

CAMPUS REPORT

IASAS turns 10! – Birthday celebrations in Rome in July 2023

Birgit Schreiber¹, Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo², Achim Meyer auf der Heyde³ & Gian Luca Giovannucci⁴

The International Association of Student Affairs and Services (IASAS) recently celebrated its momentous 10-year anniversary, marking a decade of impactful contributions to the field of student affairs and services worldwide. This milestone served as an opportunity to announce its 7th Global Summit in Korea in May 2024 and to reflect on the organisation’s accomplishments, recognise the progress made, and set ambitious goals for the future. LUMSA, the Libera Università Maria Santissima Assunta, situated at the Tiber in Rome, Italy, was a fitting site for this occasion. The event was generously supported by the European University College Association (EUCA). Professor Francesco Bonini, the Rector of LUMSA, hosted the 10-year anniversary celebrations and welcomed the guests.

Professor Rikke Toft Nørgård, professor of Educational Design and Technology in the School of Education at Aarhus University, Denmark, offered a most inspiring keynote address, challenging the attendees to project a plausible future and imagine a “preposterous one”, using Baxter’s futures cone to encourage the attendees to think further, deeper and “wilder”. Nørgård was followed by Dr Brett Perozzi of the USA and Dr Birgit Schreiber of South Africa and Germany. Perozzi mapped the internationalization of the future university and Schreiber discussed issues around leadership in complexity. Complex contexts require agile and dynamic leadership that listens, learns, and deeply appreciates the context within which the university operates.

Prof. Olga Dietlin, USA and Ukraine, highlighted the role of Student Affairs in war-torn Ukraine and was followed by Prof. Maria Cinque of LUMSA, Italy, who shared the impact of service learning on global citizenship. The president of the Collegi Universitari de Merito, CCUM, Prof. Vincenzo Salvatore of Italy and Prof Paulo Ferraz of Portugal offered case studies of how students are supported in their contexts.

Professors Patrizia Lombardi and Giacomo Di Capua of Turin, Italy, discussed the role of universities as agents of change, and Gian Luca Giovannucci and Mariagrazia Melfi of EUCA in Italy, discussed their model of tutoring, mentoring and coaching at the halls of residence across Italy.

- 1 Dr Birgit Schreiber, Alberts-Ludwig-Universität Freiburg, Germany; IASAS vice-president, Brussels, Belgium. JSAA Editorial Executive. Email: birgitedewes@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0003-2469-0504
- 2 Dr Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; IASAS secretary general, Brussels, Belgium. Email: imoscaritolo@aus.edu. ORCID: 0000-0003-2809-0012.
- 3 Achim Meyer auf der Heyde, IASAS president, Brussels, Belgium. Email: achim.meyeraufderheyde@t-online.de
- 4 Gian Luca Giovannucci, European University and College Association; IASAS treasurer, Brussels, Belgium. Email: president@euca.eu

Since its formal chartering in Belgium a decade ago, IASAS has been instrumental in fostering global collaboration and knowledge exchange among its 1,500 members in seven world regions and 95 countries across the world. IASAS has grown exponentially, expanding its membership base and strengthening its global presence. The association has become a vibrant and inclusive community, bringing together professionals from diverse backgrounds and cultures who share a common passion for supporting student success.

IASAS's 10-year anniversary celebration recognised a series of special events and initiatives. These included a flagship international biennial global summit, student leader global summits, virtual meetings and panel discussions, webinars and various research projects and publications. These activities provided a platform for members to reflect on the organisation's journey, exchange ideas, and envision the future of student affairs and services.

Over the past 10 years, the association has organised numerous conferences, workshops, and seminars, enabling professionals to connect, learn from each other, and share good practices. These opportunities have not only enriched the professional development of individuals but have also resulted in the implementation of innovative programmes and services in educational institutions around the world. Research and scholarship have been at the forefront of IASAS's activities during the past decade (www.iasas.global/research). The association has consistently encouraged its members to engage in rigorous research, evaluate programmes, and contribute to the body of knowledge in student affairs and services. Through its support for research, publication opportunities, and research-focused events, IASAS has facilitated the creation and dissemination of evidence-based practices, further solidifying the field's foundation.

The 10-year anniversary also allowed IASAS to reflect on its role as an advocate for the profession. Inclusivity, diversity, and social justice have been core values embraced by IASAS since its inception. The association has actively promoted the development of inclusive environments on campuses, encouraging professionals to foster a sense of belonging and celebrate diversity among students. By providing resources, training opportunities, and forums for discussion, IASAS has emboldened its members to address social justice issues and promote equitable educational experiences for all students.

Looking forward, IASAS has set ambitious goals for the next decade. The association aims to further expand its reach and impact by continuing to foster collaboration, supporting research and scholarship, advocating for the profession, and promoting diversity and inclusion. This IASAS 10-year birthday celebration received a lot of birthday wishes and the participants will meet again at the Global Summit in South Korea in May 2024 (www.iasas.global/globalsummit2024).

The birthday wishes can be viewed at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/153h2BSHWxxF4Shge9Z4pcpgvRTw_E0mt/view

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