



**EUROPEAN
FORUM
ALPBACH**

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STIPENDIENPROGRAMM 2019



■ ■ ■ Projekt „Alpbach-Ungarn“ ■ ■ ■

Die Gesellschaft Österreich Ungarn unterstützte den Wiederaufbau einer ungarischen Alpbach-Alumnigruppe und organisierte für Alpbach 2019 die Teilnahme ungarischer StipendiatInnen.

Das Forum Alpbach ist eine interdisziplinäre Plattform für Wissenschaft, Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur. Sein Ziel ist es, internationale VerantwortungsträgerInnen aus allen gesellschaftlichen Bereichen mit engagierten jungen Menschen zu vernetzen, und im Dialog Impulse zur Weiterentwicklung des europäischen Integrationsprojekts zu setzen.

2019 haben uns nach Ausschreibung unseres Projektes insgesamt 21 Bewerbungen ungarischer StudentInnen erreicht. Nach einem Auswahlverfahren in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Forum Alpbach wurden acht Stipendien für jeweils vier Studentinnen und Studenten über die Gesellschaft Österreich Ungarn organisiert und mit Hilfe von Sponsoren finanziert.

Den StipendiatInnen wurde dabei nicht nur die einmalige Möglichkeit geboten, am Europäischen Forum Alpbach teilzunehmen, ihr Netzwerk auszubauen und zu lernen, sondern auch von Rahmenveranstaltungen zu profitieren.

So lud beispielsweise die österreichische Botschafterin in Budapest Elisabeth Ellison-Kramer die StipendiatInnen und PartnerInnen zu einem Mittagessen in die Residenz in Budapest ein. Auch einer der Partner, die Konzerngesellschaft UNION VIG Biztosító, organisierte für die StipendiatInnen ein Frühstück in Budapest. Darüber hinaus wurden die StipendiatInnen im darauffolgenden Jänner zu einem Wien-Tag, einem Mittagessen mit dem Vorstand der GÖU und unseren Kooperations-PartnerInnen eingeladen und daran anschließend zu einem Bericht bei der Generalversammlung der Gesellschaft Österreich Ungarn. Am selben Abend fand dann noch eine Veranstaltung in der Botschaft von Ungarn statt, bei der die StipendiatInnen mit Vizekanzler a.D. Dr. Erhard Busek, dem langjährigen Präsidenten des EFA, zu diskutieren und mehr über die Geschichte des Forum Alpbach zu erfahren.

Wir möchten dieses Projekt auch im Jahr 2020 fortführen. Um den StipendiatInnen die Teilnahme am Forum Alpbach zu ermöglichen, brauchen wir auch in diesem Jahr Unterstützung durch KooperationspartnerInnen.

Wir laden Unternehmen und Organisationen ein, auch in diesem Jahr ungarische Alumnis für die Teilnahme am Europäischen Forum Alpbach zu fördern und so einen wichtigen Beitrag zur europäischen Integration und einer positiven gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung zu leisten.

Finden Sie in dieser Broschüre einige Eindrücke über das Programm und die Berichte der StipendiatInnen! Wir möchten damit unseren PartnerInnen für die Unterstützung im Jahr 2019 danken und hoffen auf weitere Kooperation!

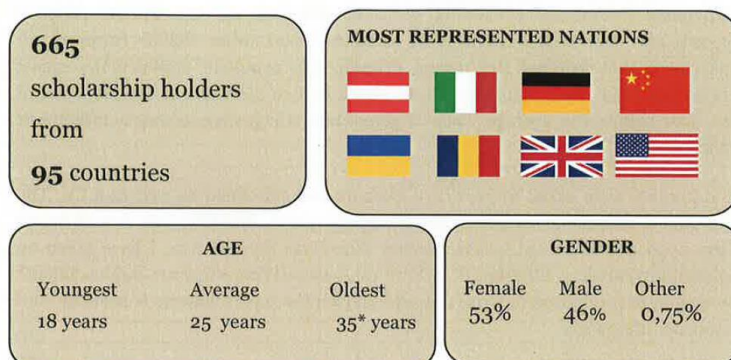
BM a.D. Maria Rauch-Kallat, MBA
Präsidentin der Gesellschaft Österreich Ungarn

