



Annual Report of the University of Nova Gorica 2025



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Title

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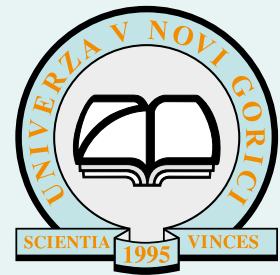


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Introduction



Science and higher education can function successfully only hand in hand. At the University of Nova Gorica, we are strongly aware of this fact and we successfully put it into practice. We consistently strive to strengthen cooperation between higher education institutions such as our university and other knowledge institutions, both in Slovenia and abroad.

Celebration of the University of Nova Gorica (UNG) 30th anniversary has marked the year 2025. Thirty years is a long period for the people who give life to an institution, yet often a short one in the life of the institution itself. Considering that the oldest universities are around 1,000 years old, and translating the 30th anniversary into the course of a human life, we find that our university has only just begun to speak.

It is our future path that nevertheless shows clear outlines. We confirm the excellence of our scientific research through outstanding results. In 2025, the world's most powerful telescope, the Vera C. Rubin Observatory in Chile, released its first breathtaking images of deep space. Researchers from the UNG Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology, who are very actively involved in this billion-euro project, were delighted to share these images with the broader public.

Environmental sciences represent an important part of our activities. Colleagues from the Center for Atmospheric Research established new measurement methods and new measurable parameters reflecting air quality, which have been adopted by the European Commission in a new directive on cleaner air for Europe.

New Honorary Doctor titles were awarded at the 30th anniversary ceremonial academy, held under the honorary patronage of the President of the Republic, Dr. Nataša Pirc Musar: to Prof. Dr. Carole Mundell, Director of Science at the European Space Agency (ESA), and to Prof. Dr. Joachim Mnich, Director for Research and Computing at CERN. To two outstanding scientists who have collaborated with our university for decades and who have helped bring the scientific reputation of researchers not only from UNG, but from whole Slovenia, to the global stage.

Clearly the cooperation and its synergistic effects are needed not only in research; we are convinced that joining forces in higher education is also the right direction, enabling students to optimally start their careers and thereby contributing to the development of society as a whole. In cooperation with universities within the Rectors' Conference of the Republic of Slovenia, we successfully organized the first Slovenian universities festival UNI-SI in 2025, where we jointly presented the rich range of study programs and extracurricular activities and services offered to young people in Slovenia.

Enlarging the constructive cooperation in higher education beyond national borders is also among our aims. For the second year, within the European University ACROSS, an international alliance of 10 universities operating in Europe's internal and external border regions, we aim—through joint education, research and innovation, and regional engagement—to create a positive impact on Europe's cross-border regions and to build an entity with more than 100,000 students.

Included as a core of our work are also the arts. At the beginning of the year, we opened renovated premises of the Academy of Arts. This necessary infrastructure upgrade will enable the academy to continue its outstanding educational work, which is renowned far beyond the national borders through the achievements of its alumni.

Similarly important as the university's core activities—higher education, scientific, innovation, and artistic work—is its broader social responsibility. The university responds to events at home and abroad. In 2025, students expressed support for their peers in Serbia in their peaceful calls for democratization. On behalf of our staff, we sent a letter of support to the Harvard University in response to attempts to interfere with its autonomy, for which we received thanks from the President of Harvard University, Prof. Dr. Alan M. Garber.

Countries that dedicate a public holiday to science are few. We emphasized publicly how proud we can be to live in one of such few countries, at the occasion of celebrating the first Day of Science in Slovenia. At the same time, however, we remarked that in many societies, scientific work is a topic that the media report on more often and more prominently than scandals.

University colleagues, especially those in the humanities and arts, contributed importantly to many of the events during the European Capital of Culture 2025. Artistic and cultural activities with participation of university staff strongly marked the Goriška region this year.

Local community has also recognized the university's achievements. We are proud that the Municipality of Nova Gorica awarded the university its municipal award for significant contributions to the development of higher education and top-level scientific research activity in the municipality and for enhancing its reputation in Slovenia and internationally.

The pursuit of excellence in our activities cannot be achieved without adequate financial support. Therefore, careful consideration in this area is essential when planning the university's future development. In this context, in 2025 we signed a letter of intent to obtain the status of a public university. So far the letter expresses the intention of both the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the university to examine the possibilities that such status would provide for the development of the local, national, and international community.

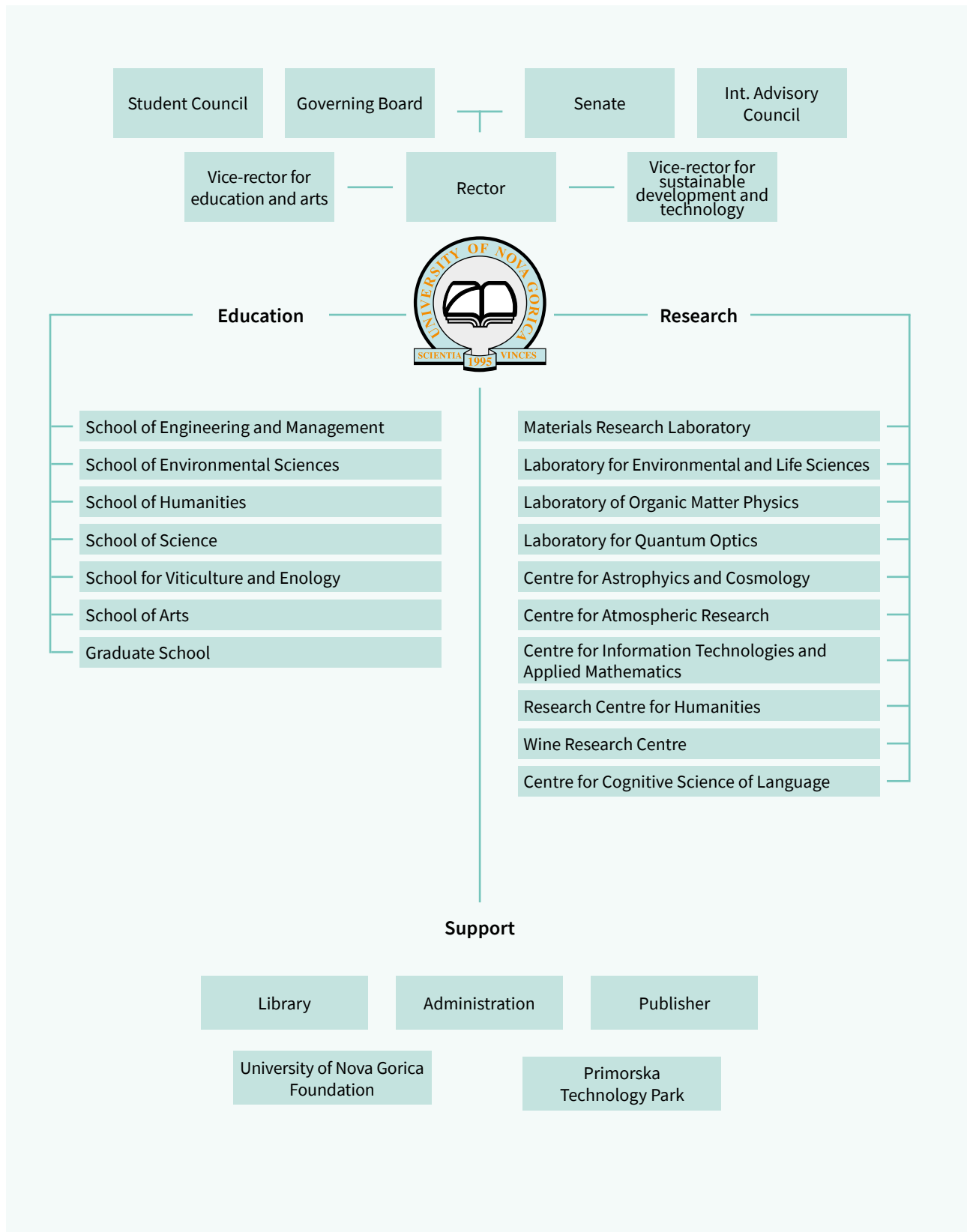
University celebrating its 30th anniversary is young. We have youthful energy that enables us to adapt dynamically and pursue our visions—but not without direction, rather by following a carefully considered development strategy.

Reading the words of renowned physicist and pioneer of quantum mechanics, Niels Bohr, "It is true that your theory is crazy, but not crazy enough to be true.", addressed to another giant of modern physics, Wolfgang Pauli, around 1958, reminds us of another shared trait of science and art: boldness.

Endeavor of human in science may be traced back for thousands of years. The Ishango bone, an archaeological discovery, is today recognized as the oldest evidence of human scientific endeavor. It was discovered in 1950 in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo and was created around 20,000 years ago. Interpretations of the markings on the bone range from simple mathematical operations to a lunar calendar. Is this science, or is it culture? The answer is simply: yes.

Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob
Rector of the University of Nova Gorica

Organisational Structure



Staff structure

As of December 2025, the University of Nova Gorica had a total of 231 regular staff members of which 121 doctors of science, 30 research assistants, another 45 holders of bachelor's or master's degree, 30 administrative personnel, 3 librarians, 1 maintenance officer and 2 photocopy clerks; 72 staff members were foreign nationals.

	Regularly employed	Supplementary employed
2015	121	33
2016	117	29
2017	115	31
2018	113	28
2019	118	29
2020	132	26
2021	169	26
2022	149	28
2023	191	28
2024	186	29
2025	202	29

In addition, collaborating with the university were also over 200 adjunct faculty from other Slovenian universities and from universities outside of Slovenia.

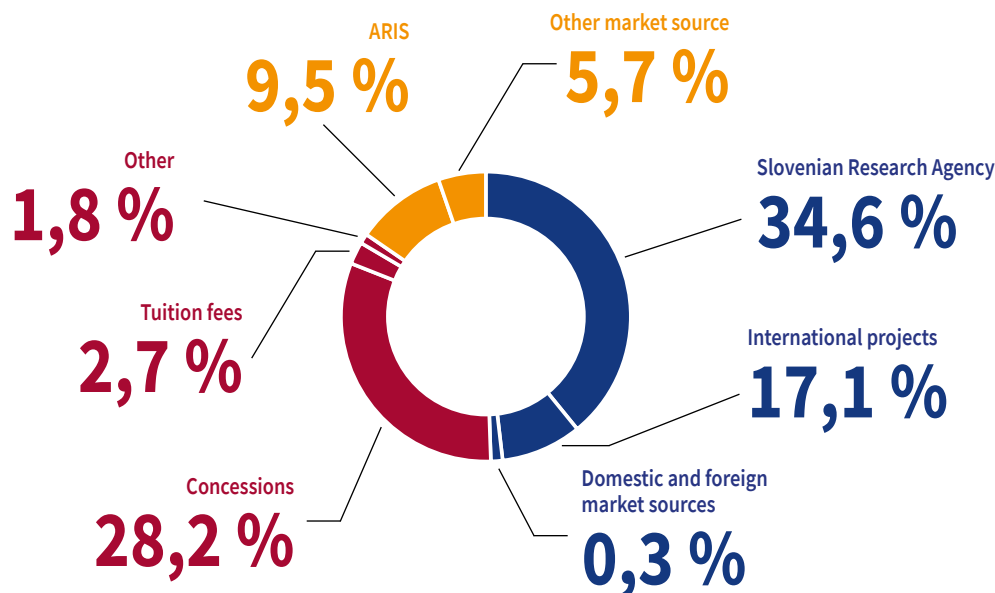
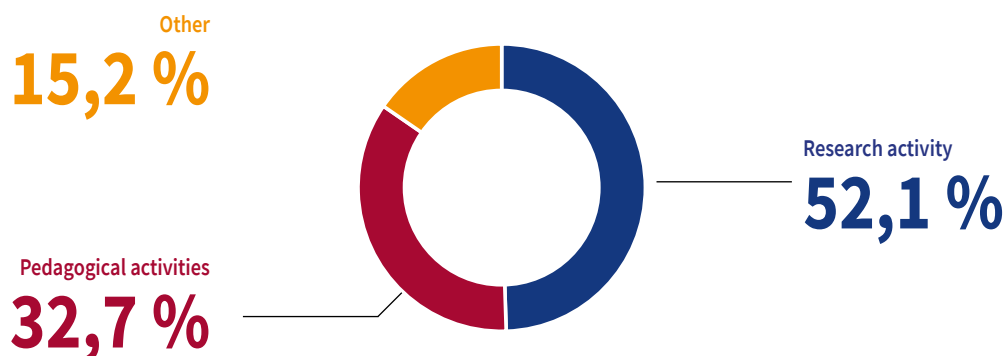
State	Nr. collaborators
ARMENIA	1
BELGIUM	1
BULGARIA	1
BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA	2
CHILE	1
EGYPT	1
FRANCE	2
GREECE	3
CROATIA	6
INDIA	11
ITALY	15
KAZAKHSTAN	1
CHINA	1
COLOMBIA	1
HUNGARY	1
GERMANY	2
NEPAL	1
PAKISTAN	2
PALESTINE	1
POLAND	2
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	5
NORTH MACEDONIA	1
SLOVAKIA	1
SPAIN	4
TUNISIA	2
UKRAINE	1
GREAT BRITAIN	1
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	1
Total	72

Financial management

The University of Nova Gorica obtains funds for its operation from tuition fees, educational programme and research project funding from the Slovenian Research And Innovation Agency and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, and from international and industrial projects and donors.

In 2024, the University of Nova Gorica acquired approximately EUR 14.699 million in funds (cash flow) for its operations from the sources listed below:

CASH FLOW	EUR 14.699 million	100.0 %
RESEARCH ACTIVITY	EUR 7.657 million	52.1 %
Slovenian Research Agency	EUR 5.092 million	34.6 %
International projects	EUR 2.520 million	17.1 %
Domestic and foreign market sources	EUR 0.045 million	0.3 %
PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES	EUR 4.809 million	32.7 %
Concessions	EUR 4.140 million	28.2 %
Tuition fees	EUR 0.403 million	2.7 %
Other	EUR 0.266 million	1.8 %
OTHER	EUR 2.233 million	15.2 %
Slovenian Research Agency	EUR 1.394 million	9.5 %
Other market sources	EUR 0.839 million	5.7 %



Awards, Titles and Recognitions

Employee awards in 2025

Award for Young Chemists and Chemical Engineers in the Field of Scientific Research and Educational Activities

Doc. Dr. Andraž Mavrič

Pregl Award

Prof. Dr. Nejc Hodnik

Srečko Kosovel Award for University of Primorska Students

Sara Vukotić

Student awards in 2025

Vesna Award for Best Student Film Festival of Slovenian Film

Melita Sandrin

Krka Award

Aljaž Škrjanc

Award for the student animation project in progress

Award of the Slovenian Animated Film Associatio

Karin Likar

Award for a completed student animation film
Award of the Slovenian Animated Film Association

Melita Sandrin

Awards of the University of Nova Gorica in 2025

Doctor Honoris Causa

Prof. Dr. Carole Mundell

Doctor Honoris Causa

Prof. Dr. Joachim Mnich

Professor Emeritus

Prof. Dr. Guido Bratina

Professor Emeritus

Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko

Alumnus Primus Student Award

Gabriel Neepo Uunona

Anna Frolova

Nina Bonifacio

Anika Černigoj

Marcel Kump

Milan Bajčetić

Polina Bakalski Veljanoska

Sara Gregorc

Amalija Rafaj Škriljevečki

Alumnus Optimus Student Award

Boban Trajkovski

Dean Trojer Smrečnik

Hamis Juma

Anna Frolova

Darian Rampih

Nina Bonifacio

Ela Zdešar

Luka Carlevaris

Amalija Rafaj Škriljevečki

Important Events

Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (left) and
Prof. Boštjan Potokar (right).



JANUARY

On the occasion of its 30th anniversary, the School of Arts of the University of Nova Gorica has got a new production space

On 23 January, the University of Nova Gorica opened a new production space of the School of Arts in Rožna Dolina.

Visitors had the opportunity to see the new multi-purpose space, which includes a film and photography studio under construction, a studio for working with materials and a future screening room, with a total area of around 300 m². The space was opened by the Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, accompanied by the Dean of the School of Arts, Prof. Boštjan Potokar.

As the Dean of the School of Arts said at the opening ceremony, after more than six years of efforts, we are opening new premises that will enable students to work even more creatively in the fields of film, animation, photography, new media and contemporary artistic practices. »We are opening a new university complex for creative work, which includes a photography and film studio, a small projection hall, a room, a studio and a space for technical support.«

The main investor in the new production space is the University of Nova Gorica, which aims to provide students with access to high-quality, modern learning and creative spaces. In the future, the space will be enriched with additional production equipment, part of which will be funded by the cross-border GO!Studio project. Workshops are already taking place as part of this project.

»The School of Arts of the University of Nova Gorica is, in my opinion, a unique institution in Slovenia with the content of its study programmes, its individual approach to students and, above all, with the quality of its teaching work. In the infrastructure strategy of the University of Nova Gorica, we foresee the continuation of the School's work at its current location, that is, in Rožna Dolina in Nova Gorica. Due to the previously inadequate and insufficient space, the idea of renovating the ground floor of the building in Rožna Dolina has been maturing for several years. Finally, the whole project has been realised and we have provided our School with the new, usable study space, screening rooms and lecture rooms,« emphasized Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, in his address and concluded: »I sincerely hope that these renovated facilities

will make the School even more attractive to new generations of students.«

The opening ceremony was also attended by the University's Honorary Rector, Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, the Vice-Mayor of the Municipality of Nova Gorica, Mr. Anton Harej, and representatives of the European City of Culture project. Also, Director of the School of Arts Programme, Prof. Rene Rusjan, addressed those gathered at the ceremony.

The event was also marked by the opening of the regular student semester exhibition, at which the visitors had the opportunity to see a number of student works, while also learning about the processes that lead to a complex product: e.g. the background of animation film-making, from storyboards, puppets and set designs, to the finished film. The exhibition showcased a wide range of artistic expressions and creative approaches, reflecting the innovative spirit of the School's students.



Prof. Dr. Kazuhiko Nakamura, president of the University of Yamanshi (left) in Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, rector of the University of Nova Gorica (right).



○ FEBRUARY

An agreement on strategic cooperation between the University of Nova Gorica and the University of Yamanshi

On 28 February, the rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, visited the Japanese University of Yamanshi to sign an agreement on strategic cooperation between the two institutions.

The president of the University of Yamanshi, Kazuhiko Nakamura, the executive directors, Prof. Dr. Xiaoyang Mao and Prof. Dr. Toru Okuda, and director of the Centre for the promotion of internationalisation, Prof. Dr. Hiromitsu Nishizaki, took part at the event.

By signing the agreement, the two institutions aim to foster a fruitful scientific and pedagogical cooperation in the fields of viticulture and wine studies, materials science and astrophysics. The general agreement represents a good foundation for more concrete, operative agreements on cooperation in the future.

The University of Yamanshi is one of the leading universities in Japan, comprising four faculties: Faculty of Education, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences and two postgraduate schools. The university has a great number of research institutes and educational institutions, such as the Fuel Cell Nanomaterials Centre and the Institute of Enology and Viticulture. The university is particularly known for its excellent research in the field of hydrogen technologies and advanced materials.



Prof. Dr. Rado Bohinc, president of the Euro-Mediterranean University EMUNI (left) in Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, rector of the University of Nova Gorica (right).

○ MARCH

Signing of agreement between the University of Nova Gorica and the Euro-Mediterranean University EMUNI

On 14 March, the rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, and the president of the Euro-Mediterranean University EMUNI, Prof. Dr. Rado Bohinc, signed an agreement on strategic partnership and cooperation.

To both of the two institutions, the signing of the agreement opens up new opportunities for strengthening academic excellence, encouraging innovations and spreading the global connections.

Relying on our mutual efforts, we aim to build a stronger future in the field of educational and research work.

MARCH

Visit by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Her Excellency the Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Slovenia, Victoria Harrison, visited the University of Nova Gorica on 21 March.

The Ambassador was received by the rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, the vice-rector for education and art, Prof. Dr. Penka Stateva, and Doc. Dr. Iain Robert White, head of the Laboratory for environmental and life sciences.

After the initial presentation related to the University, the conversation was concerned with the opportunities for cooperation in the fields of education and research.

The University of Nova Gorica has already established cooperation with a number of institutions from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, particularly in the research fields, as well as in the programmes co-financed by the European Union. A good deal of the University of Nova Gorica academic staff members has completed part of its education in the United Kingdom. The representatives of the Embassy and the University of Nova Gorica agreed that it was mainly the personal connections among the researchers that could lead to a closer cooperation, including student exchanges and a more general strengthening of the links between the University of Nova Gorica and the institutions in the United Kingdom.

Despite the fact that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is not part of the European Union any more, there are opportunities enabling the EU students to study in the United Kingdom within reasonable financial conditions.



From left to right:
Doc. Dr. Iain Robert White,
Her Excellency Victoria Harrison,
Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob and
Prof. Dr. Penka Stateva.



○ APRIL

Delegation of the European Space Agency at the University of Nova Gorica

On 17 April, A delegation of the European Space Agency (ESA) scientific programme has been in Slovenia these days and has visited the University of Nova Gorica.

