

10–11 September 2026 | [Pyramid – Innovation Hubitat, Tirana Albania](#)

DAY 1 | THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2026

09:00–09:30	Registration & Welcome Coffee
09:30–10:00	Results Gallery Opening <i>An interactive exhibition showcasing key Diaspora4Innovation results, partnerships and experiences across education, research and mentoring.</i>
10:00–10:15	Opening Remarks • Lirim Krasniqi, Co-Executive Director, GERMIN • Jule Petra Schultz, Country Director, GIZ Albania • Jenni Lundmark, EU Programme Manager, EU Delegation to Albania • Delina Ibrahimaj, Minister of Economy and Innovation of Albania (TBC)
10:15–10:45	Diaspora4Innovation: Results & Reflections • Project Results and Impact ◦ Egzon Sadiku, Project Manager, Germin • Scholar Reflections ◦ Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dorina Pojani, Diaspora Scholar, The University of Queensland, Australia ◦ Assoc. Prof. Dr. Edmira Cakrani, Resident Scholar, European University of Tirana & Western Balkans University, Albania
10:45–11:45	Thematic Panel 1: From Guest Contribution to Institutional Partnership – How Can Diaspora Expertise Really Stick? <i>A discussion on how diaspora engagement can move beyond one-off contributions toward sustained academic, institutional and innovation partnerships.</i> Moderator: Vartan Marashlyan, Executive Director, Repat Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia • Dr. Albina Balidemaj-Basha, President, RIT Kosovo • Anila Hyka-Smørgrav, Senior Technology and Transformation Leader, Orange, Paris, France • Kushtrim Xhakli, Entrepreneur & Tech Executive, Finland • Dr. Ilir Gëdeshi, Director, Center for Economic and Social Studies, Albania

11:45–12:00	International Keynote: Connecting Education, Innovation and Diaspora – The Armenian Experience Veronika Aghajanyan, Lead, Research Advancement and Higher Education Programs, Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology (FAST), Armenia
12:00–13:00	Thematic Panel 2: The Future of Entrepreneurship Education in Albania <i>A discussion on how higher education can better respond to changing labour-market needs, emerging skills and the evolving role of universities in entrepreneurship and innovation.</i> Moderator: Dr. Alba Skendaj , Lecturer, University of Tirana; Founder, Match4Research Arch. Ledian Bregasi, PhD, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Design, POLIS University, Tirana, Albania Dr. Françeska Korançe, EIT Community Officer, Albania Dr. Vehap Kola, Lecturer of Innovation, University of New York Tirana Ingrit Jushi, Head of Unit for the Preparation and Feasibility of Higher Education Projects, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, Albania
13:00–14:00	Lunch & Networking
14:00–14:30	Connecting the Dots: A Live Diaspora4Innovation Lab Facilitator: Serena Leka , Chief Innovation Officer, Leka Consult, Denmark
14:30–15:15	Interactive Clinic: Adoption Myths – Why Do Good Technologies Fail? <i>This interactive session explores why promising technologies fail to achieve adoption, connecting theoretical frameworks with real-world implementation challenges.</i> Assoc. Prof. Dr. Edlira Martiri, Associate Professor, University of Tirana, Albania Shefqet Avdullau, Angel Investor and Strategic Advisor Dr. Shkëlzen Marku, Co-Founder and CEO, Enterimpact Balkans; Director, Growpreneur Accelerator, Albania
15:15–15:30	Coffee Break

15:30–16:30	Fireside Conversation: From Learning to Practice – The Urban Oasis Experience Moderator: Valbona Koçi, Advisor, GIZ Albania • Dr. Klodian Gradeci, Diaspora Scholar, SINTEF/OsloMet, Norway • Dr. Artan Hysa, Architect/Research Associate, Technical University of Munich, Germany • Arbër Xhomaqi, Student, POLIS University Tirana, Albania
16:30–17:00	Ask the artist: AI vs. Identity – The Digital Twin Concept • Shuk Orani, Multimedia Artist, Hamburg, Germany
19:00–21:00	Networking Reception, MAK Hotel Tirana
DAY 2 FRIDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2026	
09:30–10:00	Morning Welcome Coffee
10:00–11:30	Leadership Roundtable: Diaspora Engagement for the Future of Albanian Higher Education <i>A forward-looking discussion on how diaspora expertise, networks, and partnerships can contribute to the long-term development, internationalisation, and innovation of Albania's higher education sector.</i> Moderator: Lirim Krasniqi, Co-Executive Director, GERMIN Participating University Leaders: University of Tirana · Polytechnic University of Tirana · University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi" · University of Vlora "Ismail Qemali" · University of New York Tirana · POLIS University · Canadian Institute of Technology · European University of Tirana · Aleksandër Moisiu University · Western Balkans University · EPOKA University
11:30 – 11:45	Closing Remarks and Next Steps
11:45–13:00	Light Networking Lunch