Das Europäische Forum Alpbach in Zahlen

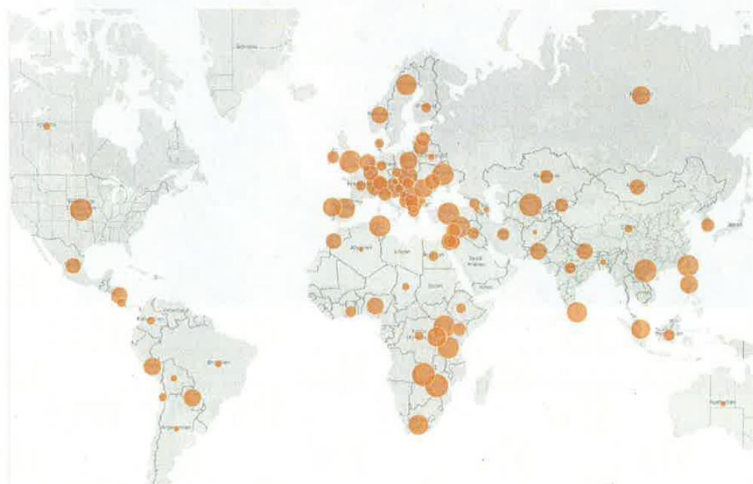
- 5.000 TeilnehmerInnen aus über 100 Ländern
- 900 SprecherInnen
- 700 StipendiatInnen unter 30 Jahren
- Nationale und internationale VerantwortungsträgerInnen aus den Bereichen Wissenschaft, Gesundheit, Bildung, Recht, Technologie, Politik, Wirtschaft, Baukultur, Finanzmarkt, Kultur und Zivilgesellschaft
- 800 Stunden Programm; 90 Plenardebatten; 90 Breakout Sessions
- Rund 150 nationale und internationale MedienvertreterInnen



Scholarship holders 2019



* There is an official age limit of 30 years. However, we are a little more flexible with the age limit for all African countries, as students in Africa tend to complete their studies later and especially women in science are mostly above 30.





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STIPENDIATINNEN REPORTS 2019

Feedback Report 2019 – Gábor BELÁK

Forum Alpbach Network Ambassador – Hungary

This was my third time in Alpbach, second time as a Forum Alpbach Network ambassador, and first time as a mentor for first-time scholarship holders. Going back to Alpbach as a returner is not just an opportunity to participate at the Forum again, but you really feel the responsibility that you need to help others, and facilitate their journey throughout the whole Forum, in order to make it a lasting experience to all participants.

I felt a real honour to be a mentor for Hungarian scholarship holders, and honestly, it was also a pleasure and I enjoyed every moment. Taking responsibility for mentees and assisting them during the Forum was not a burden at all, but another precious way to learn and improve, and experience Alpbach. The new faces, new stories, each and every one was so unique, that I am grateful for the time I could spend with my fantastic mentees. All of them are highly qualified, motivated, young individuals. We had meaningful conversations and activities, such as hiking and gatherings together. Hopefully, the new friendships and connections will not disappear, but we can start to build a team to keep and even spread the “spirit of Alpbach” in Hungary, hence I intend to keep in touch with all of them, and we have had our first reunion recently in Budapest.

As currently there is no active and properly functioning club in Hungary, the final goal would be to establish a strong community from the previous scholarship holders in the country, in order to find the possibilities of re-establishing one. If we have enough motivated Alpbachers, who intend to devote their time and energy to organise events, and spread the word about the Forum, we will be able to run a club in Hungary. In the long run we need to find out the legal procedures and guidelines of club establishment, as we need to answer both of the requirements of the Forum, and Hungarian laws and regulations. It is a lot of work but with the help of Gesellschaft Österreich-Ungarn we had so many Hungarian scholarship holders this year, that I am very optimistic about the future.

I would like to express my biggest thank and appreciation for all the hard-working people who made the Forum an unforgettable experience again, the best period of the year for many of us. I am really grateful for all of the sponsors, especially the Gesellschaft Österreich-Ungarn. President Maria Rauch-Kallat met with the scholarship holders several times, and she showed a keen interest about our well-beings, many thanks for her time and assistance.