The delegation included Dr. Marcos Bavdaz, Dr. Sven Wittig and Piero Messina; Dr. Sabina Koleša, representative of the Slovenian Space Agency Office, joined the delegation during the visit as well.

The guests were greeted by the rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Dr. Boštjan Golob, who gave an introductory presentation of the University's educational and research activities. The guests were also acquainted with the work of the School of Sciences, the Laboratory of Organic Matter Physics, the Materials Research Laboratory and the Laboratory of Quantum Optics. A detailed introduction was also given concerning the work of the Centre for Atmospheric Research and the Centre for Astrophysics and Cosmology, which have been cooperating with the European Space Agency for a few years now.

The ESA representatives expressed a great interest in further cooperation, particularly in the fields of astrophysics, atmosphere research and materials research.



MAY

Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Slovenia visits the University of Nova Gorica

On 5 May, the University of Nova Gorica has hosted the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Slovenia, His Excellency Rovshan Sadigbayli. At the occasion, the Ambassador was accompanied by Mr. Andrej Kompara, president of the Slovenia-Azerbaijan Friendship Society.

The rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, and the University's first secretary, Mr. Frenk Mavrič MSc, acquainted the Ambassador with our educational and research activities, our cooperation with Azerbaijani universities and research institutes, and the Across European University, which also includes the University of Nova Gorica.

The University of Nova Gorica has been having a successful cooperation with the Azerbaijan State Agricultural University in Ganja for many years now, as the two universities signed an agreement on joint mentorship and double doctorate programme in the fields of environmental sciences and agriculture.

The two parties expressed their interest to strengthen further cooperation between the University of Nova Gorica and the academic-research institutions in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani Ambassador and the rector also defined the fields of a potential cooperation. In the near future we aim to send a group of representatives from the Goriška region to Azerbaijan so as to strengthen mutual connections.



His Excellency Rovshan Sadigbayli, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Slovenia (left) and Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, rector of the University of Nova Gorica (right).



MAY



Celebration of the University of Nova Gorica 30 year anniversary in Ajdovščina

On the occasion of its thirty year anniversary, the University of Nova Gorica had prepared a celebration in Ajdovščina, which attracted numerous visitors of all generations.

Science, technology and art were part of all celebration activities. The event was one of the many marking the University's thirty year anniversary, which we aim to celebrate in September as well.



The celebration began on 28 May 2025 with an evening concert in the Sports park Pale, where the well-known music groups Pelhan, Kokosy and Mrfy had their performance. The following day the Lavrič trg was transformed into a research, technological and artistic centre, with more than fifteen stands and interactive presentations offering an insight into the University's versatile education and research activities.



All the University's schools, along with its academy, research laboratories and centres presented themselves at the event, including some of the many partner companies and organisations. The event participants included the Centre of green technologies, GO! 2025, Adult Education Centre Ajdovščina, Zavod BETA – Garaža, Arctur, d. o. o., Incom, d. o. o., Centre of school and other activities, and University of Nova Gorica Foundation.



A special emphasis was given to presenting the European Cross-Border University Across, as the University of Nova Gorica is its proud member. The Across University unites nine European universities with more than 110.000 students and 11.000 staff members; this offers numerous opportunities for international cooperation and mobility, a range of mutual, enriched study programmes and an access to excellent research infrastructure to students, researchers and wider public.

Visitors could take part in the measurements of black carbon, a quiz on invasive species, experiments with liquid nitrogen, and could also microscope advanced 2D materials. Children and young people were able to follow the presented scientific experiments with enthusiasm, to test their skills in a competition on the stars developmental stages, and to watch a funny presentation on the use of liquid nitrogen. Little children could test their skills in building an observatory model Vera Rubin from the LEGO bricks, while elders could taste the aroma of offered wines with the help of a scientific analysis.

Humanistic contents were presented through interactive experiments, the history documents of the Letters (Pisma) project, quizzes on coffee and chocolate and socially relevant discussions on language and bread. The visitors could also take part in a workshop on animated film and could get to know robotics.

The event in Ajdovščina was more than just the occasion for marking the three decades of life of the University of Nova Gorica – it was an opportunity for diverse generations to connect, for exchanging knowledge and encouraging creativity; in this way we also strengthened the University's mission of being an open and innovative educational institution. This is why we would like to consider organising this type of events on a regular basis.



MAJ

Graduation Ceremony for Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral Students

On 28 May, the graduation ceremony for Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral students of the University of Nova Gorica was held at the Lanthieri Mansion in Vipava.

Nine bachelor's degrees were awarded to graduates of the School of Environmental Sciences, the School of Arts, the School of Science, the School for Viticulture and Enology, and the School of Humanities.

Master's diplomas were conferred upon two female graduates and one male graduate from the School of Environmental Sciences, the School of Arts, and the School of Humanities.

The Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, conferred doctoral titles upon five new female doctors and two new male doctors of science. The doctorates were awarded through the Graduate School in the study programmes of Materials, Physics, Environmental Sciences, Cultural Heritage Studies, and Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology.

We congratulate all the students who received their degrees and we wish them a successful fulfillment of their goals and aspirations.



MAJ

New Doctors of Science, 28 May 2025

On 28 May, the University of Nova Gorica Rector, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, awarded Doctor of Science degrees to the following Graduate School graduates.

Doctoral study programme MATERIALS

· TINA ROČNIK KOZMELJ

PhD thesis title: Reaction mechanism and microkinetics of heterogeneously catalysed lignin depolymerisation and (de) functionalization

Mentors: Prof. Dr. Miha Grilc and Dr. Edita Jasiukaityte Grojzdek

· ROK ŠIVEC

PhD thesis title: Catalytic hydro(deoxy)genation of furfural and modelling of its reaction kinetics

Mentors: Prof. Dr. Miha Grilc and Doc. Dr. Matej Huš

· ANA JAKOB

PhD thesis title: Modelling-assisted optimisation of hemicellulose-derived monosaccharide valorization
Mentor: Prof. Dr. Miha Grilc

Doctoral study programme PHYSICS

· KNARIK YERITSYAN

PhD thesis title: Modeling of solvent role in protein folding experiments
Mentor: Prof. Dr. Artem Badasyan

Doctoral study programme MOLECULAR GENETICS AND BIOTECHNOLOGY

· CLAUDIA D'ERCOLE

PhD thesis title: Development of molecular methods for the comprehensive evaluation of stress conditions affecting forest trees
Mentor: Prof. Dr. Ario de Marco

Doctoral study programme CULTURAL HERITAGE STUDIES

· HAISHENG HU

PhD thesis title: Integrating Cultural Heritage and Urban Subway Infrastructures Spatial Distribution, Value Assessment, and Impacts of the Beijing Metro Line on Cultural Heritage Regional Development

Mentors: Prof. Dr. Xavier Greffe and Prof. Dr. Michela Pace

Doctoral study programme ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

· NEŽA OREL

PhD thesis title: The response of microbes to anthropogenically induced perturbations in the Gulf of Trieste (northern Adriatic Sea)

Mentors: Prof. Dr. Valentina Turk and Doc. Dr. Tinkara Tinta



Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (left) and Dr. Tina Ročnik Kozmelj (right).



Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (left) and Dr. Rok Šivec (right).



Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (left) and Dr. Neža Orel (right).



Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (left) and Dr. Knarik Yeritsyan (right).



Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (left) and Dr. Claudia D'Ercole (right).



○ JULY

The University of Nova Gorica contributed to Slovenia's journey toward CERN membership

On 3 July, the formal procedure of the Republic of Slovenia's accession as a full member of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva was concluded with the ceremonial hoisting of the Slovenian flag.

The event was attended by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr. Robert Golob, CERN Director-General Dr. Fabiola Gianotti, President of the CERN Council Dr. Costas Fountas, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation Dr. Igor Papič, State Secretary Dr. Jure Gašparič, representatives of research institutions that have been involved in CERN projects for many years, as well as representatives of economic organisations and companies.

The University of Nova Gorica was represented by Honorary Rector and long-time Slovenian representative in the CERN Council, Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, and by Rector and member of the CERN LHC Experiments Committee, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob.

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik is undoubtedly one of the individuals most responsible for Slovenia attaining the status it deserves at CERN after 50 years of participation. As a member of the aforementioned committee, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob evaluates proposed upgrades and modifications to the experiments at the Large Hadron Collider from a scientific perspective.

According to the Prime Minister Dr. Robert Golob, »CERN ... is the best that Europe and humanity can achieve.«

○ SEPTEMBER

University of Nova Gorica Recipient of the Municipality of Nova Gorica Award

On 5 September, the Slovenian National Theatre in Nova Gorica hosted a central celebration, including a ceremonial session of the City Council and the awarding of the Municipality of Nova Gorica prizes.

We are proud that among this year's award recipients is also the University of Nova Gorica. As written in the proposal justification, the University has been awarded the Municipality of Nova Gorica Award on the occasion of its 30th anniversary and for its significant contribution to the development of higher education; for outstanding scientific and research activities in the Municipality of Nova Gorica, and for enhancing the Municipality's reputation in Slovenia and the world.

On behalf of the University of Nova Gorica, the award was received by Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, the University's rector, from Samo Turel, the City's mayor. Professor Golob emphasised that the award represented a recognition for the committed work of all the University's present and past employees, and for the successes of the University's students. The rector also said that the award was, at the same time, an encouragement to create an even better quality level in the field of higher education in the Goriška region; to further create outstanding achievements in the fields of education and research, and to intensify cooperation with the local economy.





SEPTEMBER

Thirty year anniversary: Solemn academy ceremony of the University of Nova Gorica

On 24 September 2025, the University of Nova Gorica celebrated its thirty year anniversary at the EPICentre in Nova Gorica with a solemn academy ceremony held under the Honorary Patronage of the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Nataša Pirc Musar, PhD.

At the celebration, the University's rector, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, emphasised that the university was »a mosaic of all people who have built it and contributed to its development«. He thanked all colleagues and awards recipients for »pouring life into the university and taking it into a mature period of development« over the past decades.

The rector particularly touched upon the issue of connections between science, culture and national identity. He said: »Science and knowledge are an indispensable part of culture and as such they are the core pillars of national identity.« He reminded us that it was precisely scientific and research works of the great Slovene personalities, such as Trubar and Valvasor, that had fortified the space of the Slovenian language, art and culture within a wider European context.

At the same time, the rector pointed out the future needs of the Slovenian society: »It is estimated that Slovenia will need some 10,000 highly educated staff members annually over the next decade, while the fact is that every year there has been some 3,000 unoccupied working positions of this kind. Wouldn't it be wise to pay a proper attention to the Slovenian institutions of knowledge?«

The rector also emphasised the challenges faced by the European higher education area, such as fragmentation, due to which European universities tend to poorly compete with bigger American and Asian institutions. The University of Nova Gorica responds to these challenges by actively participating in international networks such as the European University Across, which connects ten European universities situated in the cross-border regions.

Also, the rector presented a vision of the University's further development, which includes the formation of a new, across the border and town oriented Faculty centre in Nova Gorica; the centre aims to be sustainable, multi-functional and connected to accommodation facilities in Gorica and Rožna Dolina. At the same time, the rector pointed out the research-developmental laboratories in Ajdovščina, in which scientists and students will work, side by side, with technologically prominent companies; and the continuation of a one hundred year long tradition, with a scientific approach for using the natural givens in the Lanthieri mansion in Vipava. »Had people not had such goals, the University might not have been founded thirty years ago«, he said and added that even today the University »is held by a strong optimism when it comes to envisioning future projects«.

At the end, Prof. Dr. Golob pointed out the importance of all people who had enabled the University to walk its path: »Thirty years may not count much for an institution. Yet the University of Nova Gorica has clearly shown what kind of path it has taken and what kind of potential it has got.«



From left to right: Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko, Prof. Dr. Carole Mundell, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob and Prof. Dr. Gvido Bratina.

The celebration speaker was Dr. Igor Papič, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation, and those gathered were also greeted by the President of the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia Marko Lotrič.

Also, the honorary titles of the University of Nova Gorica were conferred at the celebration. For the first time in its history, the University conferred the honorary doctoral title – doctor honoris causa – upon a woman: an internationally renowned astrophysicist and Director of Science at the European Space Agency (ESA) Prof. Dr. Carole Mundell. Rector of the University v Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, conferred the title upon professor Mundel for for her long-standing and fruitful



Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, rector of the University of Nova Gorica.



scientific collaboration with researchers at the Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology of the University of Nova Gorica, as well as for her outstanding contributions to their international recognition in the global research community.

Two titles of professor emeritus of the University of Nova Gorica were conferred upon Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko and Prof. Dr. Gvido Bratina. Both of the two professors left an indelible mark, within their respective fields, on the scientific excellence of the University of Nova Gorica; at the same time, they empowered the University, from an organisational point of view, to transform itself from the initial School of Environmental Sciences to today's mature University with six schools and an academy.

Besides this, on 18 September the University conferred an honorary doctorate title – doctor honoris causa –, upon Prof. Dr. Joachim Mnich. Prof. Dr. Mnich is one of the leading experts and strategists in the field of physics of high energies in Europe and the world, and Director for Research and Computing at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN). The title was awarded for his exceptional contributions to the development of high-energy physics in Slovenia, including at the University of Nova Gorica, for advancing the international recognition of Slovenian researchers in this field, as well as for his role in the progress of experimental elementary particle physics.

Many esteemed guests honoured the celebration with their presence: President of the National Council of the Republic of

Slovenia Marko Lotrič, President of Slovenian Academy of Science and Art Acad. Peter Štih, Vice-President of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Matej Arčon, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation Dr. Igor Papič, rectors of Slovenian and foreign universities, as well as ambassadors.

An artistic interpretation of texts connecting science and culture was presented at the celebration by Neda Rusjan Bric, BA in Theatre Acting, MA in Arts, theatre director, long standing adjunct professor at the School of Art of the University of Nova Gorica and, above all, the initiator of the idea and the candidate process leader for the borderless European City of Culture GO! 2025; additionally, a video animation was prepared by Polona Zupan, a former student of the University's School of Art.



Marko Lotrič, President of the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia.



Prof. Dr. Igor Papič, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation.



Prof. Dr. Carole Mundell, honorary doctoral title – doctor honoris causa –.



Prof. Dr. Gvido Bratina, professor emeritus of the University of Nova Gorica.



Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko, professor emeritus of the University of Nova Gorica.



Prof. Dr. Joachim Mnich, honorary doctoral title – doctor honoris causa –.



SEPTEMBER

Rectors' Board of the Across European Cross-Border University held at the University of Nova Gorica

On 25 September, the University of Nova Gorica hosted the Rectors' Board of the Across European Cross-Border University at the Lanthieri Mansion in Vipava. The meeting was dedicated to discussions on the future of the European Higher Education Area and on strengthening the cooperation among universities. The event was held alongside the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the University of Nova Gorica.

"We are delighted to have hosted the rectors of the Across European Cross-Border University on this special occasion. At the meeting, we focused on key tasks ahead of us in establishing the international alliance as a single entity in the field of higher education," stressed the Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, after the session of the Rectors' Board.

As part of the Rectors' Board, a consortium agreement for the implementation of a four-year alliance programme was also signed.

The day before the Rectors' Board session, the rectors and other representatives of the Across Alliance attended the formal celebration academy marking the 30th anniversary of the University of Nova Gorica. In his address at the ceremony, the Rector highlighted the importance of connecting universities:





“We must be aware that since Slovenia’s entry into the European Union and the almost simultaneous introduction of the Bologna system, the Slovenian higher education area has been completely open to Europe and shares some of its challenges. One of these is fragmentation, which prevents European universities from acting as a strong counterbalance to larger American and Asian institutions.

Together with partner institutions across Europe, Slovenian universities are addressing this challenge by forming international networks, the so-called European Universities. It gives me great pleasure and honour to welcome today among us the rectors of the Across European Cross-Border University Alliance, which unites ten member universities, all from Europe’s border regions. Together, we strive to address specific challenges and to lay the foundations of a unified European institution that will connect more than 110,000 students.”

The Across European Cross-Border University brings together ten European universities. Alongside the University of Nova Gorica, the alliance includes eight universities from different border regions: Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany; Bialystok University of Technology, Poland; University of Udine, Italy; University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina; University of Perpignan Via Domitia, France; University of Girona, Spain; University of Craiova, Romania; Angel Kanchev University of Ruse, Bulgaria; and an associated partner university – Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine.





OKTOBER

Orientation day this year in Nova Gorica

On 1 October, we have been pleased to welcome our new students at the Orientation day, which took place at the EPICentre in Nova Gorica.

The students were greeted by the rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, who wished the students a very pleasant university life, in particular from the point of view of their own field of study.

A special emphasis was given to the European Cross-border University Across, whose proud member is also the University of Nova Gorica. The Across University unites nine European universities, with more than 110,000 students and 11,000 staff members. As emphasised in her presentation by the University's vice-rector for education and arts, Prof. Dr. Penka Stateva, the Across University provides students, researchers and a wider public with numerous opportunities for international cooperation and mobility, mutually enriched study offers and access to excellent research infrastructure.

The official part of the event was followed by presentations of the University's schools, research centres and laboratories, whereby our current students presented the University's rich range of study offers and research activities. At the same time, representatives of the University's services presented their work and ways in which they can support the students; and members of the University's Student Council shared some practical advice and experience from student life.

At the event, we were joined by a number of partner companies and organisations, including the Centre of Green Technologies, Institute for Youth Politics, National Institute for Public Health, Technological Park of Primorska, Regional chamber of commerce Ajdovščina, Northern Primorska chamber of commerce, and Mjob and Arctur company.

The event also included the University of Nova Gorica Day, aimed at a wider public, where science, technology and art meet - with interactive presentations, experiments and technological demonstrations.



OCTOBER

The National Institute of Chemistry and the University of Nova Gorica - signing of agreements, strengthening of research and educational cooperation

On 8 October, the National Institute of Chemistry and the University of Nova Gorica have signed a cooperation agreement in the field of science and research, and a cooperation agreement in the field of education, with an emphasis on the University's doctoral study programme in Materials.

The two research and academic institutions have thus additionally strengthened the existing excellent cooperation, going back to the very foundation of the University three decades ago.

The signing of the two agreements represents an important step towards deepening the connections between the research and academic environment, opening up new opportunities for a mutual creation of excellent knowledge. The celebratory signing was accompanied by a review of the cooperation between the Institute and the University and a presentation on the doctoral study programme in Materials, which the University of Nova Gorica has been carrying out in cooperation with the National Institute of Chemistry.

»Universities are spaces in which excellent young staff members can develop, some of them can turn out to be future scientists, who might, one day, take a path of independent research. That is why a close cooperation between universities and research-scientific institutions is crucial. At the National Institute of Chemistry we are very much aware of the meaning of this process, so we have strongly endeavoured, throughout the years, to continue with such a close cooperation both within the higher education study programmes and research connections. The strengthened cooperation between our two institutions enables a uniting of knowledge and research capabilities, bringing about better results and more efficient research and encouraging a wholesome approach towards solving the challenges of the contemporary society. All this leads to a greater scientific excellence and, at the same time, strengthens the international reputation of both institutions,« Prof. Dr. Gregor Anderluh, director of the National Institute of Chemistry, pointed out.

»Considering the current human resources issues as well as, up to a point, financial and infrastructural conditions in the academic sphere, we have - along with other, geopolitical and natural givens - an opportunity to establish Slovenia, within the European and wider context, as a recognisable centre of higher education teaching and research-innovation activity. This could be made possible, however, only through a cooperation of all institutions of knowledge, primarily through a closer union of higher education and excellent research institutions. Today's agreement, in fact, confirms only 'de jure' the excellent cooperation between our University and the National Institute of Chemistry, which we have been carrying out successfully, 'de facto', over the many years now. The cooperation is concerned with the study programmes of higher degrees, which without a close link to research work can be neither excellent nor interesting to home and international students. At UNG we are convinced that it is only with such a close cooperation between research and educational institutions, and with research-development activities that are carried out at both institutions, that we can successfully transfer current knowledge to new generations; these generations use the acquired knowledge, with an exceptional imagination, in new fields and thus create the so called future professions,« said Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, rector of the University of Nova Gorica.

Cooperation between the National Institute of Chemistry and the University of Nova Gorica

Cooperation between the University of Nova Gorica and the National Institute of Chemistry has been active for more than three decades now, from the very first years of the University's foundation. In the beginning, in 1995 professor Venčeslav Kaučič started having lectures in chemistry at the School of Environmental Sciences. Later on, in 2003 Prof. Dr. Nataša Zabukovec Logar was habilitated for the field of chemistry; then Prof. Dr. Nataša Novak Tušar and Prof. Simona Golič for the field of materials; and Prof. Jože Grdadolnik and Prof. Gregor Mali for the field of physics.

In 2017, in cooperation with the National Institute of Chemistry, a masters degree programme in Materials was introduced; it was led by Prof. Dr. Nataša Zabukovec Logar from 2017 to 2024, while in 2020 the doctoral programme in Materials was introduced, led by Prof. Dr. Nataša Novak Tušar. The National Institute of Chemistry

has offered support in this study programme primarily with an access to superior research infrastructure needed for the implementation of the programme. A few more novice researchers from the National Institute of Chemistry have been habilitated within these study programmes, and some new habilitations have been planned in the meantime.

