

Polytechnic University at the 4th Youth Forum of the Partner Cities of Russia and Germany

Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University joined the 4th Youth Forum of Partner Cities of Russia and Germany, which was held within the 16th German-Russian Conference of Partner Cities. The key topic of the event was «Digitalization as a Chance for Cooperation.» More than 50 participants split into 9 partner teams, each representing cities of Russia and Germany: Vladimir, Erlangen and Jena; Nizhny Novgorod and Essen; St. Petersburg and Hamburg; Perm and Duisburg; Tver and Osnabrück; Kaliningrad and Bonn; Gatchina and Ettlingen; Ufa and Halle; Krasnodar and Karlsruhe.

Minister of State for Foreign Cultural Policy at the German Foreign Ministry Michelle MÜNTERFERING emphasized in a welcome video message that areas such as youth exchange and partner cities are about big issues for the future, and encouraged participants to exchange ideas, make new and useful contacts, and make new friends. The last year and a half of the coronavirus pandemic have been challenging for all of us. Especially for youth exchanges, it has been a challenging time. That is why I would like to express special thanks to the German-Russian Youth Exchange Foundation and the Russian Coordinating Office for Youth Exchange. Thanks to their tremendous dedication, they managed to keep the thread of contacts alive even at this difficult time. It took a lot of improvisation. But it was worth it. I'm sure that many of the digital solutions that were tried out during this time will remain in the future, said Ms. Münterfering.



The forum was held in a hybrid format. Participants who were able to attend in person came to Kaluga, while the rest joined the event online. During 9 days there was intensive team work, participation in thematic workshops devoted to opportunities and methods of digital cooperation, digitalization of cities, digitalization of youth exchanges, funding opportunities, etc. Also the participants of the Forum met with the experts in the sphere of Russian-German regional and municipal partnership.

The St. Petersburg — Hamburg team was presented by Polytechnic University and its long-term German partner — the Technical University of Hamburg (TUHH). Alina PUSTARNAKOVA, Master's degree student of ISI SPbPU, took part in the full-time work of the forum. Other SPbPU students, Valentina CHELYSHEVA and Anastasia AZAROVA, who also participated, along with TUHH students Arina KOSHELEVA, Yvone FIK, and Lisa KERIS joined the forum in the online format. The result of the team's work was a presentation of an educational project to increase the level of environmental culture «Circular Economy of Waste Management». «St. Petersburg and Hamburg are twin cities, the partnership between them exists since 1957. In the framework of our international project, we decided to promote awareness of St. Petersburg citizens in the issues of environmental protection, care of the environment and waste segregation. German colleagues have great experience in this field, and we can adopt a lot of useful things. I am sure that all the experience we gained will help us in our future work, said Alina PUSTARNAKOVA.



Other participants came up with no less interesting projects. The speakers proposed to record a podcast on the development of partnership between Ufa and Halle, to develop an online quest to learn the history of Tver and Osnabrück, create excursion routes for young people in Vladimir, Erlangen and Jena, launch a bike ride in Gatchina and Ettlingen, and many other ideas. At the end of the forum representatives of the Russian coordinating office for youth cooperation with Germany and the German-Russian Youth Exchange Foundation came up with the initiative to declare year 2022 as the Year of Youth Exchange between the partner cities of Russia and Germany.

For reference:

The 4th Youth Forum of partner cities of Russia and Germany was supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, the Government of Kaluga region, the City Government of Kaluga, the International Twin Cities Association and the German Foreign Ministry. The event was organized by MIREA — Russian Technological University acting as the Russian coordinating office in the field of youth cooperation with Germany, the German-Russian Forum and the German-Russian Youth Exchange Foundation.

Prepared by the SPbPU international Office

Дата публикации: 2021.07.08

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