Nonetheless, for many of us, who return year after year from different parts of the world, the Forum is not only a learning mission, but also the time of the year when we can meet and be together. I cannot tell how grateful I am, to be part of such a wonderful community.

European Forum Alpbach

2019

I have applied to European Forum Alpbach because I got an e-mail from my workplace, the University of Pécs about this opportunity and my colleagues also encouraged me. I was thinking a bit because I have never heard about it before. After I checked the webpage, I was sure that I need to be there in the summer 2019.

I think Alpbach is one of the most beautiful places in Austria, where I have ever been. This landscape creates a specific atmosphere for the Forum. I realized during the first few days that this is a huge opportunity that I could be there. I enjoyed that everybody was very friendly, open and extroverted. It was impossible not to find friends from all over the world. I met with amazing people and I had even new contacts during the last day. I felt that everybody is eager to talk with others, and you will never be alone in Alpbach. We not only small talked but we had meaningful discussions about important things such as environment, politics, education and economy.

I especially enjoyed the programmes; the first week with the seminars, where I have learned a lot in the Participatory Leadership course and the second week where acknowledges speakers shared their knowledge and ideas with us. I had the feeling that Hungary was a topic in each panel, but it was very useful to see how others see my country. I was proud when Agnes Heller's last words were read by her friend and when a student talked in the opening ceremony about how he enjoyed living in Hungary. The extra programmes were amazing for example the RADA, the balcony scene, the dancing classes, the fireside chats, the 24hours reading, the receptions, the yoga and etc. I had a chance to go to the fireside chat with Alexander Van der Bellen, which was a unique experience.

I was satisfied with the way of information sharing before and during the Forum. I believe everything was well organized, only the buses caused sometimes a problem for us, because we didn't live in Alpbach. Our hostel didn't belong to the best ones, mainly we had problems with the keys and master key issue. For us it was not a problem, because I discussed the key sharing with my roommates, but it was a huge problem almost for everybody who lived there.

I will recommend EFA for my students at the University of Pécs. I gave an interview about EFA to an online newspaper of my university a few weeks ago. I hope I will have a chance to go back once. I am truly grateful for this experience.

Kitti Deli
Hungary

Boldizsár Győri

Back in February, when I submitted my application for the European Forum Alpbach, I did not grasp the significance and importance this Forum will perform in my personal life and professional carrier. All I knew was other people's opinion – that it is an excellent event. Leaving Alpbach I can not only support this view, but add my own.

After a few days, I started to feel unreal. That this cannot be this perfect, am I dreaming, or is it really a utopia embodied here, in a village? Because if I had to express Alpbach in one word, that would be: Utopia. EFA 19 was a place, where human and professional excellence met in a picturesque setting.

Human excellence, because coming from 96 countries, we set an example of dealing with others with different cultures and opinions. I cannot recall a single debate or situation when anyone would have been impolite or scornful. Professional excellence: right after the seminar week had been launched, I had the vague impression: this is what it feels like, when you get top quality – in every aspect of your day! The teachers and guests, with whom I had the chance to speak, radiated by eagerness to teach us and answer our questions – hats off to them, there were many of those, for sure. Last but not least, the panorama: well, you have seen it yourself.

My overall impression of the Forum was that if this is what being 'European' means, I definitely would like to call myself 'European' firstly, and only 'Hungarian' secondly. I am heading into this semester fully recharged and inspired – I hope that one day, I will have the means to practice the generosity of my sponsor, Ildikó-Voller Szenczi, and enable for someone to participate in this event.

Thank you for your work. Hopefully I will return to Alpbach soon!

Best regards,

Boldizsár Győri,

Budapest, 2019.09.08

Scholarship holder report

Zsófia Hidvégi

The Forum Alpbach represents free thinking, intellectual curiosity, and the passion for understanding the human condition. A scholarship to be a part is an outstanding opportunity in terms of academic inspiration, civic responsibility issues, and establishing long-lasting relationships.

