

The subject of foreign PhD students was discussed at a scientific and practical conference in SPbPU

On December 20, Polytechnic University hosted an academic conference «Foreign PhD Students in Russian Universities: Achievements and Best Practices». The event was a part of the project to transform the model of international postgraduate education implemented by SPbPU international office as part of the Priority 2030 Strategic Academic Leadership Program. The conference consisted of two parts: a «Best Practices of International PhD Programs» speaker session and a working session, which included reporting presentations of projects by SPbPU international PhD students who won the SPbPU Best International Grant for PhD (BIG PhD) competition.



More than 40 experts from SPbPU and other Russian universities from St. Petersburg, Nizhny Novgorod, Tomsk, Novosibirsk, Moscow, Krasnodar and Omsk participated in the speaker session. The participants not only shared their successful experience of implementing foreign PhD programs, but also elaborated on the objectives and solutions, difficulties and ways to overcome them, challenges and opportunities that arose in the process.



For example, SPbPU has undergone a major transformation of its model for working with international PhD students. Strengthening informational support, working out the specifics of communication between supervisors and foreign PhD students, creating a comfortable environment for young scientists, a series of sociological studies, and more — all these processes have had a significant impact on improving the situation with foreign PhD students at SPbPU. This is also demonstrated by the results of the 2022 admission campaign, which have increased considerably compared to the previous season. In autumn 2022, 69 international PhD students from 18 countries began their studies and research activities at SPbPU. In total, the number of foreign young scientists enrolled in SPbPU PhD programs increased by a third compared to last year. Many of the young scientists who have started their research activities at SPbPU this season are winners of the [Open Doors: Russian Scholarship project in the PhD track](#).



The experts of the speakers' session spoke about many topical issues. For example, the need to improve the level of Russian language skills of foreign young scientists, as well as the intensification of the cultural component in their extracurricular activities. The participants shared their experience in applying digital technologies in the interaction between the supervisor and the PhD student during the research process, reflected on the involvement and employment of foreign PhD students, presented successful cases of training foreign PhD students on the example of specific institutions. Together with experts from Russian universities, foreign PhD students made presentations at the sessions and shared their experiences in learning, social and teaching activities.



During the working session, foreign PhD students of SPbPU — the winners of the BIG PhD contest presented the results achieved during the implementation of the grant. The members of the expert commission, co-chaired by Vice Rector for International Affairs Dmitry Arseniev and Vice Rector for Scientific and Organizational Affairs Yuri Klochkov, evaluated the results of the participants' project activities. This year, the winners of BIG PhD were 10 teams, each team consisted of a foreign PhD student and his or her research supervisor. According to the organizers, it is the two-way involvement in the project that contributes to improving the results of scientific work and increasing the level of motivation.



The projects of SPbPU PhD students were distinguished by their relevance and diversity of topics, covering engineering, biomedical areas, and humanities. The young scientists made presentations on the development of courses to develop the research competence of language students, the launch of a project to organize foreign-language speech communication for students, the creation of a model for assessing the innovative potential of high-tech industry, and an adaptive wheel-walking chassis. Other research results were aimed at identifying and preventing accidents during long-distance transcontinental data transmission, preparing students to implement bilingual education in PRC schools and developing special clamping devices using metal elements with shape memory. Separate attention of the audience was given to the projects of foreign PhD students of SPbPU devoted to optimization of methods of therapy of malignant gliomas and improvement of irradiation therapy and development of a pharmacological solution for Alzheimer's disease treatment.

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