For the National Institute of Chemistry the opportunity for academic habilitation and participation in educational work is a highly important part of cooperation, while for the University of Nova Gorica this means that the students may carry out their practice sessions and demonstrations on numerous advanced research machines. In this way, the students get to know the process of working within various projects, including the international ones. Not only do the research staff members from the National Institute of Chemistry contribute with their teaching but they also actively participate in various university boards and committees. Currently Prof. Dr. Nataša Novak Tušar is member of the University of Nova Gorica Senate, while Prof. Dr. Nataša Zabukovec Logar is president of the University's Governing board.

At the same time, an exceptional importance is attached to scientific cooperation. Since the very beginnings of UNG, we have closely been cooperating with Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon, namely in the research field of porous catalysts and adsorbents as well as the development of batteries. Lately, we have seen our mutual cooperation in other fields as well - NMR, chemical engineering, modelling, process engineering, etc. So far we have participated in a number of ARIS projects; currently we take part in two projects related to gravitation in the field of semi-conductors and technologies for energy storage.

»The signing of the agreements formalises the many years of successful cooperation between the National Institute of Chemistry and the University of Nova Gorica in both educational and scientific fields. A strong international dimension and focus of the University of Nova Gorica on research excellence, as well as openness and support to the colleagues from the National Institute of Chemistry to be proactively involved in the educational process, have led, over the past years, to unique scientific results, awarded doctoral theses and new study programmes. We are looking forward to working further in mutual research in the fields of environmental and energy technologies, and to exchanging professional knowledge and resources. And most of all, we are looking forward to new opportunities for co-creating educational activities in the fields which are of key importance for the National Institute of Chemistry, including academic habilitations and mentoring roles,« Prof. Dr. Nataša Zabukovec Logar, Head of the Department for anorganic chemistry and technology at the National Institute of Chemistry, pointed out.



From left to right: Prof. Dr. Gregor Anderluh (Director of the National Institute of Chemistry) and Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (Rector of the University of Nova Gorica).



Prof. Dr. Gregor Anderluh (Director of the National Institute of Chemistry).



Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (Rector of the University of Nova Gorica).

Doctoral study programme in Materials

The doctoral study programme in Materials is an interdisciplinary, research oriented programme, adapted to the needs of industrial development. It enables the students to acquire knowledge and skills for creating versatile types of materials, from their synthesis to characterisation; and to acquire an understanding of the relationship among material structure, features and activity. The programme also includes the study contents related to the development of materials applicable in energy and environmental technologies.

The key aim of the programme is to educate excellent and capable researchers. Students acquire theoretical knowledge, numerical skills and experience in experimental work, characterisation and planning of the development of materials for targeted use. The organised forms of study enable the preparation of an individual study and research programme, which the

student creates together with their mentor. The study programme is tied to the ECTS credit system, providing an opportunity for choosing subjects from other doctoral programmes of the Graduate School of the University of Nova Gorica and from suitably accredited programmes of other universities.

The students are actively involved in the research work of the laboratories and centres of the University of Nova Gorica and partner institutions, such as National Institute of Chemistry and Jožef Stefan Institute in Ljubljana. The programme holders are, with their research work in the field of material design, development and characterisation, acclaimed in the global, international context. The study is internationally comparable and competitive within the international context, providing good educational opportunities for foreign students.

»The graduates of the doctoral study programme in Materials are equipped for in-

dependent planning and development of versatile types of materials for targeted use. With the acquired knowledge and competences we can continue our work at universities, research institutes and industrial developmental departments both in Slovenia and abroad. For preservation, upgrade and competitiveness of Slovenian technologies we would need on the labour market competent experts, capable of solving most complex technological and developmental challenges in the field of development of new materials and technologies. On this occasion, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to professor Iztok Arčon, long-standing dean of the University of Nova Gorica, for all his support and cooperation in establishing and creating the doctoral study programme in Materials«, pointed out Prof. Dr. Nataša Novak Tušar, head of the Laboratory for catalysts at the Department for anorganic chemistry and technology at the National Institute of Chemistry, and director of the doctoral study programme in Materials at the University of Nova Gorica.



From left to right: Prof. Dr. Gregor Anderluh (National Institute of Chemistry), Prof. Dr. Nataša Zabukovec Logar (National Institute of Chemistry and University of Nova Gorica), Prof. Dr. Nataša Novak Tušar (National Institute of Chemistry and University of Nova Gorica), Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (University of Nova Gorica).



From left to right: Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon (University of Nova Gorica), Prof. Dr. Matjaž Valant (University of Nova Gorica), Prof. Dr. Gregor Anderluh (National Institute of Chemistry), Prof. Dr. Nataša Zabukovec Logar (National Institute of Chemistry and University of Nova Gorica), Prof. Dr. Nataša Novak Tušar (National Institute of Chemistry and University of Nova Gorica), Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob (University of Nova Gorica), Prof. Dr. Egon Pavlica (University of Nova Gorica), Doc. Dr. Andraž Mavrič (University of Nova Gorica).



From left to right: Samo Turel, Mayor of the Nova Gorica municipality, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Dr. Igor Papič, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation and Prof. Dr. Leon Cizelj, Director of the »Jožef Stefan« Institute.

University of Nova Gorica: signing a letter of intent regarding the activities to gain the status of a public university

On 12 November, at the University of Nova Gorica there has been a formal signing of a letter of intent regarding the initial activities whereby the University of Nova Gorica would gain the status of a public university.

The letter was signed by the Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation Dr. Igor Papič, Rector of the University of Nova Gorica Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, Director of »Jožef Stefan« Institute Prof. Dr. Leon Cizelj, and Mayor of Nova Gorica municipality Samo Turel.

Signing the letter of intent is a first step on the path which would enable the University of Nova Gorica to gain the status of a public university in the future. The event took place as part of a visit of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia to Goriška region; within this context a session of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia was held at the University of Nova Gorica.

NOVEMBER

Upon signing the letter, Minister Dr. Igor Papič emphasised that the event had been initiated by the University. He singled out two important factors which had an impact on the time framework – the adoption of a new salary act, which improves the status of higher education teachers, and a new higher education act, which ensures a considerably better developmental perspective. According to the minister, the financing of universities is likely to get a gradual increase, and in the future this would also include investment opportunities, which means that the University of Nova Gorica might also be in a position to use the funds. He added that the change of status would be an exceptionally good opportunity for development.

The University's Rector, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, pointed out that the signing of the letter of intent was a necessary step, with which the University, together with the two founding institutions, entered into the stage of negotiations concerning the possibilities and potential development which the public status would grant. At the same time, he thanked the Ministry for Higher Education, Science and Innovation for their understanding regarding the University's development. He expressed his sense of appreciation for the University's achievements, which are evidence of excellence

and a significant contribution to the development of Slovenian higher education area. He added that, after thirty years of activities, the University needs a new quality leap - in the field of infrastructure as well as when it comes to increasing the number of students.

Director of »Jožef Stefan« Institute Prof. Dr. Leon Cizelj said that he was glad that the University of Nova Gorica, which had grown out of a joint project with the Institute, achieved its independence and was about to step on a new path. He expressed his belief that the cooperation between the two institutions would continue and strengthen both in the research and educational field, for the new talents and young researchers, as he said, were the true gift that science and universities could offer to society.

Mayor of Nova Gorica municipality Samo Turel pointed out that the municipality supported a further development of the University, and would be interested to see its undergraduate studies transferred to the town itself and across the border. Mr Turel views the letter of intent as a first important step on the path and believes that the Town Council will certainly see the significance of the initiative and support the transformation of the University of Nova Gorica into a public university.

The signing of the letter of intent is the beginning of an important process, in the context of which the University of Nova Gorica will consider the possibilities for further development in Slovenian and international higher education and research environment.

From left to right:
Ms. Shubhashree Bandyopadhyay,
His Excellency Mr. Amit Narang,
Prof. Dr. Matjaž Valant and
Dr. Thanveer Thajudheen.



NOVEMBER

University of Nova Gorica welcomes Ambassador of India to the Republic of Slovenia

On 19 November, the Ambassador of India to the Republic of Slovenia, his Excellency Mr. Amit Narang, has visited the University of Nova Gorica. The Ambassador was hosted by Prof. Dr. Matjaž Valant, the University's Vice-rector.

On this occasion, the University was pleased to acquaint the Ambassador with its educational and research activities and with the Association of the Across European Cross-Border University Alliance to which the University of Nova Gorica belongs.

There are 11 students from India currently studying at the University of Nova Gorica, along with 11 employed researchers, which reflects a strong connection with the Indian academic and research environment. In addition, the University has been cooperating with the University of Kerala within an active Erasmus+ project. Within the same project, the cooperation also aims to include the Cochin University of Science and Technology, with which we have signed an Erasmus+ interinstitutional agreement.

The Ambassador had an opportunity to meet Dr. Thanveerjem Thajudheenom, a postdoctoral researcher in the field of physics, employed at the University's Materials Research Laboratory, and Ms. Shubhashree Bandyopadhyay, a young researcher at the University's postgraduate study programme in physics.

Both sides expressed a great interest in strengthening the cooperation between the University of Nova Gorica and Indian academic and research institutions, with the aim of encouraging mutual projects, research and exchanges of students and researchers.



Ceremonial awarding of bachelor's and master's diplomas, the student awards alumnus primus and alumnus optimus, and the promotion of new doctors of science, 26 November.



Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, rector of the University of Nova Gorica, 26 November.



Bachelor's and Master's Graduates, Recipients of Alumni Awards, and Doctors of Science, 26 November.

NOVEMBER

Ceremonial Awarding of Bachelor's and Master's Diplomas, Student Awards, and the Promotion of Doctors of Science

On 26 and 27 November 2025, the Lanthieri Mansion in Vipava hosted the ceremonial awarding of bachelor's and master's diplomas, the student awards alumnus primus and alumnus optimus, and the promotion of new doctors of science of the University of Nova Gorica.

Thirty-three bachelor's diplomas were awarded to graduates of the School of Engineering and Management, the School of Arts, the School of Science, the School for Viticulture and Enology, the School of Humanities, and the School of Environmental Sciences.

Fifteen graduates of the master's programmes from the School of Environmental Sciences, the School of Arts, the School of Humanities, and the School of Engineering and Management received their master's diplomas.



Ceremonial awarding of bachelor's and master's diplomas, the student awards alumnus primus and alumnus optimus, and the promotion of new doctors of science, 27 November.

The Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, promoted three new female doctors and three new male doctors of science from the Graduate School in the study programmes Materials, Environmental Sciences, Humanities, and Karstology.



Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, Rector of the University of Nova Gorica, 27 November.

We also awarded fifteen graduates of the School of Engineering and Management, the School of Arts, the School of Science, the School for Viticulture and Enology, the School of Humanities, and the School of Environmental Sciences. The alumnus primus award was presented to nine graduates who graduated as the first in their generation of enrolled students, while the alumnus optimus award was presented to nine graduates who achieved the highest average study grade among the graduates in each academic year.



Bachelor's and Master's Graduates, Recipients of Alumni Awards, and Doctors of Science, 27 November.

NOVEMBER

New Doctors of Science, 26 and 27 November 2025

On 26 and 27 November 2025, the University of Nova Gorica Rector, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Golob, awarded Doctor of Science degrees to the following Graduate School graduates.

26 November 2025

Doctoral study programme HUMANITIES

- NIKITA PERESIN MEDEN
PhD thesis title: Land in the Common Use in the 19th Century: The Case of the Manor of Duino in the Karst Region
Mentors: Prof. Dr. Žarko Lazarević and Doc. Dr. Jasna Fakin Bajec
- ANJA POLAJNAR
PhD thesis title: Representation of Africa among the Slovenes from 1850 to 1941
Mentors: Prof. Dr. Žarko Lazarević and Prof. Dr. Marina Lukšič Hacin

Doctoral study programme KARSTOLOGY

- UROŠ NOVAK
PhD thesis title: Tectonic Structures in Karst: Case Studies from Western Slovenia
Mentor: Prof. Dr. Stanka Šebela



Dr. Anja Polajnar.



Dr. Uroš Novak.



Dr. Anja Siher.



Dr. Emil Pučko.

27 November 2025

Doctoral study programme MATERIALS

- ANJA SIHER
PhD thesis title: Improving the performance of Co- and Ni-based pseudocapacitors
Mentor: Doc. Dr. Andraž Mavrič
- ARMIN HRNJIĆ
PhD thesis title: Investigation of High Current Density Methods for Identical Location Electron Microscopy Studies
Mentor: Dr. Primož Jovanovič

Doctoral study programme ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

- EMIL PUČKO
PhD thesis title: A holistic approach to differentiating natural and anthropogenic geochemical soil anomalies on mine sites
Mentors: Doc. Dr. Gorazd Žibret

Organizing of Conferences, Symposiums, Workshops and Summer Schools

Winter school “Transformative adaptation in viticulture: from climate smart to climate resilient”

February, Udine, Italy

On 24 January 2025, an introductory online event was organized as part of the winter school. During the week from 3 to 7 February, lectures and visits to good-practice examples took place. Colleagues from the Wine Research Centre also participated in the winter school and jointly prepared three thematic lectures covering climate change adaptation in viticulture, the resilience of vineyard soils to climate change, and the presentation of a harvest forecasting technique under Mediterranean conditions.



Animacikel - International student workshop and public event

7 April – 11 April 2025, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

An international animation workshop, followed by a public screening of animated works. Its special feature is the animations projected from a (moving) vehicle onto the facades, streets and trees of the hosting city. 5 art academies/universities, 8 mentors and 25 students participated. The Nova Gorica edition of the project is linked to the Nova Gorica/Gorica – European Capital of Culture 2025 project, organised within the GO!STUDIO (SPF) project.



Intuitive Wine Tasting with Eva Bruot from the Franck Thomas School (France)

7 May 2025, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

As part of the Eno(Satira) project, a workshop on intuitive wine tasting was organized on 7 May 2025 and led by expert Eva Bruot from the renowned French Franck Thomas School. The event was attended by students of the Faculty of Viticulture and Enology as well as winemakers from across Slovenia. The workshop was conducted in two parts: a theoretical session in which the expert explained the basic principles of intuitive wine perception through all the senses, followed by a practical workshop where participants had the opportunity to taste wine using all their senses.



The Summer School in the frame of AGROTUR+ Interreg Project

27 May 2025, Vipava, Slovenia

As part of the AGROTUR+ Summer School, the final workshop, the fifth in a series of events, was organized. The microbiological workshop “The Use of Advanced Approaches for Microbiological Monitoring in Winemaking” took place on 27 May 2025, in Vipava. A total of 39 participants attended the event, including students, experts in viticulture and winemaking, advisors, and producers. The program included expert lectures on monitoring microorganisms during fermentation, controlling spoilage yeasts and bacteria, and presentations of modern analytical methods. The workshop concluded with a laboratory tour and an exchange of experiences among participants.



SmellLab and “Wine and Climate: When to Harvest in Times of Change” Workshops at the Student Wine Festival

3 June 2025, Vipava, Slovenija

On 3 June 2025, two professional workshops were held as part of the Student Wine Festival: (1) the SmellLab sensory workshop in the Wine Research Centre laboratory at the Lanthieri Manor in Vipava, where participants explored the aromatic profiles of hidden wine aromas using sensory perception and the newly acquired olfactometer, cofinanced by the Eno(Satira) project; (2) the workshop “Wine and Climate: When to Harvest in Times of Change” within the RESPONd project, in which Prof. Dr. G. Antalick presented a technique for monitoring sugar accumulation in grape berries to determine the optimal harvest time. The lecture was followed by an interactive roleplay session in which participants sought possible solutions to the challenges posed by climate change.

Hypercompositional Algebra – New Developments and Applications (HAnDA25)

2 June – 6 June 2025

For the fourth year in a row, the Centre for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics in collaboration with the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece, organized online, in the first week of June, the fifth edition of the Symposium on Hypercompositional Algebra – New Developments and Applications (HAnDA25). The event brought together PhD students and researchers from 15 countries: Slovenia, Greece, Romania, Poland, Czech Republic, Montenegro, Italy, Canada, Brazil, Kuwait, Iran, Turkey, Israel, United Arab Emirates, Nigeria. HAnDA serves as a platform for advancing the dissemination of research findings on Algebraic Hypercompositional Structures and their diverse applications.





Crossing Media Boundaries summer school

27 August – 1 September 2025, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

The Crossing Media Boundaries summer school, organized by the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Nova Gorica and the Research Center for Humanities, took place between August 27 and September 1 in Nova Gorica and one day in Trieste. The theme was crossing boundaries and limitations in relation to women's authorship. This international and interdisciplinary summer school was the result of collaboration between the CEEPUS Women Writers in History network, the DARIAH Working Group Women Writers in History, and the Women Writers Route Association. The thematic focus of these meetings covered various fields, including gender studies, literature, and digital humanities. A special feature of the program was a practical workshop dedicated to working with the SHE WROTE digital database, which brought new perspectives to the study and promotion of literature. In addition to academic content, participants also went on a thematic excursion to Trieste.



Workshop on combining 2D and 3D animation techniques with Sander Joon

14 September – 17 September 2025, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

At the workshop led by Estonian film director Sander Joon, participants became more closely acquainted with the open-source software Blender and explored how 3D tools can be approached with a distinctly 2D sensibility — that is, from the perspective of a 2D animator. The aim of the workshop was to create a short 3D multiplane “clay” animation and to use 3D tools to produce a dynamic 2D animated sequence, combining spatial depth with the aesthetic and narrative poetics of traditional 2D animation. The workshop was part of Animation Hub, which is included in the official programme of GO!2025.



International student workshop on stop-motion animation – Satire, Blasphemy, Carnival

18 September – 28 September 2025, Maribor, Slovenia

Subversion through satire, teasing sacred taboos, discovering socio-political absurdity and the liberating chaos of carnivalesque laughter! A three-part workshop where conceptual rigor meets anarchic creativity. Participants created a short stop-motion animated film, from script to screen, exploring how animation—an art of transformation between frames—can, through the power of dark humor, challenge authority, dogma, and social norms. Through critical analysis, provocative storytelling, and tactile animation, 25 participants from 8 art academies in 8 countries—from Portugal and Spain to Croatia, Austria, and Bulgaria, to Poland and Estonia—explored why laughter, in the face of inevitable catastrophe, remains one of the most powerful artistic acts of resistance. An Erasmus Blended Intensive Programme, organized in collaboration with the StopTrik International Film Festival.



Nanobodies Workshop: Binder Recovery by In Silico and In Vitro Panning – Nova Gorica, 2025

22 September – 26 September 2025, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

Laboratory for Environmental and Life Sciences (LELS) organized a workshop at the University of Nova Gorica between 22 and 26 September 2025 on Binder Recovery by In Silico and In Vitro Panning. The workshop provided intensive training for 12 PhD students and early-career researchers from eight countries in computational and experimental nanobody discovery, combining lectures, hands-on wet-lab panning, computational tutorials, and daily PhD2PhD sessions for participant presentations and peer exchange. Keynote lectures were delivered by Prof. San Hadži (University of Ljubljana) and Eva Smorodina (University of Oslo), with contributions from LELS researchers and external lecturers from the University of Udine and TU Graz.



Linguistic conference 'Škrabčevi dnevi 14'

17 October 2025, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

On October 17th, 2025, the University of Nova Gorica's Center for Cognitive Science of Language and the Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts co-hosted Škrabčevi dnevi 14. Škrabčevi dnevi is the only linguistic conference in Slovenia that imposes no restrictions with respect to the subdiscipline, topic, investigated language, framework or methodology of the reported research, with which the biannual event attempts to serve as an all-inclusive umbrella meeting for Slovenian linguists. Its 14th edition offered 16 talks by linguists from Slovenia and abroad which covered topics as diverse as morphology, phonology, syntax, language acquisition, language standardization, and dialectology. The conference will be completed in 2026 with the publication of the conference proceedings published by the University of Nova Gorica Press.



Autumn School – Erice 2025

5 November – 12 November 2025, Erice, Italy

The International Autumn School on "Basic Photothermal and Photoacoustic Techniques: Theory, Instrumentation and Application" was organized by the University of Nova Gorica, in cooperation with Ettore Majorana Foundation and Centre for Scientific Culture International School of Quantum Electronics and International Photoacoustic and Photothermal Association. The International School was held in Erice, Italy during the period from 5 November till 12 November 2025. There were lectures in the areas of photoacoustic and photothermal techniques and instrumentation, such as: Thermal Lens Spectroscopy, Photothermal Beam Deflection Spectroscopy, Photoacoustic Phenomena, Infrared Radiometry, Non Destructive Evaluation & Testing, Biomedical and Biological PA & PT Application, Photothermal Interferometry.

Overview of the most prominent achievements and articles

Overview of the most prominent achievements of colleagues from the University of Nova Gorica.