During the Seminar Week, we sign up for one theoretical seminar in the morning and one in the afternoon, focusing on soft-skill development. My academic choice was to learn about the *Global Economy Battleground* presented by Dr. Jeffrey Sachs and Dr. Aniket Shah from Columbia University. They impressed me with their insights on the colliding interest of the economic players regarding sustainable development, and the discussions they curated raised my curiosity towards large-scale well-being. I began to understand the nature and drive of geopolitical conflicts and to discover the complexity of society, especially in Eastern Europe. I became sensitive to notice despair, atavistic resentment, universal distrust, and the powerlessness to impact this toxic environment inherited from the previous centuries. Currently, I am conducting research on productivity growth in Central Eastern Europe, and another one on interest in establishing an innovative start-up ecosystem in Hungary.

Back to the Forum, unfortunately, the organizers miscalculated the afternoon seminar spots, and among 50 people, I was left out with frustration and discomfort. Having received the basics of the self-organizing project from Philippe Narval, the Secretary-General of the EFA, I realized how unique of a social experiment the situation could be. It was a mind-set change down to the core, realizing that advocating for the program of the group would be a participatory leadership lesson for all of us - not to mention the revolutionary initiative to transform the general curriculum. After joining the Harvesting Team, my responsibilities focused on identifying those key intangible collective findings that constitute our social capital as an organization, shining a light on our shared values, and embedding them profoundly into our working culture and processes. Finding the critical milestones of the novel experience and discovering the most wholesome way of reflection that captures the essence of co-creation. Following the agile method, we hosted a session with the Harvesting Team for consideration and working on better processes for the group. Overall, I participated in leadership coaching, a decision-making simulation, an education design workshop, a philosophic hike with Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, a talk with the Nobel-prize winner Joseph Stiglitz and his wife, a session on public speaking, and a military leadership training hosted by the Theresian Military Academy.

Later, when the Seminar Week was over, our group received an invitation to make a short movie. At this point, I applied to the position of the next Day Host with the task to keep organizing our seminar sessions and to articulate our experience accordingly. I co-hosted two seminars, where we developed the storyboard for the movie using the world cafe method to summarize and evaluate the essence of our work.

My contribution resulted in finding a well-articulated and later unanimously accepted purpose, clear guidelines on how to establish self-organizing groups from scratch, and making use of the intellectual and sensational learning experience in a short movie.

I learned the power of active listening and observation, learned how to create an open space where people feel trusted, appreciated, and heard. I became able to convert the irreplaceable value of our differences into intellectual curiosity, improved human relations, and mutual respect.

Whoever experienced the spirit of Alpbach, has the same unquenchable light in the eyes for discovering and understanding human relations from a personal, historical, scientific, or from any other aspect. This passion for learning and contributing more, is why we, as an alumni community, need to take responsibility, not to forget but strengthen our connection to the values of the Forum and include others with the same openness we received.

Besides receiving invaluable support from many, I owe special gratitude to

Elisabeth Ellison-Kramer for the initiative to include Hungarian students, Maria Rauch-Kallat and the Gesellschaft Österreich-Ungarn for the tremendous effort and advocacy, and Károly Pataki, who has been the personal sponsor of my scholarship to Alpbach.

Ludvig Zsöfia





Alpbach Report

ÁKOS KŐRÖS

HISTORIAN, IN A PHD PROGRAMME AT SZENT ISTVÁN UNIVERSITY

Alpbach provides a wonderful environment to relax, think and share ideas with others. I am grateful for my donors they provide me with this wonderful journey.

During the seminar week, I had a chance to discuss the European Union's problems with disintegration. The seminar was led by professors Jan Zielonka and Erik Jones and I learned so much how to construct a peaceful place in a study room. Although the topic was interesting and I learned a lot, it was not really for me. I can not help, but feel that I could choose more wisely.

The afternoon seminar was one of the best choices of my life. I went to the Dojo and I discovered how should I stand, how should I defend myself physically and verbally too. The logic of the conversation or dispute is a whole new world for me and I am blessed I could be part of the seminar.

Later I tried to attend every symposium that interested me. I loved Mark Elsberg's lecture about power-out on the Klimate Breakout (TEC) and probably I will read his book too. Professors Peter Schlosser and Robert Page told me a lot about a modern university. Dr Tamar Makin had a fascinating lecture about robotic fingers and the perfection of the human body during the TEC symposium (AI & Robotics panel). I love Chad Frischmann's project against climate change. I already started to use Project Drawdown's website and knowledge in my work.

My roommate was African and this was a great opportunity to discover a different, yet familiar culture. Therefore I tried to attend some Africa-related talks and then discuss my thoughts with Patrice. It was interesting and I hope our connection will last.

