



FuturePR 2024 International Student Competition Winners Announced

November 29, 2024

The inaugural edition of the [FuturePR International Student Competition](#) has concluded with a grand finale that showcased the creativity, strategy, and collaborative excellence of communication students from around the globe. Organized by [EUPRERA](#) (European Public Relations Education and Research Association) in collaboration with [ICCO](#) (International Communications Consultancy Organisation), the competition united academic rigour with professional expertise to address key global challenges in public relations and communication. This year's theme, rooted in the [Media Information and Education Pledge](#), invited participants to devise innovative PR strategies for countering misinformation and polarization while fostering media literacy.

The 2024 edition of FuturePR brought together 77 students from 15 universities in 13 countries (Australia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Hungary, India, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and United States of America).

The **winning teams** are:

- **First place:** Team ASAP - **Wathanya Apipattarakul** (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand), **Thi Kim Ngoc Pham** (Leeds Beckett University, UK), and **Cristian Stroe** (University of Bucharest, Romania), under the mentorship of **Saad AlRubaian** (Managing Partner, CYLKA, UAE)
- **Second place:** Team Mado - **Rudi Doughty** (Leeds Beckett University, UK) and **Riya Mathew** (St Joseph's University, Bengaluru, India), under the mentorship of **Michaj Sodolski** (Advisor, SEC Newgate CEE, Poland)
- **Third place:** Team Disinfo Disruptors - **Sue Jean Chen** (Leeds Beckett University, UK), **Sharmayne Crockett** (St. John's University, USA), and **Yasmin Rodrigues Reis** (Budapest Business University, Hungary), under the mentorship of **Celia Díaz-Pardo** (COO – Growth, LF Channel, Spain)

A **Special mention** for Best Individual Assignment was awarded to **Riya Mathew** (St Joseph's University, Bengaluru, India).

All the members of the winning teams, as well as the recipient of the Special mention will receive in 2025 an internship in their home country in a company or agency associated with ICCO. In addition, the students who won first prize will be able to choose between attending the ICCO European Forum or the ICCO Global Summit. Admission and accommodation will be covered by ICCO.



The inaugural edition of FuturePR took place over 4 weeks, from November 4-28, 2024. Each week was dedicated to an activity preparing and testing the students for the final brief of the competition.

Week 1 was Masterclass Week. The students attended 3 Masterclasses addressing core issues related to the topic of the competition:

- **Masterclass on Ethics and Professional PR/Comms Roles** - Christina Forsgård, Finland, ICCO Ethics Chair
- **Masterclass on Fake News and Misinformation** - Bogdan Oprea, Romania, University of Bucharest
- **Masterclass on International PR Campaigns** - Raluca Moise, UK, City University of London

The students were also invited to attend the **Global Alliance #NextInLine Hero Web Conference**, which consisted of 2 sessions: Future of PR and Responsible Communication.

The aim of the courses was to provide essential information to help tackle a PR brief in a professional manner. The 77 students that entered the competition were nominated by institutional and individual members of EUPRERA and ICCO representing the following universities:

- Bahçeşehir University, Turkey
- Budapest Business University, Hungary
- Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
- City St. George's, University of London, UK
- Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Portugal
- Leeds Beckett University, UK
- Middlesex University Dubai, UAE
- Rey Juan Carlos University, Spain
- Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria
- St Joseph's University, Bengaluru, India
- St. John's University, USA
- University of Georgia, Georgia
- University of Melbourne, Australia
- University of Bucharest, Romania
- Yeditepe University, Turkey

Week 2 was Evaluation Week. The students had to develop and submit a 5-minute video presenting and analysing the fake news and mis/dis-information situation in their country and what communication and PR professionals and associations are doing about it. Their work was evaluated by 12 academics from the EUPRERA PR Education Network, each submission being independently evaluated by 2 academics with no connection to the student they were evaluating:

- Ana Raposo - Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Portugal
- Camelia Cmeciu - University of Bucharest, Romania
- Gabriel Sadi - Huddersfield University, UK
- Ileana Zeler - Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain
- Michal Chmiel - Royal Holloway, University of London, UK



- Monique Abbenbroek - Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands
- Noelia Zurro - Rey Juan Carlos University, Spain
- Rudiger Theilmann - Leeds Beckett University, UK
- Sónia Sá - Universidade da Beira Interior, Portugal
- Tatiana Nunes - Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Portugal
- Teela Clayton - Leeds Beckett University, UK
- Tiffany Mohr - St. John's University, USA