Number	Description	Reference	Organizational Unit
1.	The start of full partnership of UNG in the Across European Cross-Border University Alliance.	Across unites 10 European universities, 9 full partners from Banja Luka, Bialystok, Chemnitz, Craiova, Girona, Nova Gorica, Perpignan, Udine, and Ruse, plus our associated partner from Lviv.	University of Nova Gorica.
2.	Vesna Film Awards for Creators of the School of Arts of UNG.	For the feature-length animated film "Stories from the Enchanted Garden", directed by Leon Vidmar (external collaborator of School of Arts), screenplay by Kaja Balog (external collaborator of School of Arts), produced by Kolja Saksida (employee of School of Arts); and for the student animated film "Arachnophobia", created by Melita Sandrin, author of the diploma student film (School of Arts student).	School of Arts.
3.	Prof. Dr Saša Dobričić, President of UNISCAPE, Speaker at the Council of Europe Ministerial Conference.	President of UNISCAPE Prof. Dr. Saša Dobričić, officially presented the Nova Gorica/Gorizia UNISCAPE Declaration on Borderless Landscapes, adopted during the general assembly of UNISCAPE during the Landscape Festival (official programme of the European Capital of Culture Nova Gorica - Gorizia 2025).	Graduate School, Doctoral Study Program Cultural Heritage Studies.
4.	UNG as a Partner in the Competence Centre for Semiconductors and Semiconductor Technologies and in the Competence Centre for Artificial Intelligence.	The competence centres aim to accelerate the development of semiconductor technologies and semiconductor ecosystem as well as artificial intelligence on the national and European levels.	Laboratory of Organic Matter Physics.
5.	Prof. Dr Peter Purg, Head of the International Curatorial Team of the 26th Festival of Contemporary Artistic Practices Pixelpoint.	Within the framework of the European Capital of Culture Nova Gorica – Gorizia, Pixelpoint presented over sixty artists from around the world across a total of thirteen venues, through more than thirty exhibition setups and events.	Research Centre for Humanities.
6.	UNG as a Full Partner in the Slovenian AI Factory (SLAIF) Project.	The SLAIF project addresses the key needs of the Slovenian economy, the research sphere, and society in the field of artificial intelligence. The funding exceeds EUR 100 million, and the project is based on the use of a supercomputer optimized for AI methods.	University of Nova Gorica.
7.	The Slovenian Chemical Society (SCS) Award to Doc. Dr. Andraž Mavrič.	The Slovenian Chemical Society awarded him the prize for young chemists and chemical engineers in the field of scientific research and pedagogical activity for scientific excellence and successful leadership of national and international research projects.	Materials Research Laboratory.
8.	Prof. Dr Irina Elena Cristea edited the book Algebraic Structures and Graph Theory.	Algebraic structures and graph theory. 2nd ed. Basel: MDPI, cop. 2025, ISBN 978-3-7258-3356-6, CRISTEA, Irina Elena (urednik), LINZI, Alessandro (urednik).	Centre for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics.
9.	Presentation of the First Images from the World's Most Powerful Telescope, the Vera C. Rubin Observatory.	The Vera C. Rubin Observatory will carry out a 10-year survey of the sky called the Legacy Survey of Space and Time and, using the largest digital camera ever built, will record a so-called color movie of the Universe with around 40 billion celestial objects. Researchers from the University of Nova Gorica are also participating in this primarily US-Chilean project.	Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology.
10.	Awards for Doctoral Students for Research Contributions at Conferences.	PhD student Anjali received an award for her oral presentation at the SKD conference, PhD student Ahmad Shazheb received an award for his poster at the Slovenian Microscopy Society conference, and PhD student Enrico Talotti received the award for the best presentation at the HANDA mathematical symposium.	Materials Research Laboratory. Centre for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics.

Overview of the most prominent articles of colleagues from the University of Nova Gorica.

Number	Description	Referenca		Impact	Organizational Unit
1.	C. Tassel, ..., G. Močnik, K. Džepina et al	<i>Nature</i> 647, 109-114 (2025)	Oxidative potential of atmospheric particles in Europe and exposure scenarios	Oxidative potential is a new legislative parameter in the determination of air pollution - our campaigns determined the 3 out of 4 highest values among 43 sites in Europe, showing that in addition to traffic and wood burning, the industrial emissions also impact health.	Center for Atmospheric Research
2.	J. Morgan, ..., G. De Ninno et al.	<i>Nature Photonics</i> 19, 946–951 (2025)	Poincaré beams from a free electron laser	Complex polarization states of light can be generated directly at an extreme-ultraviolet free-electron laser, without the need for additional optics.	Laboratory of Organic Matter Physics
3.	A. Semerci, ..., E. Saim, M. Fanetti et al	<i>Advance Functional Materials</i> 35, 2423109 (2025)	The Role of Fluorine-Functionalized Organic Spacers for Defect Passivation and Low-Dimensional Phase Formation in 3D MAPI Perovskite	This study demonstrates that fluorine-containing molecules in combination with the formamidinium cation effectively passivate perovskite materials, improving the efficiency and long-term stability of perovskite solar cells.	Materials Research Laboratory
4.	Y. Liu,... A. Mavrič, I. Arčon, M. Valant et al.	<i>ACS energy letters</i> 10, 1911-1920 (2025)	Lattice-matched Ta3N5/Nb5N6 interface enables a bulk charge separation efficiency of close to 100%	The system achieved nearly perfect charge separation and record performance, highlighting the crucial role of fabrication strategy and interface control.	Materials Research Laboratory
5.	K. Klemenčič,..., N Zabukovec Logar, et al.	<i>Angewandte Chemie</i> , 64, e202424747 (2025)	Amine-Functionalized Triazolate-Based Metal–Organic Frameworks for Enhanced Diluted CO2 Capture Performance	New MOF material (NICS-24) significantly outperforms the compositionally related benchmark MOF CALF-20 in low concentration CO2 capture.	School of Science
6.	A. J. Levan,... A. Gomboc et al	<i>Nature astronomy</i> 9, 1375-1386 (2025)	Fast X-ray transient EP240315A from a Lyman-continuum-leaking galaxy at $z \approx 5$	The study shows that fast X-ray transients can serve as a new and powerful probe of massive star deaths, GRB physics, and ionizing-photon-leaking galaxies during the epoch of reionization, significantly expanding the role of X-ray transient surveys in early-universe astrophysics.	Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology
7.	M. Fanculli, ..., G. De Ninno et al	<i>Physical Review Letters</i> 134, 156701 (2025)	Magnetic Vortex Dynamics Probed by Time-Resolved Magnetic Helicoidal Dichroism	By revealing how complex magnetic patterns can be optically created and manipulated, it opens new perspectives for future magnetic devices and data storage technologies.	Laboratory of Quantum Optics
8.	A. A. Halim,..., A. Filipčič, J.P. Lundquist, S. U. Shivashankara, S. Stanič, S. Vorobiov, D. Zavrtnik, M. Zavrtnik et al	<i>Physical review letters</i> 134, 021001 (2025)	Inference of the mass composition of cosmic rays with energies from 1018.5 to 1020 eV using the Pierre Auger Observatory and deep learning	A novel approach to the study of the highest-energy particles in the universe and their origins using machine learning.	Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology
9.	I. Cikajlo et al.	<i>Annals of medicine</i> 57, 1-9 (2025)	The effect of weight-bearing training with visual feedback on balance and prosthetic loading in trans-tibial amputees following vascular disease: a pilot randomized control trial	A pilot randomized controlled trial demonstrated that weight-bearing training with real-time visual feedback may significantly improve balance and prosthetic loading, increase gait speed and reduce reliance on walking aids in trans-tibial amputees with vascular disease.	Centre for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics
10.	M. Okorn, ..., N. Novak Tušar, P. Djinović	<i>Carbon Energy</i> , e70102 (2025)	Simultaneous Photoactivation of Copper and Ti-Doped CeO _{2-x} Enables Optimal Acceleration of the RWGS Reaction	We studied the effect of visible light on kinetics of CO ₂ reduction in to CO and confirmed that a change in the reaction mechanism occurs at an almost 60-fold higher reaction rate.	School of Science



Research Activity

In 2025, the research work at the University of Nova Gorica was organized at four research laboratories and six research centers: Laboratory for Environmental and Life Sciences, Laboratory of Organic Matter Physics, Materials Research Laboratory, Laboratory of Quantum Optics, Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology, Center for Atmospheric Research, Center for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics, Research Centre for Humanities, Wine Research Centre, Centre for Cognitive Science of Language.

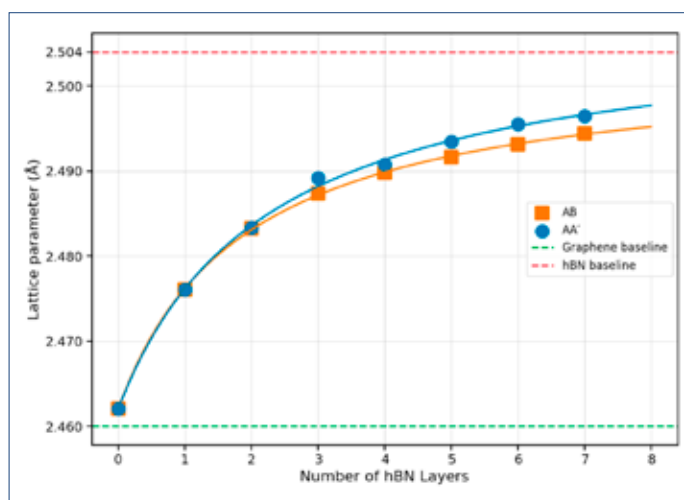


Laboratory of Organic Matter Physics

Head: Prof. Dr. Egon Pavlica

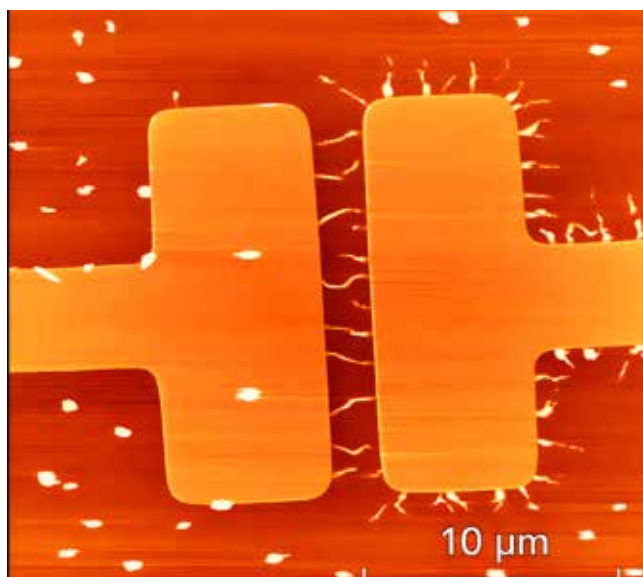
Research activities in 2025 in the Laboratory of Organic Matter Physics were conducted on several different topics, focusing on ultrafast electron dynamics, heterostructure engineering, and ionic impact on organic semiconducting layers. We investigated $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ MXene using time-resolved pump-probe photoemission to understand femtosecond carrier dynamics. Graphene/hexagonal boron nitride heterostructures were studied with density-functional-theory simulations to reveal thickness-dependent structural relaxation and charge redistribution. Additionally, a novel organic material was deposited under electric fields to examine molecular self-organization and charge transport. These complementary approaches aim to clarify fundamental mechanisms linking electronic excitation, structural evolution, and transport, providing guidance for designing advanced electronic and optoelectronic materials.

In 2025, we performed a density-functional-theory study of graphene/hexagonal boron nitride heterostructures, focusing on bilayer graphene covered with one to seven hBN layers. The in-plane lattice parameter increased with hBN thickness and followed a $1/N$ dependence described by a strain-sharing model reflecting elastic energy redistribution between graphene and hBN. Analysis of uniaxial stress components revealed a critical thickness of four hBN layers, at which the heterostructure becomes nearly fully relaxed in-plane. This relaxation was accompanied by a reduced graphene–BN interface separation and decreased charge transfer to graphene, consistent with an increased interface valence-band offset. These results clarify how thickness-dependent relaxation and interfacial charge redistribution influence both structural stability and electronic properties, and they provide important guidelines for designing high-performance graphene-based devices with tunable electronic characteristics.



Results of DFT calculations of graphene/hBN heterostructure of two graphene layers and N hBN layers. Symbols represent lattice parameter as a number of hBN layers, approaching hBN lattice parameter (green dashed line).

We investigated ultrafast electron dynamics in $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ MXene using time-resolved pump-probe photoemission spectroscopy. Experiments were performed on a $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ MXene thin film at the SPIRIT beamline of the Fermi@Elettra research facility in Trieste. This experimental station provides high temporal and energy resolution, which is essential for studying nonequilibrium processes in advanced quantum materials. The sample was cleaned in situ by stepwise vacuum annealing to remove surface contaminants and ensure reproducible experimental conditions. After preparation, static photoemission spectra exhibited a well-defined valence-band density of states terminating at a sharp Fermi edge, confirming the metallic character and high quality of the sample. These observations



AFM topography of epitaxially grown D3 grains on the SiO_2 substrate between two T-shaped Au-structures. Thin D3 crystals are observed growing from the right Au structure, which was at positive electric potential.

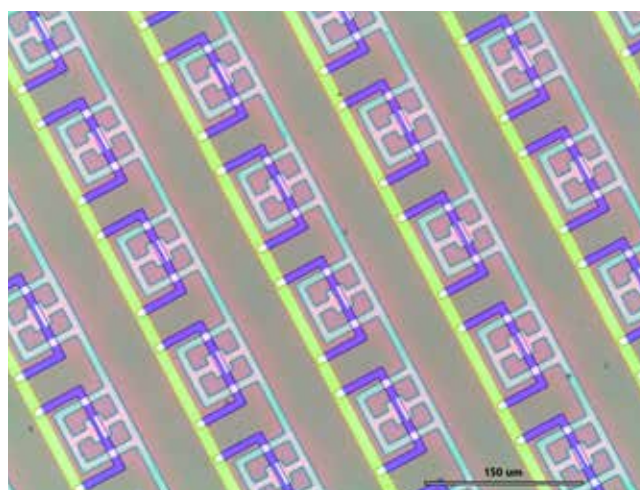
provided a reliable reference for interpreting time-dependent electronic responses under ultrafast excitation.

Time-resolved measurements were carried out in a pump-probe geometry using a p-polarized 27 eV XUV probe pulse and a p-polarized 800 nm pump pulse, with an estimated temporal cross-correlation of approximately 100 fs. The data were analyzed as delay-energy intensity maps and pump-induced differential maps obtained by subtracting a negative-delay reference. A transient increase of spectral weight above the Fermi level was observed around time zero, accompanied by a corresponding depletion below the Fermi level. The above-Fermi-level signal was quantified by averaging an energy window and fitting the delay trace with a Gaussian function, yielding a full width at half maximum of about 0.22 ps. The below-Fermi-level depletion persisted on the picosecond timescale and was described by a slower decay with a characteristic time of approximately 2.3 ps using a double-exponential model. These measurements highlight the rapid redistribution of electrons immediately after excitation and the subsequent relaxation processes that involve interactions with phonons and lattice vibrations, providing insights into the fundamental carrier dynamics in MXenes.

We also investigated a novel organic material based on cyanobenzoic acid (D3) with a high molecular dipole moment to understand thin-film formation under an external electric field. D3 molecules were deposited by molecular

beam epitaxy between gold electrodes under various bias conditions. The samples were characterized using Raman spectroscopy, atomic force microscopy, and polarized light microscopy. Preferential growth of thin crystalline domains from the biased electrode was observed, indicating the key role of the electric field in molecular self-organization and crystal orientation. In parallel, LC resonators were fabricated using lithography and metallization processes to explore their potential for optical and electronic device applications. Finally, we

studied charge transport in semiconducting polymers, demonstrating that ionic doping and the addition of gold nanoparticles significantly enhance electrical conductivity and charge mobility. The observed transport regimes provide valuable insight for potential use in neuromorphic electronic devices, flexible memory architectures, and other advanced optoelectronic applications, highlighting the importance of combined structural and electronic characterization in designing semiconducting heterostructures.

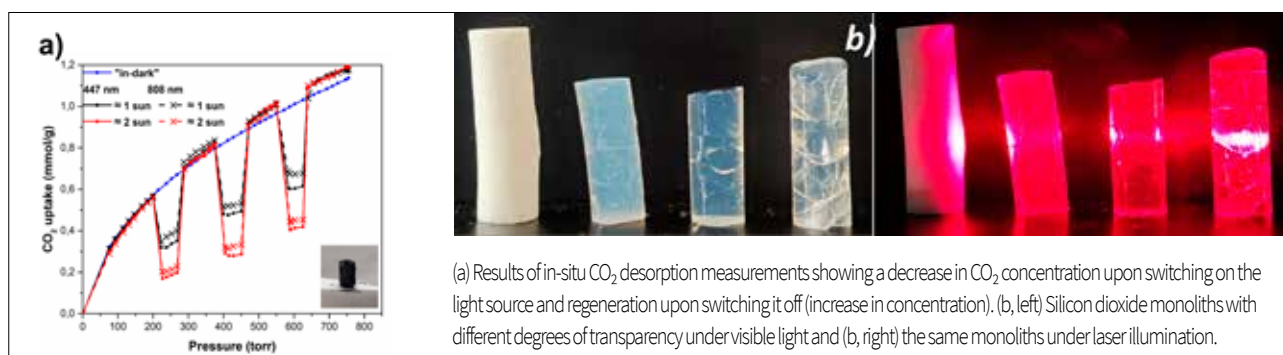


Optical micrograph of an array of LC-resonators. Different metallic leads were prepared in a subsequent steps of laser lithography and metal depositions.

Materials Research Laboratory

Head: Prof. Dr. Matjaž Valant

Material Research Laboratory was established in 2009 and has evolved into a sizeable research unit with state-of-the-art equipment and diverse expertise of the team members, ranging from synthetic and crystal chemistry to functional materials, surface science, and theoretical and computational chemistry. We have not only maintained the initial research focus on environmental and electronic materials but also developed it towards new exciting and advanced material systems and processes that include topological insulators, energy conversion and storage, nanostructured photo-catalysts, materials for electrochemical devices, biomaterials and materials in extreme environments.



(a) Results of in-situ CO₂ desorption measurements showing a decrease in CO₂ concentration upon switching on the light source and regeneration upon switching it off (increase in concentration). (b, left) Silicon dioxide monoliths with different degrees of transparency under visible light and (b, right) the same monoliths under laser illumination.

The research activity of the Material Research Laboratory in 2025 was characterized by strong interdisciplinarity, successful integration into international research projects, and the development of new materials, methods, and concepts in the fields of energy technologies, sustainability, advanced characterization, and environmental applications. The achieved results further confirm the laboratory's role as an important research hub at both the national and international levels.

Photothermal Materials and CO₂ Regeneration

In 2025, we officially launched two projects funded by ARIS (a basic research project and a project within the ERC complementary scheme), focusing on the development of energy-efficient CO₂ regeneration using spectrally targeted photothermal effects in

stable monolithic materials. The research is based on high-surface-area silica monoliths as CO₂ sorbents and iron oxide and activated carbon as photothermally active components. We developed and optimized synthesis routes for transparent silica monoliths using polymers and surfactants, as well as several strategies for incorporating photothermal particles, including particle addition during synthesis, post-synthetic impregnation, and in-situ synthesis of iron-oxide nanoparticles within the monolithic matrix. Surface chemical modifications of the particles, such as silica coating of iron oxide and hydrophilization of activated carbon, enabled improved and homogeneous particle distribution. The materials were evaluated in terms of CO₂ sorption capacity, photothermal response under narrow-band laser irradiation and simulated solar light, desorption temperature, and long-term cycling stability. In

this context, a dedicated in-situ CO₂ desorption measurement system was established for the first time, allowing direct monitoring of material response upon switching the light source on and off, representing an important step toward realistic operating conditions.

Low-Loss Optical Fibers and Electron-Beam Material Modification

We concluded a bilateral project funded by ARIS and CEA (French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission), focused on the characterization of irradiation-induced point defects in ultra-low-loss optical fibers. The role of UNG was primarily the analysis of chemical composition and cathodoluminescence response of the fibers, contributing to a deeper understanding of degradation mechanisms under high-energy irradiation. In parallel, a new research direction was developed, focusing on

the use of a focused electron beam for localized heating and controlled surface modification of materials. This approach enables local melting, reshaping, and tuning of electronic properties. The achieved results were presented at the 17th Multinational Congress on Microscopy (17MCM, 2025), where the poster received the Best Poster Award in the Materials Science category (S. Ahmad, M. Fanetti, "Focused E-Beam Heating for Local Material Modification: Melting, Patterning, and Band Gap Tuning").