I have three take-outs from Alpbach:

1. I know that I can be better. And this thought is not stressful.
2. I had many projects before Alpbach. Now I know what I have to do to focus better and say no.
3. I learned in a hard way that I should read more and more, not only news but books and novels too.



Report- Dorka Takácsy

Preparations

I had the privilege to take part in the 2019 Alpbach Seminar Week and three blocks of specific themes. I received a generous scholarship from Siemens, and prior to the participation in the Forum, I visited the company's HQ in Budapest. During these two meetings the General Director and the Economic Director of the company received me and we agreed on the details of the knowledge transfer following the Forum. Prior to the Forum we had a splendid reception at the Austrian Embassy and a business breakfast at Union, and I got to know the other Hungarian scholarship holders.

On site

It was stunning how neatly and accurately the event was organized. It is no exaggeration to say that I have never seen such a well-organized event of even hosting a smaller number of guests, hence, I was constantly amazed by the professionalism I saw managing so flawlessly thousands of people in the same time. The venue was picturesque, the accommodation was alright as well, and the buses operated in a foreseeable, logical way. Even though it might sound pretentious, my only difficulty was to choose among the programs.

During the Seminar Week I attended two series of lectures. The mornings I learned about the EU's foreign policy that fitted my professional interest perfectly. This course was led by a theoretical expert Professor Tobias Schumacher and a practical one Maja Kocijancic, spokesperson of the European External Actions Service. Their differing backgrounds completed each other magnificently, and the course was like a dream. We discovered the theory behind the EU's external actions and compared it to its day-to-day operation, analyzed how the programs are being implemented, how decision-making works, what leads the wide range of stake holders and how it all goes down in reality. The knowledge acquired during this seminar exceeded all my prior expectations, and I use it ever since, working as a political analyst. The afternoon seminars I chose were a little bit out of my comfort zone, but I did not regret choosing them. I chose the Mindfulness in Conflict Management seminar and learned a lot about the importance of self-discovery, observing and mindfulness in general.

The Seminar Week was followed by thematic symposiums. I attended the Economic Symposium, the Political and the Health Days. Out of these three, the first two were close to my interests by default, and the Health Symposium was something I was not particularly familiar with, therefore I chose to go there and learn about brand new topics. I was absolutely overwhelmed by the excellent panels, speeches and presentations, the biggest impact had probably Joseph Stiglitz on me. The seminar I was most passionate about was on media freedom and illiberalism in CEE involving Hungarian speakers as well. I was not disappointed. But what surprised me the most was how much I enjoyed the Health Symposium that I had no prior interest or knowledge in. It was unbelievably thought-provoking and inspiring, especially a panel where the awesome researchers from the Graz University presented how prosthetic body parts impact the sensoric functions of the brain, where is science now and what might come in the future.

They presented alternative body parts that might be attached to perfectly healthy bodies (and not replacing an injured one that currently they are used to), and how it all alters the sensoric functions. The project called “third thumb” was extraordinary and truly inspiring.

Post-Forum

After the Forum I went twice to Siemens. First, we talked about the general structure of my knowledge acquired and agreed on the details of the transfer. Second, I talked for approximately 20 minutes about my experience in Alpbach to the leadership of Siemens Hungary (cca. 20 people). It was a successful presentation and the audience seemed to be content as well.

Alpbach Report:
Virag Turcsan (turcsan0@gmail.com)
Hungarian Alpbach Scholar 2019
07.09.2019

Alpbach – Planetary Responsibilities, Planetary Dreams

“Our responsibilities have become planetary” – recited Professor Josef Mitterer from Madame Heller's post-humorous speech on my first day at Alpbach. The phrase “our responsibilities have become planetary” since has become a daily mantra that guides my decisions about the future. My Alpbach experience, the lessons I have learned, and the lasting connections I have made, have become so ingrained in my day-to-day adventures that I simply cannot remember the life before. Who could say that on an average morning they have gone on a sunrise hike with fellow sleep-deprived scholars only to practically sprint down that same mountain so that they can be on time to listen to the father of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), followed by a discussion about Brexit and WTO with Pascal Lamy surrounded by an amazing sun-kissed vista, and play ‘two truth and a lie’ with a Nobel Laurette before lunch? Only people who had the chance to call Alpbach home for not only a few weeks but for the rest of their lives.

