forward to new double-degree programs and joint summer schools, joint postgraduate studies, the development of academic mobility of students and teachers, expansion of the partner network and other events,” commented Dmitry

ARSENIEV, Vice-Rector for International Affairs of SPbPU.

Подготовлено международными службами СПбПУ

Дата публикации: 2020.09.04

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