Energy Storage and Electrochemical Materials

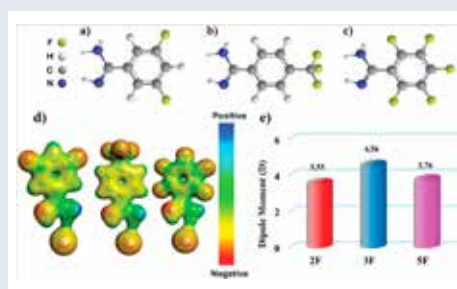
Research on electrochemical energy storage systems continued with the development of supercapacitors based on nickel- and cobalt-based hydroxides. The focus was on understanding the relationship between synthesis pathways, internal structure, and accessibility of redox-active sites. Using in-situ X-ray absorption spectroscopy, changes in the electronic state of metal ions during operation were directly monitored. We demonstrated that less ordered, open structures enable faster ion transport, higher capacitance, and improved cycling stability, whereas excessive crystallinity and carbonate impurities significantly reduce performance by blocking active sites. These results were published in leading journals in the fields of materials science and energy (Chemistry of Materials, ACS Energy Letters, 2025).

Photoelectrochemistry and Energy Conversion

In the field of photoelectrochemistry, we continued investigating the stability and performance of interfaces in complex heterostructures. In collaboration with international partners, we demonstrated that precise control of fabrication steps enables the formation of clean and well-matched interfaces with suppressed interlayer diffusion, leading to nearly ideal charge separation and record performance in solar-driven hydrogen production. In parallel, we developed experimental and theoretical approaches for the photoelectrochemical conversion of biomass-derived alcohols into value-added products.

Perovskite Solar Cells and Catalysis

Research on perovskite solar cells showed that fluorine-functionalized organic spacers significantly improve the efficiency and moisture stability of 3D MAPI perovskite structures. The best devices achieved efficiencies exceeding 19% and retained more than 85% of their initial performance after prolonged operation under humid conditions. In addition, studies on electrochemical ammonia synthesis using iron phosphides and tungsten oxides were conducted, resulting in publications in international peer-reviewed journals.



Advanced Characterization Methods and Topological Materials

A significant part of the research was devoted to the development and application of cathodoluminescence spectro-microscopy. This technique was used to map nanoscale plasmonic edge modes in the topological insulator Bi_2Se_3 , revealing that edge excitations play a key role in its optical response. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of plasmonic phenomena in topological materials and their potential for nanophotonic applications. Within a broad international collaboration, we also contributed to a comprehensive study on the growth of antimonene on Bi_2Se_3 single crystals, clarifying the formation of distinct structures and their identification using standard imaging and spectroscopic techniques.

Materials and Microbiology

In 2025, a new research direction at the interface of materials science and microbiology was initiated. Porous materials, including covalent organic frameworks and metal-organic frameworks, were investigated as potential antimicrobial agents. Experiments demonstrated their ability to suppress the growth of pathogenic microorganisms in suspension and inhibit biofilm formation, highlighting their potential for applications in medical and environmental technologies.

Sustainability, LCA, and Systems Approaches

A significant part of the research focused on life-cycle assessment (LCA) of energy systems, particularly residential heating and domestic hot-water systems based on ground-source heat pumps combined with photovoltaic-thermal collectors. The results showed substantial reductions in global warming potential and resource use, while also identifying trade-offs related to ecosystem impacts. In collaboration

(a-c) Molecular structures of the organic spacers 2F, 3F, and 5F. (d) Electrostatic potential (ESP) analysis of the xF organic spacers ($x = 2, 3, 5$); the color scale represents the self-consistent field Coulomb potential. (e) Calculated molecular dipole moments of the 2F, 3F, and 5F molecules.

with the University of Dundee, system-level approaches to sustainability governance were developed, emphasizing biome-specific risk diagnostics and adaptive decision-making rather than universal solutions.

Modeling, Biosensors, and Analytical Tools

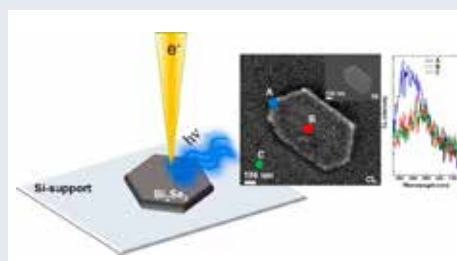
Research activities also included the development of web-based tools for the analysis of circular dichroism and differential scanning calorimetry data in protein thermal denaturation studies, the development of kinetic models for pH-sensitive urea biosensors, and the modeling of photoelectrochemical processes. These results strengthen the link between experimental data, modeling, and applied technological solutions.

Applied Circular and Sustainable Processes

In 2025, our portfolio of applied technologies was expanded with a patented circular process for CO_2 capture and concentration in sodium hydroxide with simultaneous production of green hydrogen. The process is based on an innovative two-step regeneration scheme: (i) conversion of carbonates/bicarbonates to NaCl via chlorination and electroreduction, and (ii) membrane electrolysis of brine to regenerate NaOH. Extensive experimental studies and theoretical modeling are being carried out to optimize absorption capacity, energy efficiency, process stability, and product purity.

Collaboration with Industry

In addition to the research activities described above, the laboratory continued its long-standing and successful collaboration with the industrial partner RHI Magnesita (Seven Refractories d.o.o.) from Divača. Within this collaboration, we provide quality analysis of industrial samples, supporting material performance assessment and industrial process control.



Cathodoluminescence mapping of plasmonic edge modes in Bi_2Se_3 . Cathodoluminescence spectroscopy reveals nanoscale plasmonic edge modes in the topological insulator Bi_2Se_3 , confirming CL as an effective technique for investigating localized plasmonic phenomena.

Laboratory for Environmental and Life Sciences

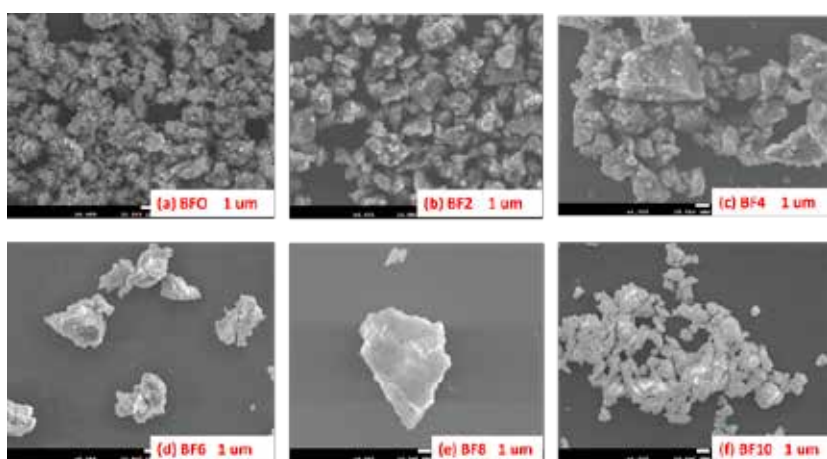
Head: Doc. Dr. Iain Robert White

The Laboratory for Environmental and Life Sciences (LELS) provides a platform for intensive interdisciplinary research collaboration among analytical chemists, environmental chemists, technologists, biochemists, molecular biologists, toxicologists, and materials scientists. LELS focuses on the development of novel ultrasensitive laser-based analytical techniques, the study of the fate and transformation of pollutants in atmospheric, terrestrial, and aquatic environments, the characterization of advanced materials, the development of biomedical diagnostic tools, and the identification of recombinant antibodies targeting tumour biomarkers. The laboratory maintains extensive collaborations with research groups worldwide.

Research activity

During 2025, we developed a laser-based analytical approach to study metal oxide photocatalysts designed for water treatment applications, focusing on their performance during the degradation of toxic hexavalent chromium. BiFeO₃ doped with Co and Pr (2–10%) was analysed to understand how chemical modification influences its thermal and functional properties. Using a combined system of beam deflection spectrometry and photopyroelectric calorimetry, we showed that increasing dopant concentration leads to a measurable reduction in thermal diffusivity and thermal conductivity. Structural analyses revealed that these changes arise from dopant-induced lattice distortions, reduced crystallite size, and altered microstructure, which together enhance phonon scattering. These results link nanoscale structural modifications to macroscopic thermal behaviour and photocatalytic performance, providing insights relevant for designing more efficient and safer materials for removing toxic metal ions from water.

We continued our work on the development of methods to characterise the health impacts of exposure to pollution, including targeted analyses of oxidative stress metabolites and techniques to characterise pollutants present in both inspired and expired air. We also successfully completed a bilateral project with Bosnia and Herzegovina focused on the cytotoxic and genotoxic potential of atmospheric aerosols from the city of Tuzla



SEM images of BFO and Co-Pr doped BFO $\text{Bi}_{(1-x)}\text{Pr}_x\text{Fe}_{(1-x)}\text{Co}_x\text{O}_3$ (for $x = 0.02, 0.04, 0.06, 0.08, \text{ and } 0.10$).



J. Mijajlović and M. Trček sampling the Reka river for chemical pollution analysis.

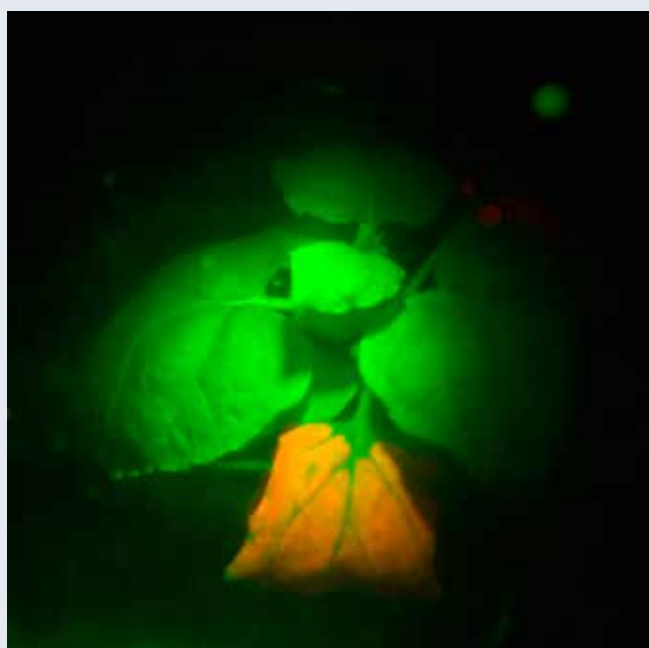
(BiH). Our applied work in environmental science now includes a collaboration with Škocjan Caves Park, which aims to identify pollution sources along the Reka River to protect endangered crayfish that rely on the region's delicate ecosystem. In addition, we are initiating a new research direction in plant epigenetics, integrating genome-wide analyses with environmental data to investigate epigenetic regulation of plant stress responses and resilience.

In the area of biotechnology development, we continued research on the identification of new target-binding biomolecules. Over the past year, we began integrating machine learning approaches and have already started applying the resulting theoretical advances within specific projects. We significantly advanced our understanding of how comparative oncology can be structured to maximize its translational potential and have discovered new reagents and biomarkers. Furthermore, several team members visited other institutes where they learnt techniques that have become part of our lab expertise. For example, Dr. D'Ercole visited Aachen University focussing on the expression and characterization of nanobody-based biomolecules in cell-free and plant systems,

alongside comparative isolation of plant-derived exosomes using multiple separation methods. Dr. Kropivšek Brumat visited the University of Oxford and the University of Oslo, where she analysed various machine-learning

methods for nanobody-antigen binding. Asst. Prof. de Marche visited GENOS d.o.o, Zagreb to study cancer epigenetics, focusing on the role of chromatin remodelers HLTf and ZRANB3 in DNA accessibility and genome stability. This work supports their emerging importance in tumour development and therapeutic response.

Elsewhere, our research on the impact of APOBEC3 (A3) proteins is in its final phase, in which we have determined that the expression of A3A and A3B proteins in HPV-infected cells affects both the level of expression and the localization of the host protein CDKN2A (p16). We continued with the analysis of gene expression and the occurrence of somatic mutations at different stages of HPV infection in order to determine the temporal pattern of changes during cell transformation caused by HPV activity and associated with the expression of A3A and A3B proteins. During this year, we also successfully continued research into the role of phosphorylation of the HPV L2 capsid protein in the infection of cells by HPV viruses. We generated all mutants of potential phosphorylation sites in two expression vectors and initiated functional assays.



Fluorescence image of *Nicotiana benthamiana* leaves used in plant-based molecular biotechnology experiments.

Laboratory of Quantum Optics

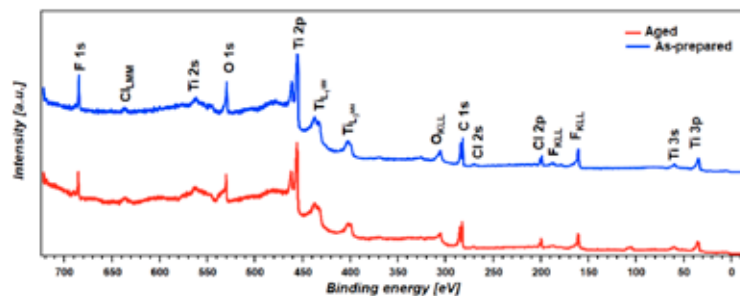
Head: Prof. Dr. Giovanni De Ninno

The Laboratory of Quantum Optics (LKO) specializes in studying the ultrafast response of electrons in semiconductors, topological insulators, superconductors, and metal/organic interfaces for applications in electronics, spintronics, and energy harvesting. In addition, LKO performs XUV time-resolved reflectivity studies to investigate resonant magnetization dynamics in magnetic alloys and develops advanced optical schemes to enhance the properties of high-harmonic generation (HHG) radiation in gases. Furthermore, LKO uses X-rays at synchrotron radiation facilities for in situ characterization of the atomic and molecular structure of new functional nanomaterials, as well as biological and environmental samples. Lab members actively participate in the development of the FERMI free-electron laser, one of the most powerful laser sources worldwide, which is opening new opportunities for exploring the structure and non-equilibrium states of condensed, soft, and low-density matter.

During the year 2025, the activities focused on the following topics:

Stability and aging effects in $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ MXene thin films

We investigated the electronic and structural stability of $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ MXene thin films with a focus on aging effects relevant for electronic and optoelectronic uses. We characterized samples immediately after preparation and after one year of storage in a nitrogen atmosphere using X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS, see Fig. 1), near-edge X-ray absorption spectroscopy at a synchrotron source, complementary laboratory-based X-ray measurements, and electrical conductivity tests. We found that, despite only limited surface oxidation after one year, the electrical conductivity decreases by nearly one order of magnitude compared to the as-prepared film. This result demonstrates that even mild aging can strongly affect the functional performance of $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ MXene. Our study highlights the need for careful control of storage conditions and material engineering strategies to ensure long-term reliability when MXenes are integrated into devices. The study was carried out in collaboration with the ALOISA beamline of the Elettra Sincrotrone Trieste.

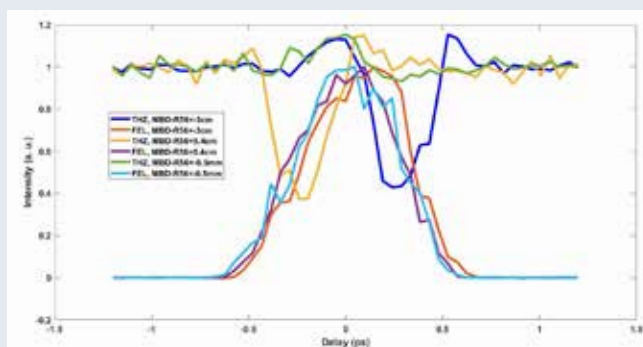


XPS survey spectra of the $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ MXene phase in the as-prepared (blue curve) and aged (red curve) states, acquired using soft X-ray irradiation at a photon energy of 820 eV. For clarity, the as-prepared spectrum is vertically offset.

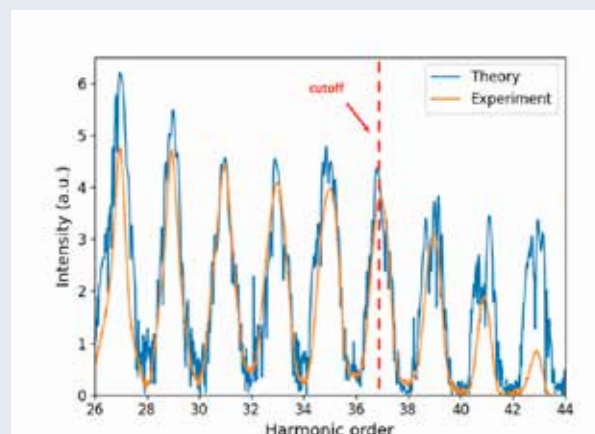
Optical Control of a Metastable Phase in 1T-TaS_2

We investigated light-induced metastable phases in quantum materials using time- and angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy. In our laboratory we carried out pump-probe experiments on the CDW-Mott insulator 1T-TaS_2 , demonstrating the emergence of a long-lived metastable phase triggered by strong infrared excitation. We analyzed the fluence dependence of the electronic structure and identified a clear excitation threshold for the formation of the metastable state. Our measurements reveal a renormalized band structure associated with a relaxed periodic lattice distortion and

predominantly lattice-driven dynamics. We observed the appearance of a new dispersive band near the Hubbard bands, indicating a novel electronic structure unique to the metastable phase. By varying the pump fluence, we showed how the phase can be optically tuned, while fast transient dynamics indicate that the intrinsic CDW amplitude mode remains largely unaffected. These results are relevant for future device concepts, as they demonstrate how nonequilibrium phases can be selectively created and controlled on ultrafast timescales, opening routes toward optically driven functionalities in quantum and electronic devices.



FEL and THz intensities measured at the TeraFERMI beamline as a function of the delay between the electron beam and the seed laser for different settings of the longitudinal transport parameter R56 in the main beam dump (MBD). The data are shown for large negative R56 (-3 cm), large positive R56 (+5.4 cm), and R56 close to zero (-0.5 mm). While the FEL signal exhibits a pronounced temporal overlap dependence for all configurations, the THz yield strongly depends on R56, demonstrating that tuning the beam optics in the MBD enables controlled modulation of the THz emission.



Experimental and theoretical spectrum of N₂, showing the estimated cutoff.

THz studies at the FERMI free-electron laser

We carried out experimental activities at the FERMI free-electron laser (FEL) at Elettra Sincrotrone Trieste aimed at the long-term development of monochromatic, tunable, and structured THz radiation at the TeraFERMI beamline. At this beamline, THz radiation is generated via coherent transition radiation from the spent electron beam, accelerated to about 1.5 GeV and transported to an Al target after FEL operation. To achieve narrowband THz emission, a controlled microbunching of the electron beam with picosecond periodicity is required. Our work focused on preliminary experiments to impose and preserve an external longitudinal modulation using laser beating and on controlling the electron-beam optics in the main beam dump (MBD) line. In particular, we investigated the role of the R56 optical parameter in converting energy modulation into current modulation. Joint experiments by the LKO team and the FERMI beam-dynamics group demonstrated that tuning R56 enables controlled modulation of the THz yield, see Fig. 2. This opens the way to future studies of THz spectral properties in seeded regimes.

HHG molecular spectroscopy

HHG provides a powerful spectroscopic tool to probe the electronic structure and ultrafast dynamics of atoms and molecules, as the emitted radiation encodes detailed information on electron-ion interactions during strong-field ionization and recombination. In our activity we employed one-color HHG spectroscopy to investigate molecular targets, using N₂ as a

benchmark system to validate the performance of our experimental setup and its capability to access electronic structure information. The measured HHG spectra of non-aligned N₂ molecules show good agreement with theoretical calculations based on full electron wave-packet dynamics, correctly reproducing the cutoff position and the main spectral features, see Fig. 3. Building on this benchmark, we extended our studies to more complex molecules such as bromoform, where the experimentally observed cutoff energies exceed the predictions of the standard three-step model, revealing the contribution of multiple molecular orbitals beyond the HOMO. Despite reduced conversion efficiency in molecules, the essential spectral features are clearly resolved, opening the way to studies of larger and more complex systems. As a first step in this direction, we have already obtained preliminary HHG results on the water molecule.

Advances in nanomaterial research using synchrotron X-ray spectroscopy

In 2025, we obtained beamtime at three synchrotron facilities (DIAMOND, PETRA III, and ELETTRA) for four research projects. With the University of Ljubljana, we studied calcium distribution and chemical states in calcium-rich cereal grains using X-ray micro-spectroscopy and micro-XANES, providing insights into calcium bioavailability relevant for improving nutritional quality. We also applied micro-XANES to archaeologically significant Egyptian samples to investigate mummification processes. With the Jožef Stefan

Institute and the University of Maribor, we used high-resolution RIXS at PETRA III to study two-electron excitations in transition elements, revealing quantum correlations beyond mean-field models. Led by UNG, we published operando XANES and EXAFS studies on Ni- and Co-based oxygen evolution electrocatalysts and, with international partners, on high-entropy alloy catalysts and rhodium complexes for metal recycling.

Teaching activities

In 2025, Prof. Giovanni De Ninno served as the course principal for two undergraduate courses: Classical Mechanics, with assistant Arun Ravindran, mag. fiz., and Quantum Mechanics, also with assistant Arun Ravindran, mag. fiz. Prof. Barbara Ressel was the course principal for Electrodynamics and Solid State Physics and also taught Physics Laboratory III. Prof. Giovanni De Ninno was the course principal for Optics, with assistant Dr. Johannes Schmidt. Dr. Michele Manfreda from Elettra-Sincrotrone Trieste S.C.p.A. contributed to the "Numerical Optics" component of the course. Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon served as the course principal for the following courses: Physics and Technical Physics (first cycle); X-ray Spectroscopy and Contemporary Measurement Techniques (second cycle); Structural Analysis of Materials with X-ray Absorption and Emission Spectroscopy and Microscopy (third cycle).