Looking back at my schedule from just a week ago, I honestly do not know where I have found the energy to attend and participate in so many once-in-a-lifetime events. Yet, I do know! The Alpbach atmosphere and the collective power of the community inspire everyone to keep going and continue discussing topics like AI and technology or rule of law into the early mornings, only to go and learn about Dr Sachs’ experience about Eastern Europe three decades ago a few hours later.

Agnes Heller was right, our responsibilities have become planetary, but so did our dreams and passions. I have made lifelong friends at Alpbach from all over the world who are working on amazing projects. Just to mention a few, over the past three weeks, I had the honour and opportunity to discuss a fellow scholar’s project for social workers in Ghana helping terminally ill children learn literacy skills; another one’s social justice training as well as work on a guide for the ‘international nomads’ about sustainable cooking on the go. Quite frankly, Alpbach is an experience that one has to live to be able to fully understand those who attended prior.

I am still flabbergasted about the pure concentration of ideas and brainpower Alpbach accommodates every year, I can only hope that someone would chronicle the inception of such world-changing projects for the future. It is now our responsibility to take the ideas and projects created in Alpbach and make sure they benefit not just those who had been part of the adventure, but everyone we encounter post-Alpbach. I am eternally grateful for the kindness of Gesellschaft Österreich Ungarn and Madame Rauch-Kallat for giving me this opportunity of a lifetime and for helping us feel at home in Alpbach! I cannot wait to see how my Alpbach journey continues forward!





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DIE STIPENDIATINNEN IM GESPRÄCH MIT...



Bundesministerin Dr. Margarete Schramböck



Mag. Marcel Haraszti, CEO Rewe International



Dr. Alexis von Hoensbroech, CEO Austrian Airlines



Mag. Katharina Swoboda, Head of Communications Siemens
und Mag. Jochen Borenich, COO Kapsch BusinessCom



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PRESSEARTIKEL 2019

Artikel aus: APA OTS0166, 24.04.2019

„Freiheit und Sicherheit“ sind Generalthema des Europäischen Forums Alpbach 2019

EFA-Präsident Fischler: „Illiberale Demokratie ist ein Widerspruch in sich“

Wien (OTS) - „Es genügt nicht, zu beschreiben, wie eine freie Gesellschaft aussehen könnte. Unsere Ambition ist, gemeinsam darüber nachzudenken, welche Voraussetzungen für eine freie Gesellschaft nötig sind und wie wir sie schaffen.“ Diesen Anspruch formulierte Franz Fischler, Präsident des Europäischen Forums Alpbach (EFA), am Mittwoch in Wien anlässlich der Programmpäsentation des Forums 2019, das von 14. bis 30. August stattfinden wird. Dessen Generalthema lautet dieses Jahr „Freiheit und Sicherheit“.

Demokratie sei der beste gesellschaftliche Garant für Freiheit, so Fischler, der anmerkte, dass der Begriff „illiberale Demokratie“ ein Widerspruch in sich sei. Denn diese schränke die Freiheitsrechte der Bürger ein. In diesem Zusammenhang bat der frühere EU-Kommissar alle Wahlberechtigten, an den Wahlen zum Europaparlament teilzunehmen. Generell sieht Fischler derzeit eine Neigung, Freiheiten für mehr Sicherheit aufzugeben. Daher müsse man darüber reden, wie die Politik Angst nehmen könne. „Null Risiko“ sei ein Zustand, den es in der Natur nicht gibt, und genauso wenig gibt es eine völlig risikofreie Gesellschaft.

Der Präsident des EFA forderte aber auch ein, Freiheit für die Zukunft zu schaffen – nichts anderes sei nämlich Nachhaltigkeit. Dafür sei noch viel mehr Innovation nötig, technologisch wie gesellschaftlich. Und trotz des aktuellen Drangs in Richtung Sicherheit findet Fischler, dass diese in mancher Hinsicht auf der Strecke bleibt – wenn etwa in puncto Klimaschutz zu wenig geschieht und damit die Sicherheit künftiger Generationen gefährdet wird.

