

RAU and SPbPU: a course that changes the approach to university education

From June 29 to July 4, 2025, the Russian-Armenian University (RAU) hosted the defense of student projects as part of the joint course with Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University (SPbPU) entitled «Fundamentals of Project Activity» (FPA). This event was another step in the successful implementation of a new educational format that focuses on real-world practice, interdisciplinary interaction, and mentoring support.



The course is being implemented for the second year in a row and has become part of the RAU and SPbPU strategy to introduce practice-oriented educational models. In 2024, 30 students participated in the pilot version, working on 8 projects. In 2025, the number grew to 20 project teams. The course became compulsory for third-year bachelor's students in economics, tourism, trade, management, and hospitality.

Students from other fields, including philology, bioengineering, and medical biochemistry, are offered the option of taking «Fundamentals of Project Activity.»

Most of the student projects focused on the development of tourism and solving

pressing issues within the university and in the broader context of Armenia. Among the best were a project to improve the quality of education (1st place), the organization of Russian Language Day (2nd place), and an initiative on «green» tourism (3rd place).

Representatives of SPbPU were present at the defense: Anton Ambrazey, senior researcher at the International Academic Center of Competence «Intelligent Enterprise Technologies,» and Inna Seledtsova, senior lecturer at the Higher School of Project Activities and Innovation in Industry at SPbPU. They gave a detailed interview to the RAU press service and highly praised the evolution of the course and the students' results.

«The projects have improved, and the mentors have become interested. Any project is successful when there is someone who really needs it. At RAU, such people began to emerge, forming the core of the course team. At the last defense, 17 out of 20 projects were good. This is very good and encouraging. RAU, of course, has its own specifics: a more individual approach to projects, mentors are more involved, they communicate more with the team. Perhaps this is your unique path,» noted Anton Ambrazey.



Inna Seledtsova emphasized the value of the insights gained in student projects: *«In some projects, there were insights that we hadn't thought about, to be honest, either from the perspective of a tourist or even from the perspective of some kind of product researchers. There were interesting projects where the students went*

straight to the fields and conducted their research there. The project on researching the quality of education turned out to be very interesting, due to the fact that it was conducted by students themselves for students.»



At the end of the visit, a working meeting was held with mentors and RAU Vice Rector for Academic Affairs Marina Khachatryan. The participants discussed the results of the course and outlined directions for further development. These included training mentors in the fall, launching a pilot modified version of the course, refining the structure of project activity artifacts, improving internal promotion of the course, and reflecting successful projects in public communication.

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