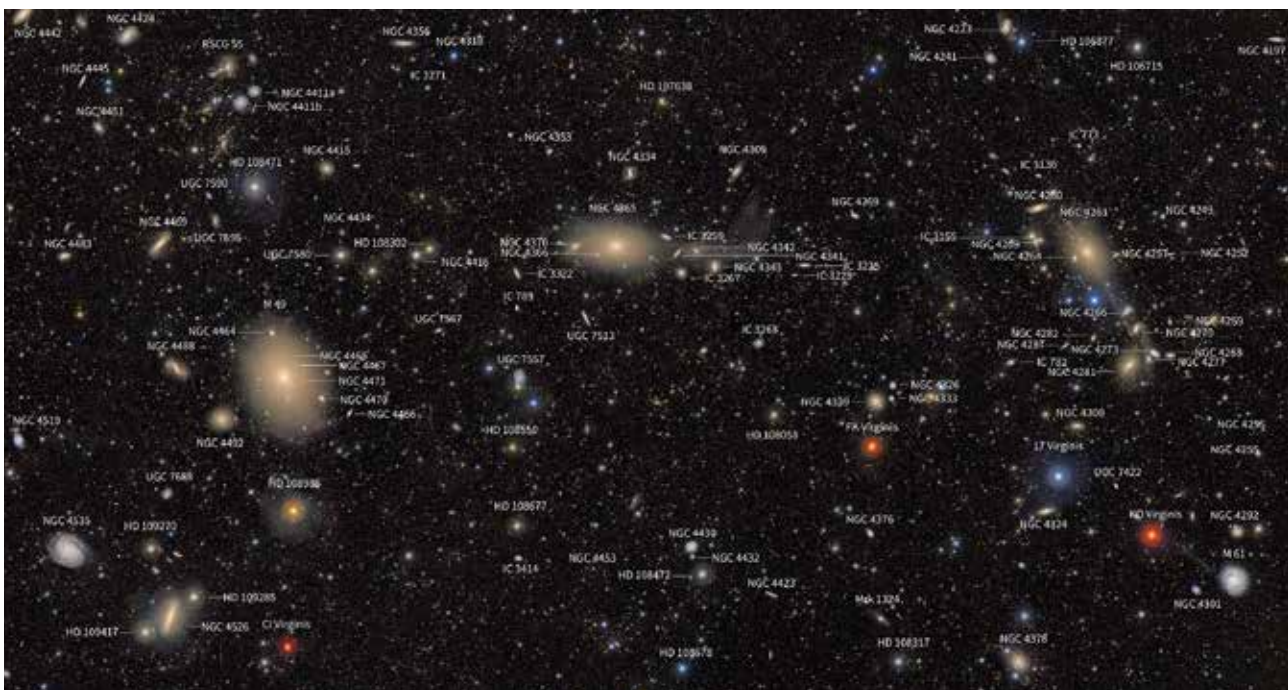
Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology

Head: Prof. Dr. Samo Stanič

Research at the Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology is aimed at achieving a more comprehensive understanding of the Universe, its fundamental constituents, and the high-energy processes that take place within it. We believe that the key to success lies in combining information carried by different cosmic messengers - photons, charged particles, neutrinos, and gravitational waves - and therefore focus on multi-messenger research. Our primary goal is to study physical phenomena occurring at extreme energies in nature, which we pursue through active participation in international scientific collaborations. Our research is financially supported by projects and programs of the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency, the ESFRI CTA infrastructure project, the MSCA COFUND project SMASH, as well as by projects funded by the European Commission and the European Space Agency.

Pierre Auger Observatory

A very different perspective on the universe can be gained by observing incident charged cosmic particles at extreme energies. Such particles are exceedingly rare - at the highest energies, on average only one particle strikes a square kilometer of the Earth's surface per century. They can be studied only through their interactions with atomic nuclei in atmospheric gases, which produce extensive air showers of secondary charged particles. By analyzing the properties of these showers, the energy and arrival direction of the primary particles can be reconstructed. To facilitate this study, the Pierre Auger Observatory consists of an array of 1660 surface Cherenkov water detectors and 27 fluorescence telescopes, spread over an area roughly equivalent to one-seventh of Slovenia's surface. In 2025, the upgraded observatory (AugerPrime) released its first data from its new large-scale radio detector system, measuring radio emission from extensive air showers, which confirm its excellent performance. The observatory also reported the first observation of



Annotated First Look image of the Virgo Cluster by the Vera C. Rubin Observatory. From sizable stars to sprawling galaxies, Rubin transforms seemingly empty pockets of space into glittering tapestries. Credit: NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory.

a deficit in cosmic-ray counts (a “shadow”) caused by the Moon at an average energy of approximately 7×10^{17} eV, confirming its angular pointing accuracy at ultra-high energies and opening new opportunities to study magnetic deflections and intergalactic propagation in detail. Important progress was also made in the study of hadronic interactions at unprecedented energies - about an order of magnitude higher than those accessible at the LHC - where the observatory served as a natural particle-physics laboratory. The results, published in 2025, challenge existing models and contribute to the refinement of fundamental descriptions of particle collisions. The University of Nova Gorica has been a member of the Pierre Auger Collaboration since 2004.

Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory

Studies of very-high-energy cosmic photons (gamma rays) provide crucial insights into the non-thermal Universe. In early 2025, the European Commission established the European Research Infrastructure Consortium for the Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory (CTAO ERIC), which will build and operate the world’s largest observatory for high-energy gamma-ray astronomy, covering energies from 20 GeV to 300 TeV. Slovenia is one of the founding members of CTAO ERIC. The observatory will consist of two arrays: a northern array under construction on La Palma (Canary Islands, Spain) and a southern array being built at Paranal in the Atacama Desert, Chile. On La Palma, construction of the large-sized telescopes (LSTs) and medium-sized telescopes (MSTs) continued throughout 2025, with structural installations and support assembly progressing toward full commissioning. At Paranal, CTAO reached a major construction milestone with the groundbreaking ceremony for the southern array site at the end of 2025, paving the way for



Dense cluster of bright blue stars shining like beacons against wispy nebula cloud of orange and blue. The background is filled with countless smaller stars.



This image offers a closer look at the region surrounding the Trifid and Lagoon Nebulae, as seen in this First Look image captured by NSF–DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory.

the installation of the first telescopes in 2026. Slovenian scientists have been contributing to the observatory’s conceptual design and scientific strategy as part of the international Cherenkov Telescope Array Consortium since 2013. Their research focuses on studies of dark matter and new physics using machine-learning methods, the detection of Galactic and extragalactic astrophysical sources, and the development of a Raman lidar system for atmospheric characterization and monitoring above the observatory site on La Palma.

Fermi Large Area Telescope

The Fermi Large Area Telescope (LAT) is the primary detector aboard the Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope, the leading space observatory for high-energy gamma-ray research since 2008. Operating in the energy range from 20 MeV to over 300 GeV, Fermi LAT has identified more than 5000 gamma-ray sources - over ten times the number previously known. In a surprising discovery, it revealed a massive bubble-like structure emanating from the center of the Milky Way, extending above and below the Galactic plane. These so-called Fermi bubbles are nearly half the height of the Galactic disk’s radius. Additionally, Fermi LAT has placed strong constraints on the nature of dark matter particles by analyzing potential decay or annihilation signatures in astrophysical objects. The findings from Fermi LAT have been instrumental in a series of multi-messenger discoveries, particularly those related to the origins of ultra-high-energy neutrinos and high-energy emissions from gamma-ray bursts.

Astrophysical transients

Our group is active in international collaborations studying short-lived transient



Panoramic view of all four LST telescopes for CTAO (left) and the two MAGIC telescopes (right) at the Observatorio del Roque de los Muchachos on the island of La Palma in the Canary Islands, Spain.

phenomena in the sky, including gamma-ray bursts, neutron star mergers, tidal disruption events, and supernova explosions. Much of our research is linked to the Vera C. Rubin Observatory, which will conduct the largest and most precise sky survey to date and is expected to discover a vast number of new transient phenomena. In June 2025, the Rubin Observatory unveiled its first images from the 8.4-meter telescope equipped with the world’s largest 3.2-gigapixel digital astronomy camera, revealing distant galaxies, dense star fields, and a dynamic snapshot of the night sky. This first look at the Universe through the Rubin LSST Camera was a global event and was followed live at the University of Nova Gorica. The early release demonstrated the telescope’s exceptional imaging power and wide field of view. In addition to scientific research, we contribute to the observatory’s data repository and data processing pipeline. Beyond Rubin, we also participate in spectroscopic observations for the classification of transient phenomena using the New Technology Telescope (NTT) in Chile through the ePESSTO+ collaboration.

Center for atmospheric research

Head: Prof. Dr. Griša Močnik



Haze, caused by carbonaceous aerosols in Sonipat India.

The Center for Atmospheric Research (CAR) focuses on the study of physical processes in the atmosphere using in-situ and remote measurements and modeling of atmospheric phenomena. Our research includes studies of fundamental aerosol properties, the influence of aerosols on the climate, the investigation of aerosol sources, their dispersion in the atmosphere and vertical profiles. We investigate atmospheric structures, how aerosols interact with the clouds, and use these data for validation of satellite measurements. The key question is, how aerosols affect the atmosphere by scattering and absorption of solar radiation. Scattering cools the atmosphere, while absorption warms it – aerosol black carbon is the second most important climate forcer, and dust and organic aerosols increase this effect.

We also conduct research on the sources of air pollution, identifying and quantifying the contributions of domestic heating with biomass, industry and traffic to the local and regional air pollution. These activities are a mixture of techniques to determine the aerosol chemical composition and their physical properties, and sophisticated statistical methods to obtain the source profiles and their contributions to particulate air pollution. We develop new methodologies and compare them with the state-of-the-art.

The Center is located at the University of Nova Gorica Ajdovščina site and is involved in the activities of the European Space Agency and field campaigns around the globe. The atmospheric observatory at Otlica is part of the Center and functions within the Virtual Alpine Observatory.



Instruments for the measurement of enhancement of aerosol absorption due to organic coatings - Sonipat, India.

Black Carbon Research – laboratory and ambient studies

Black carbon is the most important among the aerosols which absorb solar light and heat the planet. The magnitude of the heating is determined by models which require experimental inputs. The models feature a very large uncertainty which can be reduced only by measurements. For this, accurate and precise measurement methods are required and laboratory and ambient campaigns need to be conducted to validate the models and produce inputs for these models. One of the parameters with great uncertainties is the enhancement of absorption as black carbon aerosols age and are coated with organic material. This so-called “lensing effect” can be small or up to 3. Ambient campaigns have in the past clashed with predictions and resulted in very different values of the enhancement with little explanation on the differences. We have used the novel photo-thermal interferometer PTAAM-2 to measure the enhancement of the aerosol absorption coefficient due to coatings in an ambient campaign in Sonipat, close to New Delhi in India in close cooperation with Indian Institute of Technology Delhi.

We have started a project in the framework of the Marie Skłodowska Curie project SMASH on the development of new machine-learning-facilitated approaches to identify and explain the differences in absorption between different carbonaceous species and mineral dust using absorption and mass measurements.

Determination of sources of air pollution

The results from Kanal ob Soči were reprocessed and we continued to work on the Sarajevo campaign results. In both cases the results show that while the majority of particulate matter is due to biomass combustion (and potentially other unconventional fuels in Sarajevo), the oxidative potential might arise from sources that contribute fractionally less to particulate matter than oxidative potential. Our measurements have found three out of four highest values of oxidative potential in Europe, as reported in the paper, published in the journal *Nature*.

We continued two projects in the framework of the Marie Skłodowska Curie project SMASH on the development of new machine-learning-facilitated approaches to perform source apportionment.

Applied research

The observatory at Otlica above Ajdovščina (965 m a.s.l.) is a node in the national grid of meteorological and environmental stations, administered by the Slovenian Environment Agency, and a member of the European Virtual Alpine Observatory, with continuous monitoring of temperature, humidity, wind speed and direction, ozone concentration and solar irradiation, all available on line at the Agency’s and Center’s web portals. The observatory is involved in numerous dedicated international collaborations.

Wine Research Centre

Head: Doc. Dr. Melita Sternad Lemut

The Wine Research Centre (CRV) is uniting the researchers and multidisciplinary research activities related to the fields of viticulture and enology (plant physiology, biochemistry and pathology; viticulture and winemaking technologies; sustainable agriculture; fruits, grapes and wine analytics; microbiology of grapes and wine and other fermented drinks; biotechnology). We operate in the modern equipped laboratories in Lanthieri Mansion, Vipava and in the experimental fields, including the University's own vineyard. Our primary studied plant is grapevine (with the processing from grapes to wine) but we also study some fruit plants, olives and apple wine (cider). We deal with both applicative research, addressing current problems in the field, as well as expert, more future-oriented research.



We completed three projects in 2025. Within the ARIS CRP MED-STI-K project we worked together with partners to prepare a conceptual design for the establishment of a knowledge network for sustainable Slovenian Mediterranean agriculture and a professional basis for the development strategy of sustainable Slovenian Mediterranean agriculture. In the final year of the Interreg AGROTUR+ project, we analysed aromatic compounds in Slovenian and cross-border ciders, introduced monitoring of lactic acid bacteria and the spoilage yeast *Brettanomyces bruxellensis* using flow cytometry, and determined undesirable compounds in Teran wines from the 2024 vintage. The results of the analyses of Teran wines were presented at the 20th CFGBC Symposium and at the international IMEKOFOODS conference in Ljubljana. The Interreg ENO(SATIRA) project, focused on knowledge transfer to producers and activities aimed at enriching wine tourism offerings, was also completed. In addition, we purchased research equipment for olfactometric analysis, which enables qualitative determination of individual aromas in beverage samples.

Spontaneous fermentation of Blaufränkisch grapevine variety, sampled from seven vineyards in Bela krajina and Dolenjska. Yeast colonies are visible on Petri dishes, appearing a few days after inoculation with samples of fermenting grape must.

Work on several ongoing projects continued. As part of the Interreg Alpine Space RESPOnD project, we prepared an analysis of our pilot area, the Vipava Valley wine-growing region, from the perspective of geomorphology, climate characteristics, and understanding of AWO (Alpine Wine Orchards), and we collected and analysed scientific and professional literature to prepare a catalogue of ecosystem-based approaches to adapting viticulture to climate change. Within the ARIS project “Wine Provenance: Geo-Climatic, Microbiological or Human Construct? Example of Slovene Blaufrankisch Wines”, we carried out sensory evaluation of experimental wines from the 2024 vintage and repeated spontaneous fermentations of the grape variety Blaufrankisch, sampled from seven vineyards in Dolenjska and Bela krajina; yeasts isolated from these fermentations were included in a collection, while their molecular identification is still ongoing. In the ARIS project “Valorization of Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera* Royle) waste for the development of bioactive extracts with potential protective activity on the human vascular system”, we performed various extraction procedures from the plant (conventional, ultrasound-assisted, and pressurized) using different solvents and temperatures; methanolic extracts obtained at higher temperatures showed the highest antioxidant potential in ABTS and FRAP assays. Extracts with the highest antioxidant values were used in experiments on human endothelial cells, from which we prepared cell lysates for further measurements of the enzymatic activity of five enzymes (SOD, catalase, heme oxygenase, GCS, and GST).



Olfactometer, research equipment acquired within the ENO(SATIRA) project



Behind-the-scenes moment from filming the RESPOnD educational video at the Vrhoplje Grapevine Selection and Nursery Centre in the Vipava Valley, featuring Jan Reščič and Andreja Škvarč.

In collaboration with Norwegian partners NIBIO, NOFIMA, and cider producers from the Hardanger region, we continued project activities within the SiderSprak project. We analysed two major experimental trials carried out in Norway. The first trial focused on the fermentation of four apple cultivars from the Hardanger region using four different yeast strains. The second, a terroir trial, included inoculated and spontaneous fermentations of the main apple cultivars originating from different production areas across Norway. The analytical work comprised the determination of aromatic profiles, phenolic compounds, colour, tannins, and selected individual polyphenolic compounds; the results of the chemical analyses will be complemented by sensory evaluation, providing insight into the influence of the apple cultivar–yeast–production area combination on the quality and sensory characteristics of Norwegian cider.

In 2025, the SpoilControl project (Horizon Europe MSCA) was launched, and in the same year the selection procedure for a PhD candidate was carried out; the selected candidate will start research work within the project in 2026. In 2025, young researcher D. Martin studied aromatic compounds to better understand their evolution during wine ageing and completed an ERASMUS exchange in Verona, where she was trained in an additional chromatographic technique. She presented part of the previous year's results at the MACROWINE Congress in Bolzano, where the abstract was selected for a poster presentation and a 3-minute flash talk. Twelve Erasmus students were involved in the Centre's research activities, and a student from Bulgaria also completed her master's thesis within the WRC.

Center for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics

Head: Prof. Dr. Irina Elena Cristea



SmartHallway system for markerless gait assesment in clinical settings.

The Centre for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics is a dynamic, interdisciplinary research group operating at the intersection of mathematics, computer science and informatics, operations research, systems theory, and control systems technology. The Centre is dedicated developing innovative methods for modeling and solving a wide spectrum of problems across mathematics, robotics, industrial engineering. In mathematics, the Centre makes significant contributions in hypercompositional and ordered algebra, as well as coding theory. In parallel it develops and applies intelligent data analysis methodologies in domains where information technologies are essential for knowledge discovery. These applications address complex challenges such as understanding multifactorial diseases, analyzing environmental phenomena, including chaotic systems, and tackling problems related to renewable energy systems.

In 2025 the Centre employed 7 senior researchers and 2 young researchers, working on interdisciplinary fields related to discrete mathematics, rehabilitation robotics and integration of virtual reality and AI into robotics, theoretical and applied operations research, discrete optimization, Gaussian-process models, chaos theory and renewable energy sources.

In the framework of algebra theory, we investigated several characterizations of semigroups by using classical generalized antiideals and fuzzy antiideals. Besides we developed an algorithm to compute the β relation associated to a hypergroupoid. We continued the studies on ordered algebras, introducing the notion of soft GE-algebras, which extends the classical framework of GE-algebras. Moreover, we further explored several homological aspects of short exact sequences of modules. In Algebraic Coding Theory, we investigated properties of nonbinary QR codes with the aim of constructing LCD codes derived from this class.

As part of a project funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency (ARIS), the University Rehabilitation Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (URI Soča) collaborated with the University of Ottawa to develop a markerless gait-analysis system. The system is based on a 25-point biomechanical model from Carnegie Mellon University and uses a supervised deep neural network—an artificial intelligence technology developed by NVIDIA—to identify anatomical points in video recordings. Data from four synchronized cameras are merged through triangulation to construct the biomechanical model and compute gait parameters, including joint angles, segment trajectories, walking speed, step length, segment lengths, step duration, and cadence. To date, we have evaluated the

system in 75 lower-limb prosthesis users, 40 orthosis users, and 30 able-bodied volunteers across four distinct walking conditions. The project's objective is to deliver a system capable of capturing clinically relevant gait parameters in patients using prostheses or orthoses in an outpatient setting, without requiring reflective markers and while wearing everyday clothing.

We further expanded our research in Optimization and Data Science across diverse domains, including Transportation Networks, Viticulture, and Enology. By applying state-of-the-art AI and Machine Learning methods and Data Analytics tools, we uncovered valuable insights

from complex datasets in viticulture, enology, and related fields. This, in turn, enabled more informed and effective decisions in research and industry.

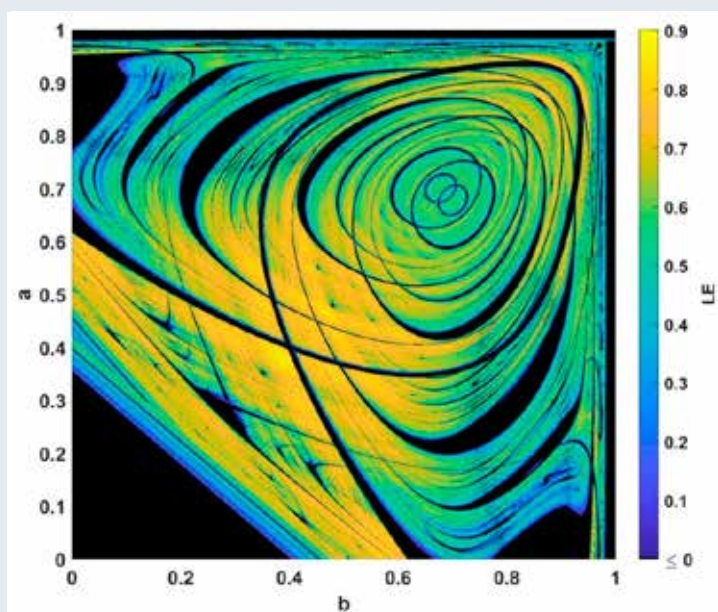
In the field of dynamic systems research, studies were conducted on hybrid modelling, combining theoretical and experimental approaches to systems with distributed parameters, and on the identification of environmental variables in karst cave systems. In the field of nonlinear systems and chaos theory, one part of the Centre's research activities is devoted to the modeling of chaotic systems. Specifically, the problems of designing new families of chaotic maps, and the study of chaotic maps that model neural networks.