Alpbach wird immer internationaler

EFA-Generalsekretär Philippe Narval legte den Fokus auf die Aufgabe des Forums, jungen Menschen das zu geben, was sie künftig als Träger von Verantwortung brauchen. „Wir wollen unseren etwa 700 Stipendiaten aus 90 Nationen Kompetenzen mitgeben, um mündig und handlungsfähig zu sein.“ Deshalb enthalte die Seminarwoche vormittags Einheiten, in denen Spitzenwissenschaftler mit den Studierenden Themen wie Biotechnologie und Quantenphysik behandeln. Nachmittags werden handlungsorientierte Seminare angeboten, etwa vom Leiter des Schönberg-Chors, der Militärakademie oder der Royal Society of Dramatic Arts.

Ein wichtiger Schwerpunkt des Forums 2019, so Narval, liege auf dem Thema Digitalisierung. In einer Reihe von Veranstaltungen gehe es darum, wie diese, Ängste nehmend, gestaltet werden könne. Dabei dürften ethische Fragen nicht außer Acht gelassen werden. Philippe Narval verwies auch auf ein Seminar mit dem US-Campaigner Zack Exley, der zeigen wird, wie die Demokratie im Netz gestärkt werden kann.

Kunst und Kultur: Begegnungstag mit Ruth Beckermann

Einen integralen Bestandteil des Forums bilden Kunst und Kultur. Beim offiziellen Eröffnungsakt am 18. August werden eine überlebensgroße Installation des Bildhauers Lois Anvidalfarei und eine Auftragskomposition von Chistof Dienz gemeinsam ihre Wirkung entfalten. Die ungarische Philosophin Ágnes Heller, Holocaust-Überlebende, unter dem Kommunismus Exilantin und Nachfolgerin auf dem Lehrstuhl Hannah Arendts, wird eine Ansprache halten. Die im Vorjahr etablierten „Begegnungen“ gestaltet dieses Jahr die Filmemacherin Ruth Beckermann („Waldheims Walzer“): Sie bittet u.a. den Komponisten Georg Friedrich Haas und den Autor Max Czollek nach Alpbach.

In den 17 Tagen des Europäischen Forums Alpbach werden insgesamt etwa 5.200 Teilnehmer aus über 100 Staaten erwartet. Im Vorjahr teilten 787 Vortragende ihr Wissen, der Frauenanteil unter ihnen betrug 36 Prozent. Auch 2019 wird Bundespräsident Alexander Van der Bellen am Forum teilnehmen und Bundeskanzler Sebastian Kurz eröffnet die Wirtschaftsgespräche. Darüber hinaus hat EU-Kommissar Günther Oettinger sein Kommen angekündigt sowie zahlreiche österreichische Minister.

Ein Seminar als "Revolution von innen"



Philipp Naderer/ European Forum Alpbach

Weil es nicht genug Seminarplätze für alle Stipendiaten gab, organisiert sich eine junge Gruppe beim Europäischen Forum Alpbach selbst.

Ein Raunen geht durch die Menge, das Murmeln wird immer lauter. „This is ridiculous“, ruft ein Spanier, der mit jeder Minute des Wartens unrunder und ausfallender wird. Die Situation droht zu eskalieren, die zwei Organisatoren sind ratlos. Plötzlich kommt Philippe Narval, Geschäftsführer des Forums, stellt sich auf den Tisch und dreht die Situation in wenigen Minuten um 180 Grad.

Rund 60 Stipendiaten konnten beim Europäischen Forum Alpbach am Donnerstag vergangene Woche keinem Seminar mehr zugeteilt werden. Denn einige Seminarleiter gaben kurzfristig bekannt, doch weniger Teilnehmer als ursprünglich geplant in ihre Gruppen aufzunehmen. Bei der Zuteilung warfen die Stipendiaten Zettelchen mit ihrem Namen in einen Topf für das jeweils gewünschte Seminar, dann wurden die Plätze Zufallsprinzip ausgelost.

Doch plötzlich war das Kontingent ausgeschöpft und zig junge Leute verblieben ratlos ohne Seminarplatz. Der 26-jährige Julian Pekler war einer von ihnen und erzählt der „Presse“, was dann geschah.