Week 3 was Teamwork Week. The 30 students who reached the final step of the competition worked in 10 mixed international teams of 3, with the support of professionals from the communication industry and the ICCO network, acting as mentors. Their goal was to find the most creative and effective solutions to a brief provided focused around the multi-stakeholder promotion of the Media Information and Education Pledge, addressing it from both a B2B and a B2C perspective. The students in each team got to know each other, understand better how to work in an international team bringing together people from different countries, different time zones, different cultures, but with a common goal, while also referring to the feedback of their industry mentors:

The mentors of the FuturePR 2024 edition represented companies and agencies from 9 countries:

- Boaz Paldi - Chief Creative Officer, UNDP, USA
- Celia Díaz-Pardo - COO - Growth, LF Channel, Spain
- Chris Pratt - Group Managing Director, Burson, UK
- Joanna Oosthuizen - Chief Communications Officer, EMEA, Ogilvy, UK
- Juha Frey - Managing Director, Netprofile, Finland
- Lubomir Alamanov - General Manager, SiteMedia Consultancy, Bulgaria
- Michaj Sodolski - Advisor, SEC Newgate CEE, Poland
- Oeindrila Biswas - Group Business Director, Avian WE, India
- Saad Alrubaian - Managing Partner, CYLKA, UAE
- Viroslava Novosylina - Founder & CEO, SLOVA PR, Ukraine

Week 4 was the Grand Finale Week. On November 28th all teams and supporters gathered to present their best pitch to an international jury representing both EUPRERA and ICCO:

- Agung S. Ongko - Partner & Strategy Director, RICE Communications, Singapore
- Anne-Marie Cotton - Former President of EUPRERA, professor at Artevelde University of Applied Sciences, Ghent, Belgium
- Hasan Zuberi - Founder President, Council of Public Relations Pakistan (CPRP), Pakistan
- Peggy Simcic Brønn - 2023 winner of the EUPRERA Distinguished Scholar Award, professor emerita, BI Norwegian Business, Norway
- Tamás Bokor - Associate Professor, Corvinus University in Budapest, Hungary
- Stefania Romenti - Past President of EUPRERA, professor at IULM University in Milan, Italy
- Wim Elving - 2022 winner of the EUPRERA Distinguished Scholar Award and EUPRERA Executive Director, professor at Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen, Netherlands



Overall, the intercultural dimension of the teamwork was very appreciated by the students, as well as the opportunity to work with industry mentors on a challenging topic. When asked to name the best thing about the FuturePR competition, the students pointed to:

- „The interaction with people from other countries, and the opportunity to participate in a competition that allows to hear other opinions and perspectives on Public Relations, other than my country.”
- „Being able to work with students from other countries. It was a great opportunity to see how students from other universities in other countries work and I feel like we learned some new things from each other.”
- „Working with a mentor. For PR briefs I have done in class, it has all been on our own. Having someone in the industry guide the way from their own experience was invaluable.”
- „Working with people with different skills and knowledge, common problem and responsibility, which united us and made us friends in one week.”
- „That it became a real challenge and a goal to have on your own.”

The competition was a joint effort between EUPRERA and ICCO which aimed to foster a long-term dialogue on the critical issues affecting the PR profession, with a particular focus on the role current and future PR and communication professionals play in countering misinformation and polarisation.

FuturePR will return in 2025 with a new edition!

For more information, visit www.euprera.org/futurepr or contact education@euprera.org.

About EUPRERA and the PR Education Network

EUPRERA is an academic organisation that has been advancing public relations education and research since 1959. With over 500 members from more than 50 countries, EUPRERA supports cross-national research and education projects and hosts an annual congress to disseminate knowledge and innovation in public relations and strategic communication.

By initiating a network dedicated to education in communication and public relations, EUPRERA Education Network, the association aimed to support the development and dissemination of the best and innovative educational practices, at the same time facilitating their integration and research results in the teaching activity. Among the PR Education Network's activities are the organisation of the FuturePR international student competition.

About ICCO

The International Communications Consultancy Organisation (ICCO) represents 41 PR associations across 82 countries, encompassing over 3,000 PR firms. ICCO is dedicated to raising standards in the PR industry and fostering innovation. Through events, educational opportunities, and global summits, ICCO connects professionals and nurtures talent at every stage of their careers.