Besides we assess critical materials for the green transition and a systematic study of datasets collected from international institutions' databases and industry reports, covering 40 years of global extraction of critical materials. The analysis examined extraction trends in relation to the development and deployment of green technologies, including environmental indicators such as abiotic depletion, energy demand and climate change as a burden on the environment.

The centre has collaborated with colleagues from Slovenia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy, Germany, Canada, Brazil, France, Sweden, Greece, Montenegro, Poland, Turkey, Iran and Romania. In June we organized the fifth edition of the Symposium "Hypercompositional Algebra – new Developments and Applications (HAnDA25)" <https://projects.ung.si/handa/>. Also this year we published 2 edited books in MDPI as reprints of Special Issues led in the open access journals Mathematics and Axioms.



Edited books published in MDPI in 2025.



Example of Lyapunov exponent values with respect to changes in some parameter values, for a chaotic neural network map.

Research Centre for Humanities

Head: Prof. Dr. Katja Mihurko

The Research Center for Humanities works in the fields of literary sciences, cultural history, women studies, visual culture, intercultural studies and digital humanities. The common basis of research areas and their research methodologies is the focus on exploring forms of complex living conditions and human creativity through a historical perspective. Research approaches complement each other - comparative research into literary media, for example, provides reflection on the complexity of interpersonal communication throughout history, while cultural history expands historical research into questions of modern and contemporary cultural practice.



Researchers involved in the project Forms of Shame in Slovenian Literature.

In 2025, researchers from the Research Centre for Humanities participated in numerous international conferences and published several scientific papers in various fields of research.

We acquired two new projects: a basic research project entitled Forms of Shame in Slovenian Literature, led by Assist. Prof. Dr Ivana Zajc, and a citizen science project entitled Biciklistinja Cycling Route.

As part of the bilateral project Promotion of Humanistic Tourism as an Innovative Approach to the Valorisation of Cultural History in Slovenia and Montenegro, we collaborated with Prof. Dr Andriela Vitić Četković and Prof. Dr Ivona Jovanović from the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality at the University of Kotor.

Together with the Faculty of Humanities, we also organised the international summer school Crossing Media Boundaries of the CEEPUS Women Writers in History network, coordinated by Prof. Dr Katja Mihurko, which took place from 27 August to 1 September in Nova Gorica and for one day in Trieste. The theme was crossing boundaries and limitations in relation to female authorship.

We were also active in the field of citizen science, participating in the preparation of the citizen science exhibition "Discover, Participate, Explore" (31 July–31 August 2025), which also featured the Pisma project (www.pisma.org).



Mag. Sara Vukotić and Prof. Dr. Katja Mihurko at the exhibition Discover, Participate, Explore.

In cooperation with the local community, we successfully completed two projects. The Ljubka's trail project was carried out together with the leading partner, the Forum of Slavic Cultures and the Lojze Bratuž Cultural Centre, while the Museum of Transport and Freight project was carried out with the leading partner, the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Primorska and the Municipality of Divača.

We also organised several professional meetings. As part of the bRunCH event, we spoke with guests from the US (Amy Fradel and Joe Valenčič), and with Prof. Dr Mirjam Milharčič

about the importance of letters for emigrants, while Dr Oskar Mulej gave a lecture on the minority problem between the wars – historical responses to national minorities in Europe.

In the seminars of the Research Centre for Humanities, we provided an opportunity for doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers to present their research. In these online seminars, young researchers at the beginning of their academic careers had the opportunity to present their research and receive feedback and encouragement for their future work.



Prof. Dr. Alicia Montoya with participants of the Crossing Media Boundaries summer school.

Center for Cognitive Science of Language

Head: Prof. Dr. Rok Žaucer

Center for Cognitive Science of Language is an interdisciplinary research center of the University of Nova Gorica. Our core expertise is in formal generative linguistics, which we use as a foundation for engaging in other domains of language-related cognitive science – especially language processing, language acquisition, bilingualism and the relation between language and other cognitive abilities.

At the focus of our research are investigations of theoretically relevant syntactic and semantic/pragmatic aspects of different languages. We strengthen the reliability of our data and analysis assessments with the use of corpora, large judgment samples, and various behavioral experimental methods (e.g., sentence completion, reaction times, developmental tasks, eye tracking, ERPs).

The Center for Cognitive Science of Language group specializes in formal generative linguistics, especially syntax and semantics/pragmatics, and uses this as a foundation for engaging in other domains of language-related cognitive science – especially language processing, language acquisition and bilingualism.

Basic research in 2025:

Our main focus in 2025 was on research within five projects financed by the Slovenian Research & Innovation Agency. In 'The limits of freedom: A permutational approach to word order in South Slavic languages', for which 2025 was also the concluding year, we worked on a new methodology of analyzing word order variability in the South Slavic languages and applied it to probe the limits of this variability in the context of a fixed sentence size. This allowed us to re-assess a number of known syntactic phenomena that bear on the freedom of word order as well as to identify new, previously unexplored, word order patterns in these languages.

In 'Slovenian word-prevalence: an online mega-study of word knowledge', a collaboration between us, ZRC SAZU, U. of Ljubljana's Faculty of Education, and University Medical Center Ljubljana, we conducted a large-scale study using lexical decision and word-picture matching tasks to collect word-prevalence norm data for Slovenian, which is crucial for psycholinguistic studies, for clinical assessment tests, for materials level assessment in language pedagogy, etc.

In 'Multifunctionality in Morphology' we joined forces with colleagues from the University of Graz in creating detailed morphological databases of Slovenian and lexical material which allow us to investigate multifunctional affixes, i.e. morphological elements which have little or no stable meaning and can appear in various, at first sight unrelated contexts.

In 'The Behavior of Czech and Slovenian Clitics' we teamed up with colleagues from the Masaryk University in Brno in conducting a series of experiments in order to provide new experimental data from the syntax, morphology, phonology, and prosody of clitics, which will allow us to gain better insight into the language-specific properties of clitics in Czech and Slovenian and into the general grammar of clitics.



Outside of research funded by the Slovenian Research Agency, we used brain-imaging to study word structure processing in Slovenian and Serbian within the multipartner 'SAVANT' project coordinated by Queen Mary University, UK. And in collaboration with the Technological university of Varna and the Varna Dolphinarium, Bulgaria, we continued our joint investigation of aspects of dolphin communication. At the very close of 2025 we kicked off a 'SMASH (Machine Learning for Science and Humanities) project, which aims to create a syntactically annotated corpus of Slovenian dialects and develop tools for detailed syntactic and morphosyntactic annotation, including search functionality by syntactic construction.



Applied projects and broader-audience activities in 2025:

As part of a two-year project funded by the Slovenian Ministry of Culture, we teamed up with the Slovenian Research Institute from Trieste in upgrading and updating the contents and functionality of the online portal 'SMeJse – Slovenian as a Minority Language'. The portal is a repository of tools, materials and information boosting Slovenian language skills. A result of this project was also the publication of a monograph on the teaching of Slovenian in Slovenian-language primary schools in Italy, which garnered considerable interest as attested by its several well-received public presentations.

Two members of our unit took part in the Ministry of Culture's round-table discussion (June 2025) on the new strategic document that will lay down Slovenia's language policy in the coming five-year period. And we organized the fourth year of our invited lecture series *Jezik & Linguistics Colloquia* established in 2022. In 2025 the series hosted 10 invited speakers from different European and North-American research institutions.





Pedagogical Work

In 2025, the pedagogical work at the University of Nova Gorica was done within seven schools: School of Environmental Sciences, School of Engineering and Management, School of Science, School of Humanities, School for Viticulture and Enology, School of Arts, and Graduate School.



School of Environmental Sciences

Dean: Prof. Dr. Griša Močnik



Fieldwork in the vicinity of the cement plant, part of the student project INSPIRO.

The study program Environment, Level I is an undergraduate program to obtain a university degree. The program offers all important contents from natural sciences and technical and social subjects related to environmental issues such as pollution of water, air and soil, environmental monitoring, waste management and environmental protection, management and economics. The basic goal of the program is to educate experts that will be able to conduct work on research, technical and managerial fields related to environment. This goes for different industrial sectors, lawmaking and law executing area on national and local levels.

Study Programmes:

Bachelor's Study Programme Environment

Master's Study Programme Environment

School for Environmental Sciences educates in the field of research, preservation and management of environment. The university study program Environment was according to the Bologna Directives modernized in changes into study programs Environment, Level I and Environment, Level II. The I. and II. level programs received public accreditation with declaration of Directorate for Higher Education of Republic of Slovenia on date 12. 10. 2007 and 15. 2. 2008, respectively. Continuously, we are modernizing the contents of the both study programs. In 2017/18, we have introduced obligatory practical training for the I. level students and substitute a diploma thesis with a diploma seminar. In 2018/19 we introduced courses on the climate emergency. In addition, we have introduced up-to-date contents among mandatory courses on the II. level. We are continuing with the gradual update of the programs, focusing on content related to the climate. Lately, we have started involving students in hands-on research activities.



In the school year 2023/2024 we enrolled the eighteenth generation of students in the study program Environment, level I – twice the number as last year. Beside mandatory and selective courses the students had an opportunity within their field trips, excursions and group projects to see waste landfills, experimental stations and institutes, industrial facilities, power plants and regional parks. Three students from the School of Environmental Sciences, School of Humanities and the School of Arts have carried out a multidisciplinary student project INSPIRO in the vicinity of the cement plant in the Soča valley.

A uniqueness of our study program Environment Level I is a course called Group project, which introduces modern approaches to education through project work. Emphasizes are on solving practical problems related to

environment and working in a multidisciplinary group. During 2021, students took part in several projects, within which they investigated topics from environment remediation, pollution monitoring, waste management etc. They also studied influence of the biological waste in agriculture. Among others, the results suggest that by regulating easily-variable parameters such as e.g. extraction time, pH and temperature, the extraction of specific elements for use in fertilizers with a safe impurity content may be possible through alkaline leaching, the most economically efficient extraction method currently available. Reducing the amount of by-product that needs to be transported to landfills would have a significant societal benefit, both due to the favorable environmental impact of reducing the amount of landfilled waste and reducing the carbon footprint of waste transport.

The study at the Environment, Level II, takes four semesters to complete and is exceptionally interdisciplinary and research oriented. It offers courses from all important fields of environmental sciences but also enables students to deepen their knowledge in their fields of interest by choosing from a large selection of the selective courses. Three times as many new students enrolled in the school year 2024/2025 as the year before. During the Level II studies, the project work is performed individually within the Individual project course. The students performed field research to determine the contribution of resuspended dust to air pollution with particles PM10 (Figure 2).

School of Engineering and Management

Dean: Prof. Dr. Imre Cikajlo

Study Programmes:

Bachelor's Study Programme Engineering and Management (First Level)

Master's Study Programme Engineering and Management (Second Level)

Master's Study Programme Master in Leadership in Open Education (Second Level)

The School of Engineering and Management delivers the Industrial Engineering study programmes at both first and second cycle levels and, since 2020, also the international Master's degree programme in Leadership of Open Education. The School educates broadly trained professionals who, on the basis of their technological, economic and organisational competences, are capable of effectively identifying and addressing challenges related to ensuring economically successful and socially responsible production and business operations. In their project work, Bachelor's theses and Master's theses, students of the School of Engineering and Management typically address and solve concrete problems from the business sector, public institutions and local communities, thereby further strengthening the School's connection with its environment. Ambitious graduates find employment in high-technology companies in the local and wider region, and their understanding of the industrial engineering profile also enables them to successfully integrate into the global labour market. The School records a high level of graduate employability.

In the 2024/2025 academic year, a total of 128 students were enrolled in the programmes of the School of Engineering and Management: 75 students in the first-cycle (Bachelor's) programme in Industrial Engineering, 41 students in the second-cycle (Master's) programme in Industrial Engineering, and 12 students in the Master's programme in Leadership of Open Education. In the 2024/25 academic year, a significant increase in the number of students was recorded in the undergraduate Industrial Engineering programme.

The School of Engineering and Management conducts activities for all three study programmes at its location at Lanthieri Mansion in Vipava. In exceptional cases, part of the instructional activities is carried out in a hybrid or remote learning format. This approach is used by lecturers who have unavoidable commitments abroad and also facilitates the studies of students who, due to employment, active involvement in sport, or other reasons, require a certain degree of flexibility in fulfilling their academic obligations. Participation in the development of an e-learning platform has opened up opportunities for the School of Engineering and Management to develop and implement new teaching methods using information technology. In addition to improving access to study through the introduction of elements of e-learning and open learning, the faculty monitors the quality of delivery and continually strives for ongoing improvement.



Students of the Bachelor's degree programme Engineering and Management are learning how to handle the cobot UR3.

One result of this is a high level of graduate employability, which, according to data from

May 2025, amounted to 77.03% within one year of graduation, with as much as 71.62% employed in their field of study. According to available data, 20.27% of graduates decided to continue their studies. The high employability of graduates of the School of Engineering and Management is also supported by the competences that students acquire through project work within or beyond the study programme. In 2025, as part of project work and practical training for third-year students, we cooperated with the companies Incom d.o.o., Vitanest d.o.o., BT INOX d.o.o., Ljubljana, Pipistrel Vertical Solutions d.o.o., Pipistrel d.o.o., ACINEL d.o.o., SNEP Nepremičnine d.o.o., the Institute of Metals and Technology (IMT), and the company EDITOR d.o.o.

In May 2025, the School of Engineering and Management convened the Advisory Board of the School of Engineering and Management, composed of a representative of the University of Maribor, the holder of the UNESCO Chair in Open Technologies for Open Educational Resources and Open Learning, a representative of the Jožef Stefan Institute, the Director of the Ajdovščina Regional Chamber of Craft and Entrepreneurship, the Director of the Primorska Technology Park, the Head of the Quality Department at Mahle Electric Drives Slovenija d.o.o., the Head of Human Resources at LedLuks d.o.o., and, as of 2025, also the Director of the North Primorska Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Director of the Nova Gorica Regional Chamber of Craft and Entrepreneurship. The Board committed itself to promoting awareness of the profession of industrial engineer, emphasised the importance of linking with related study programmes (e.g. with the University of Maribor), and in particular highlighted the importance of cooperation with companies in the narrower and wider region, as well as the development of practical training for students in companies.

The School of Engineering and Management celebrated its existence at the intersection of technology and entrepreneurship together with the University of Nova Gorica in September at a formal academy marking the 30th anniversary of the University of Nova Gorica. The event was opened by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr. Igor Papič. The ceremony was attended by the rector, Prof. Boštjan Golob, and guests including the President of the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr Marko Lotrič, rectors of Slovenian

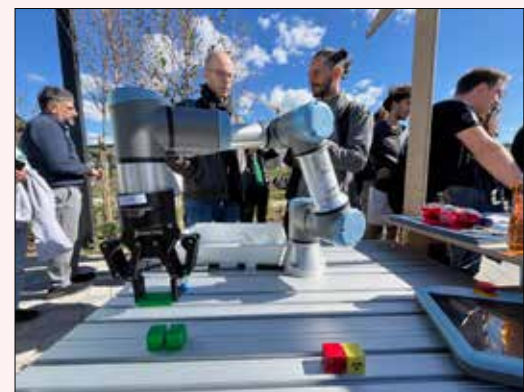
universities, and directors of institutes and public agencies. At the academic assembly at the beginning of the academic year, the Dean highlighted innovations in the study programmes and plans to increase the recognition of the industrial engineer profile in Slovenia.

Teaching activities

In October, Dr. Andrea Brunello visited the School of Engineering and Management, where over three consecutive weeks he delivered a series of lectures entitled “Managing large volumes of data, analysis and visualisation”; large language models (LLMs) and prompt engineering for data analysis; practical work with ChatGPT for data analysis; practical work with Power BI, and an introduction to data storage. In the spring, we hosted Dr. Robert Dillon, Associate Professor at the School of Science and Technology at James Cook University in Singapore, who, as part of a workshop, introduced students to the importance of cyber security, password cracking, small secrets, and the pitfalls inherent in prevailing authentication methods.

The University of Nova Gorica became part of the European alliance Across – the European Cross-Border University, whose mission in higher education is to provide students with a truly European learning experience and to address the unique challenges of border regions through cross-border cooperation. Through this, the School of Engineering and Management also expanded opportunities for teaching collaboration and student engagement across ten European universities.

A group of students from the first-cycle (Bachelor’s) degree programme in Industrial Engineering undertook a student project entitled “Mobile platform for the cobot UR3e – cobotPlatform”. The students formed their own team, selected a project leader and divided the roles amongst themselves. They tackled challenges such as computer-aided design, project management, procurement of materials, finding subcontractors and achieving the set objectives. The successful collaboration of the student team culminated in the assembly of the Universal Robots UR3e on a mobile platform. Subsequently, a student from the School of Engineering and Management and a student from the Academy of Arts at the University of Nova Gorica created a creative video film about human–robot collaboration within the framework of the Inspiro 2.0 project.



Robot UR3e at small object manipulation during the University Day in Nova Gorica.

Within the Master’s degree programme in Leadership of Open Education, we marked the successful defence of the Master’s thesis entitled “Exploring the role of open educational practices in transforming the face of adult education in the Ohangwena region of Namibia”, defended by Lasarus Hakwaake Nghifindwako. In the autumn, further defences followed: “Leveraging the affordances of OERs to the accessibility, promotion and preservation of Namibian Oshiwambo and Khoekhoegowab indigenous language literatures”, defended by Gabriel Neepo Uunona; “Enhancing student engagement through co-creating OER: an Open University of Tanzania case study”, defended by Hamis Juma; and “Capacity building for the adoption of open educational resources by postgraduate students of English and Applied Linguistics at a Namibian university”, defended by Aletta Mweneni Hautemo.

Dr. Chrissi Nerantzi, a collaborator on the Master’s programme in Leadership of Open Education, published the Handbook for the Dissertation: Strategies and Support for the Academic Journey with TU Delft Press.

School of Science

Dean: Prof. Dr. Egon Pavlica



Two students of the bachelor study of Physics and astrophysics.

Study programmes:

Bachelor's Study Programme Physics and astrophysics

Master's Study Programme Physics and astrophysics

Master's Study Programme Materials Science

The School of Science brings together students, researchers, assistants, and professors from Slovenia and abroad in a vibrant academic environment. United by a common enthusiasm for science, they engage in research spanning scales from atoms, molecules, materials, and devices to the study of Earth's atmosphere, stars, galaxies, and the universe as a whole. The School offers research-focused bachelor's and master's degree programmes, supported by well-equipped laboratories and research centres. Students also have the unique opportunity to conduct remote astronomical observations using the GoChile telescope in Chile. Doctoral studies in Astrophysics, Physics, or Materials Science can be pursued at the UNG Graduate School.

In 2025, the School of Science achieved significant advances across its academic programmes in Physics, Astrophysics, and Materials Science. The undergraduate programme in Physics and Astrophysics equips students with strong theoretical and experimental foundations, while progressively engaging them in research activities in the later years of study. This structure successfully connects theoretical learning with hands-on practical experience.

In 2025, students of the Physics and Astrophysics programme gained valuable experience through educational visits to research laboratories. Among the most important was a visit to the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, where they became familiar with the operation of the accelerator that played a key role in the experimental confirmation of the Higgs boson. They also visited the ATLAS experiment, where they carried out key measurements related to the confirmation of the Higgs boson. These and other visits provided students with direct exposure to leading research environments and deepened their understanding of modern physics.

The programme placed a strong emphasis on experimental methods. First-year students completed foundational courses in mathematics, physics, and experimental techniques, while in the later years the curriculum became more specialised, concentrating on core subjects and research projects. Two-month intensive courses provided students with the opportunity to explore specific topics in depth. Through the INSPIRO projects, students participated in research at the state-of-the-art laboratories of the University of Nova Gorica (UNG), applying

their knowledge to real-world projects. Their studies concluded with a diploma seminar, preparing them for postgraduate education, and graduates were able to continue with master's programs in Physics, Astrophysics, or Materials Science at UNG or at other institutions throughout Europe.

The UNG Master's Program in Materials Science builds on the school's research excellence in materials physics, chemistry, and experimental characterization. The program places a strong emphasis on hands-on learning, with over half of student activities devoted to laboratory work and seminars. Students develop practical skills using advanced characterization instruments available in UNG laboratories and partner institutions, including the National Institute of Chemistry and the Jožef Stefan Institute.

Small class sizes provide personalized attention, while elective courses allow students to focus on their specific interests within materials science. The program is designed to equip students with the essential skills needed to excel in both academic and professional environments, including communication, confidence, and teamwork. Students actively participate in ongoing research projects, contributing to the development of state-of-the-art materials. Faculty and students alike make meaningful contributions to the scientific community.



Presentation of dr. Jure Mencinger from Gorenje about the application of knowledge of physics and theoretical simulations at the early stage of development to design new products to the students of School of science.