Die Gruppe der Rebellen

Narval, trat von hinten aus der Menge hervor und hielt eine „spontane und sehr mitreißende“ Rede, wie Pekler erzählt. Hier in Alpbach gehe es darum, sich selbst zu organisieren. Schmollen oder das Beste daraus machen und den Geist von Alpbach leben - eine andere Möglichkeit gebe es nicht. Und so schlug Narval vor, nach den bestehenden 29 Seminaren ein dreißigstes, und zwar „das beste Seminar“ zu gründen. Ganz spontan. Mehr wollte er zu diesem Zeitpunkt nicht verraten. Etwa die Hälfte der rund 60 Übriggebliebenen wollte sich nicht auf die Überraschung einlassen. Sie kamen dann doch noch irgendwo unter. Und jetzt, sagt Pekler, würden sie diejenigen beneiden, die sich wie auch er selbst auf Narvals Abenteuer eingelassen haben.

„Wir haben ein Seminar zum Thema Selbstorganisation selbst organisiert. Die anderen nennen uns jetzt 'die Gruppe der Rebellen', weil es das erste Seminar in dieser Form in der Geschichte des Forum Alpbach ist“, sagt er nicht ohne Stolz. Mit seiner Führungsqualität habe Narval die Gruppe abgeholt. Wo es hingehet, sollen sie selbst bestimmen. Der Weg ist das Ziel.

Selbstfindung abgeschlossen

Die Selbstorganisierten sind nach Peklers Einschätzung zwischen 19 und 29 Jahren alt. Die Geschlechterquote sei ausgewogen. „Wir sind ein diverses Team. Die Kollegen kommen aus der ganzen Welt: Von Marocco über Spanien und Österreich bis Skandinavien“, sagt Pekler. Heute, Sonntag, ist er als "Day Host" dafür verantwortlich, die Runde zu leiten.

Dafür sei viel Zusatzarbeit nötig, damit alles rund läuft. Einer seiner Kollegen, Konstantin Klug, hat diese Erfahrung gestern gemacht. „Die Gruppendynamik ist fantastisch. Ein sehr erhebendes Gefühl“, fasst er zusammen. Jeden Tag übernehmen drei Personen die Rolle der „Day Hosts“ und bereiten am Vorabend das Programm für alle vor. Weil es nicht die eine Führungsperson gibt, sondern abgewechselt wird, werde aus der Gruppe ein immer stärkeres Team. „Allein am Freitag wollten schon zwölf Seminarteilnehmer zu uns wechseln, aber wir haben nach langer Diskussion beschlossen, niemanden mehr aufzunehmen“, erzählen Pekler und Klug, „denn wenn ständig jemand Neues dazustößt, können wir nicht das ganze Potenzial aus der Gruppe herausholen. Unsere Selbstfindung ist abgeschlossen.“

Dann gibt es noch die „Harvester“, eine permanent bestehende Kleingruppe, für die Dokumentation und Aufbereitung von Inhalten zuständig ist. Die „Finances“ verwalten 300 Euro Budget, indem sie sich mit den „Day Hosts“ absprechen und je nach Bedarf Material und Verpflegung besorgen.

"Best Of" Seminarprogramm

Vortragende von anderen Seminaren unterstützen die 25 Personen vom Selbstorganisationsseminar mit ihrem Wissen. Bei Übungen mit der Militärakademie zum Beispiel bekamen die Teilnehmer einen Crashkurs zum Thema Zielsetzung. „Das Ziel muss klar und möglichst einfach definiert sein. Und ganz wichtig ist, dass die Führungsperson für das Thema brennt! Egal, worum es geht“, sagt Pekler. Heute, Sonntag, wanderte die Gruppe gemeinsam mit US-amerikanischen Wirtschaftsprofessor Jeffrey David Sachs zur Zotteralm.

Weil es so gut funktioniert, wird es das Seminar in dieser Form von nun an jedes Jahr geben. „Früher waren die Seminare eher Frontalvorträge, unseres ist handlungsorientiert“, sagt Pekler. Denn es ist die Interaktion, die Alpbach ausmacht. „Heuer ist im Rahmen des Forums etwas ganz Neues entstanden. Wie eine Revolution von innen.“

Wir danken unseren Sponsoren!



Károly Pataki

Ildiko Voller-Szenci