In 2025, the faculty organized numerous seminars and public outreach activities on topics ranging from black holes and fluid simulations to fundamental particle research at CERN and work at the Vera Rubin Observatory. Students and the broader public were actively engaged in these events, fostering interest in STEM careers. Female faculty members and assistants played a pivotal role in promoting the participation of women in science. Associate Professor of Astronomy Tanja Petrushevska contributed to a major discovery on black hole behavior, inspiring young female researchers. Professor Andreja Gomboc, through public lectures and science popularization initiatives, continued to encourage girls to pursue careers in STEM.

In 2025, the institution remained committed to nurturing future scientific leaders. By offering world-class academic programs and facilitating hands-on research experiences, the year was marked by significant academic growth. Students acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed across diverse scientific fields. The faculty remains steadfast in its dedication to advancing research, academic excellence, and preparing students for successful careers in physics, astrophysics, and materials science.



Part of larger group of students of School of science, who were visiting ATLAS experiment in CERN. At the School of Science students have the opportunity to become involved in actual research in state-of-the-art research laboratories and centers of the of the University of Nova Gorica and its partner institutions, the National Institute of Chemistry, the Jožef Stefan Institute and Elettra Trieste.

School of Humanities

Dean: Prof. Dr. Franc Marušič



It seems that we are getting better every year. How could we not? Every year, we observe enrollment increase in our programs, every year we have more events, every year we are more visible, there are fewer and fewer people who do not about know. Thus, in 2025 we also achieved a higher level according to these criteria. In addition to the public lectures Dialogues, which we organize at the Novo Gorica Bookstore Maks, we organized several public lectures and participated in several events as part of the GO! 2025 European Capital of Culture program. We contributed to numerous national and international conferences and organized workshops, seminars and invited lectures in the fields of literary studies, linguistics, cultural history, gender studies, etc. We participated in the international university network Across, where we cooperate particularly intensively with university partners in Chemnitz, Germany, and Udine, Italy.

Study Programmes:

Bachelor's Study Programme Language and literature in the digital world

Bachelor's Study Programme Cultural history

Master's Study Programme Humanities studies

European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (Erasmus Mundus)

At the School of Humanities, we aim to enrich the Goriška region, as well as the Slovenian and international spheres, with new insights in the humanities, thereby fostering connections between the academic community and society. Our study programs maintain a high standard of scientific, professional, and educational excellence, equipping students with the skills needed for further studies and for engaging in research and professional work both domestically and abroad.

Our study programs cover various fields of the humanities: at the first level, Language and Literature in the Digital World develops modern competencies in the fields of literary studies and linguistics, while Cultural History brings an interdisciplinary perspective on the history of everyday life in cross-border areas. In the master's program Migration and Intercultural Relations, students from over twenty countries discover precisely the aspects of crossing (physical) borders. All of this at the School of Humanities is rounded off by the offer of three directions in the second cycle study program Humanities Studies: Linguistics, Literary Studies and Histories and Cultures of Cross-Border Areas.

Within the undergraduate program Language and Literature in the Digital World, with which we replaced the older program Slovenian Studies in 2024, students can choose between three study programs: the Slovenian Studies program enables the acquisition of broad basic knowledge in the fields of Slovenian studies, general linguistics and literary studies. The interdisciplinary Literature and Culture program enables the acquisition of basic knowledge in the fields of literary studies, cultural studies, digital humanities and literary history. The Slovenian Language and Linguistic Data program provides students with basic knowledge of linguistics, the Slovenian language and language in general.

The Cultural History study program enables the acquisition of in-depth knowledge of the socio-political and cultural processes that have shaped the historical image of today's Europe from prehistory, the Middle Ages, the modern and postmodern eras. Special attention is paid to interdisciplinary connections with related disciplines (anthropology, ethnology, sociology, culturology) and the historical and cultural specifics of the cross-border Primorska region, as well as to practical work both within the framework of group research projects and within the framework of actual practical training with various regional potential employers.



The Master's program in Humanities Studies consists of three study directions: Literary Studies, Linguistics, and Histories and Cultures of Cross-Border Areas, whose mandatory courses provide basic theoretical knowledge from the aforementioned disciplines, while common elective courses provide the possibility of interdisciplinary connections and complementation.

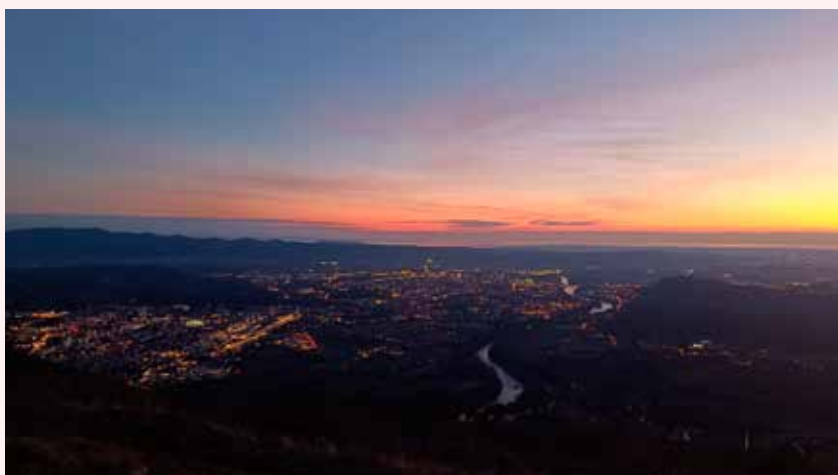
Migration and Intercultural Relations is an international master's program that focuses on human rights, democratic values, the welfare state and the labor market, as well as on the challenges facing the entire globalized world. It

is implemented with the support of the special mechanism for international cooperation and exchange Erasmus Mundus, which takes place at several European, African, and Indian universities, and is conducted in English.

The School of Humanities also provides language tutoring in various languages, both foreign and Slovenian, which is adapted to non-Slovenian speaking students. In 2023, we established the Language Center, which strategically combines the implementation of language tutoring and markets our offer outside the university itself.

Students of the School of Humanities publish the student magazine Artepakt with literary, essayistic and visual works of art.

Together with the Research Center for Humanities and the Center for Cognitive Sciences of Language, the school co-organized several high-profile scientific conferences (Škrabčevi Dnevi 2025 in Nova Gorica and SinFonJA 18 in Skopje) as well as workshops and seminars with wide international participation. The public talk series Dialogi also provided talks with famous guests on interesting topics: in April, we discussed "The Future of Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence", and in September, we asked guests whether it is true that "The mountain is not crazy, the crazy one is the one who goes up!".



School for Viticulture and Enology

Dean: Prof. Dr. Branka Mozetič Vodopivec

Study Programmes:

Bachelor's Study Programme Viticulture and Enology

Master's Study Programme Viticulture and Enology

In 2025, the School for Viticulture and Enology of the University of Nova Gorica continued to deliver its bachelor's and master's programmes in Vipava, at CRV and at the Manče estate, with a clear emphasis on linking theory and practice. The year was marked by the University's 30th anniversary, the institutional reaccreditation process and the launch of the Across project, as well as numerous invited lectures, field visits and workshops within the Enosatira, RESPOND and Agrotur+ projects. Twelve students graduated, with award-winning students Laura Smolnikar Štrukelj, Sara Gregorc, Magdalena Mihajlovska and the first FUNG scholarship holder for the development of viticulture and enology, Elizaveta Kunina, standing out.

A snapshot from an intuitive tasting with Eva Bruot (Franck Thomas School, France).



The School for Viticulture and Enology remains the only higher education institution in Slovenia that provides comprehensive education in viticulture and enology with its bachelor's and master's programmes.

The year 2025 was marked by the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the University of Nova Gorica, within which the School co-designed the programme of events. At the same time, the institutional reaccreditation process of the University took place, and the School actively updated the contents of the bachelor's curriculum. The Across project was also launched, through which the School will gain new international partners and further strengthen pedagogical cooperation and innovative teaching approaches.

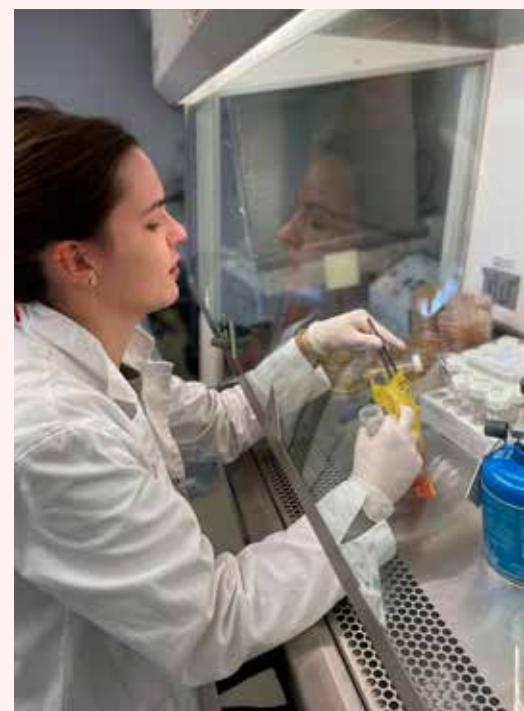
The year began with a meeting of the Advisory School Council, which provided the Dean, Prof. Dr Branka Mozetič Vodopivec, with key information on labour-market needs and programme renewal. In autumn 2025, she was re-elected for a four-year term and elected as a member of the University Senate. An important development at School level was the introduction of new rules for the awarding of academic and research titles at the University of Nova Gorica.

The study process was enriched by invited lectures from national and international experts. Carlo Cuomo from Demptos presented innovations in barrel use in winemaking, Dr Mathias Schmitt from Geisenheim University organised a hybrid tasting of dealcoholised wines, and Dr Comuzzo from the University of Udine lectured on current vinification technologies. Young oenologist Luka Ribolica (Kleti Brda) presented practical aspects of modern winemaking through a lecture and guided tasting, while School alumna Daniela Markovič from Tenuta Villanova (Italy) introduced students to the sensory characteristics of grape grappa and wine distillates and to the production process in their cellar. Master's students took part in an Erasmus Winter School on sustainable approaches in viticulture at the University of Udine.

Field visits to wine estates and professional events formed an important part of teaching activities, including visits to Vinakoper, Nebo, Albiana and Colnarič, the estates Burja and Gverila, the Slovenian Wine Festival in Ljubljana and the vine nursery in Vrhopolje. Students were also introduced to other grape-derived products, such as table grapes, raisins, ciders and grape juices, and carried out a quality analysis of raisins on the Slovenian market, which they presented at a scientific conference together with their mentor, Dr Tatjana Radovanović Vukajlovič.

As part of its educational activities, the School, in cooperation with CRV, organised several professional workshops open also to alumni and producers. Among them, the workshop "The Sensory Secrets of Wine: Tasting with Intuition" (Eva Bruot, Franck Thomas School, France), held within the Enosatira project, was particularly notable. Students also participated in the international CRV projects RESPOND and Agrotur+ and regularly attended meetings of the CRV sensory panel.

Practical training takes place at the Manče estate, with external partners, and through the organisation of the Student Wine Festival and the event "DegustAkcija", which in 2025 was held in Nova Gorica within the Enosatira project,



A student tests the microbiological quality of raisins.

where third-year students independently presented wines to the public.

In 2025, 12 students successfully completed the bachelor's programme. Among student achievements, Laura Smolnikar Štrukelj won first place at the Student Wine Festival, while Sara Gregorc, recipient of the Alumnus Primus award. Magdalena Mihajlovska and Tara Seničić also stood out; supported also FUNG, the latter two represented the School at a student conference in Banja Luka, where Mihajlovska received the first prize for her presentation. Student Elizaveta Kunina became the first scholarship holder of the FUNG Fund for the Development of Viticulture and Enology. In 2025, the company Tosla donated funds to improve study conditions and to enhance the acquisition of new knowledge and skills by our students.



A student conducts interviews for the Respond project.

School of Arts

Dean: Prof. Boštjan Potokar



Filming of the master's film *Aylan* by student Meta Berhan Arkin.

Study Programmes:

Bachelor's programme in Digital Arts and Practices

Master's programme in Media Arts and Practices

The School of Arts has been educating in the field of arts since 2008 within the University. It began as a BA school and in seven years developed into a fully accredited Academy. This is the first university level academy in Slovenia in 71 years. In English it retains the naming as the *School of Arts*. In 2022 the School received concession (state funding) for implementing the bachelor's professional degree programme in Digital Arts and Practices. Together with the master's degree programme in Media Arts and Practices the studies cover the following fields:

- Animation (*animated film, animation in creative industries*)
- Videofilm (*fiction, documentary, experimental film, art video*)
- Photography (*author, functional*)
- New Media (*creative use of new technologies*)
- Contemporary Art Practices (*combining different media*)
- Scenographic Spaces (*film, theatre scenography*)
- Art-Science-Technology (*connecting diverse fields*)

After 2008, when we prepared the first study programme in the field of arts, the school saw a gradual but firm development into an art academy: The Programme structure at the UNG School of Arts enables combining media and fields thereby opening a range of professional pathways, from becoming an author to developing a distinct professional identity. In 2009 we opened the Bachelor's programme in Digital Arts and Practices. Our MA programme was developed within ADRIART, an EU supported project, together with partners from Croatia, Austria and Italy. When we began pilot implementation of the program in the 2012/2013 academic year, we addressed the need to cover the entire educational vertical and, of course, enabled graduates of our undergraduate program to continue their studies.

In the 2025/26 academic year 95 students are enrolled at the UNG School of Arts. An important change that took place in the 2022/23 academic year is the acquisition of a concession for the implementation of the Digital Arts and Practice undergraduate program. This has also led to a significant increase in interest in enrollment. In recent years, we have recorded interest from more than 100 candidates for 20 enrollment places. In the premises in Rožna Dolina, we managed to renovate additional spaces by October 2024, which were renovated specifically for the needs of the School of Arts. At the Semester Show in January 2025 we ceremonially opened a film and photography studio, a screening and technical room, and some additional spaces, which were in part equipped within an Interreg call related to the European Capital of Culture GO!2025. For the first time, students have access to a fully equipped studio environment where they can work uninterrupted all day long.

In addition to the independent work of the mentors and other colleagues of the UNG School of Arts,

most of whom are internationally recognized artists, a lot of energy is also invested in participating in various festivals and exhibitions with student works. Thus, we once again participated in various festivals and exhibitions at home and around the world, below a selection:

Animated BA diploma film *“Arachnophobia”* by Melita Sandrin (AU student)

- Annecy 2025 – World Premiere
- 28th Slovenian Film Festival (FSF)
 - Vesna for Best Student Film
- National Student Animated Film Award (DSAF Awards):
 - Award for Completed Student Film
- Live action feature film *«Little Trouble Girls»* directed by Urška Djukić (AU alumni), produced by Jožko Rutar (AU external collaborator)
- 75th Berlinale Film Festival – world premiere, opening film of the new Perspectives section
 - FIPRESCI International Film Critics Association Prize
- 28th Slovenian Film Festival (FSF)
 - Vesna for Best Film
- Slovenian candidate for the 2026 Oscar

Feature film *“Ida who sang so badly even the dead rose up and joined her in song”* directed by Ester Ivakič (AU alumni)

- Film Festival Cottbus (Germany) – world premiere
 - Special mention of the Ecumenical Jury
- 43rd Torino Film Festival
 - Special Jury Award
- 36th Liffe - Ljubljana International Film Festival
 - FIPRESCI International Film Critics Association Prize

Feature-length animated film *“Tales from the Magic Garden”* co-production of four countries, Slovenian part: directed by Leon Vidmar (AU external collaborator), screenplay by Kaja Balog (AU external collaborator), producer Kolja Saksida (AU professor, employee)

- 75th Berlinale Film Festival – world premiere



International student animation workshop Animacikel visits the center of the city, part of GO!STUDIO Interreg project.

- 28th Slovenian Film Festival (FSF)
 - Vesna for Best Animated Film
 - Vesna for Best Screenplay

Ars Electronica 2024 - Festival for Art, Technology & Society, Linz, Avstrija. We were invited for the fourth consecutive year. The title of this year's event was *«Panic, yes/no»*. We presented five student projects under the joint title: *«Slow down. Breath. Feel. Think. Act!»:«*

- *“Futura - Future Manifestations”* Ana Evtič, Gašper Rebernik
- *“Futura - Future Manifestations”* Tina Furlan, Oasis Ahmed, Tijana Mijušković
- *“What’s your opinion?” a program of videoessays and animation films: Polina Veljanoska, Uku Jürgenson, Domen Sajovic, Melita Sandrin, Tamara Taskova, Gašper Rebernik, Tina Furlan, Anja Resman, Neda Ivanović, Anđelina Petrović*
- *“Promo film – Acceleration”* Tilen Lajevec, Matej Pirkovič, Itan Giorgievski, Sofija Matovska, Miljana Nikolić, Ljubica Giorgijevska, Matej Vodeb, Mila Simonovikj, Vanja Miloš Jovanović, Anja Sučić, Yauheni Lavshykh, Sofija Miljatovič, Vukašin Panić
- *“Space and Time – Fragile Dreams”* Tijana Mijušković, Domen Sajovic, Tamara Taskova, Ana Evtič

At the International Festival of New Media Speculum Artium Festival in Trbovlje we took part with works by students and collaborators:

- *“Glass Speaks”* by Ana Evtič (AU student)
- *“Blood Runner”* by Jasna Hribernik (AU professor, employed)

in the DigitalBigScreen program we participated with a selection of student films and video essays:

Brina Fekonja *“Stop”*, Uku Jürgenson *“Another Way”*, Sofija Mijatović *“What for”*, Polina Bakalski Veljanoska *“Echoes of Existence”*, Gašper Rebernik *“Alcoholism in My Family”*, Melita Sandrin *“Love Can Be Digested”*, Domen Sajovic *“Memory Loss”*, Toma *“Peaceful Protest”*, Tamara Taskova *“Mind the Gap”*, Uku Jürgenson *“What’s your opinion?”*, Yue Feng *“Welcome to 2028”*

At the Animateka 2025 International Festival of Animated Film in Ljubljana University of Nova Gorica has, together with University of Ljubljana, sponsored the *«Young Talent Award»* for the best European student film.

In the Young Talent European Student Competition Programme we had a record number of five films: three in competition and two in panorama section. In Competition section:

- *«Stop»* animated film by Brina Fekonja
- *«Arachnophobia»* animated film by Melita Sandrin
- *«Deconstruction»* animated film by Neda Ivanović

and two in the Panorama section:

- *“Womens Club”* animated film by Anđelina Petrović
- *“till we melt again”* animated film (in an international group of authors) Brina Fekonja

In the Elephant Children’s programme we had a film by our collaborator:

- *“The Girl Who Wasn’t Afraid of Bears”* animated film by Lea Vučko (AU external collaborator)

Most importantly, we believe that the artworks of students of the UNG School of Arts are – according to independent expert assessments – of such high quality, that they represent and present Slovenia with their works at various exhibitions, festivals and competitions all over the world.



Opening of the exhibition *We are here* at Nova Gorica City Gallery.

Graduate School

Dekanja: prof. dr. Martina Bergant Marušič



Cherenkov telescopes on La Palma, Spain.

The mission of the Graduate School is to educate leading professionals capable of solving the most challenging tasks in science and society in Slovenia and internationally, and to create new knowledge through a coherent relationship between students, professors, and researchers. The Graduate School brings together and implements all doctoral programmes at the University of Nova Gorica (UNG), regardless of their field of study.

The range is very broad, spanning natural sciences, engineering, the humanities, and interdisciplinary sciences. In the academic year 2024/2025, 81 students were enrolled across all eight doctoral programmes. Enrolment has increased for the second consecutive year.

All doctoral programmes at the Graduate School maintain a close connection with research units at UNG or other partner

Study Programmes:

- Doctoral Study Programme Environmental Sciences**
- Doctoral Study Programme Karstology**
- Doctoral Study Programme Physics**
- Doctoral Study Programme Materials**
- Doctoral Study Programme Humanities**
- Doctoral Study Programme Cultural Heritage Studies**
- Doctoral Study Programme Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology**
- Doctoral Study Programme Cognitive Science of Language**

Graduate School at the University of Nova Gorica (UNG) brings together and implements all doctoral programmes, regardless of their field of study. It is organised as a coherent, unified and internationally oriented graduate school. The individual study programmes are closely linked to the research units of UNG and other research institutions at home and abroad, where doctoral students can carry out research work as part of their studies and engage in international research projects



Natural Bridge (Pont d'Arc) at the entrance to the Ardèche Gorge, France

research institutions, both in Slovenia and internationally. This enables students to conduct research, participate in international research projects, and effectively generate new knowledge, transferring it into practice within a business environment. Among the many external partners, we highlight those with whom we have established long-term collaborations. The doctoral programme in Karstology is implemented in close cooperation with the Karst Research Institute of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Postojna, with which we have also established the UNESCO Chair on Karst Education at UNG. The PhD programme in Cultural Heritage Studies is run in cooperation with the IUAV University of Venice, offering a double PhD degree as well as a one-year advanced training programme (second-level Master). The Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology programme is conducted in collaboration with

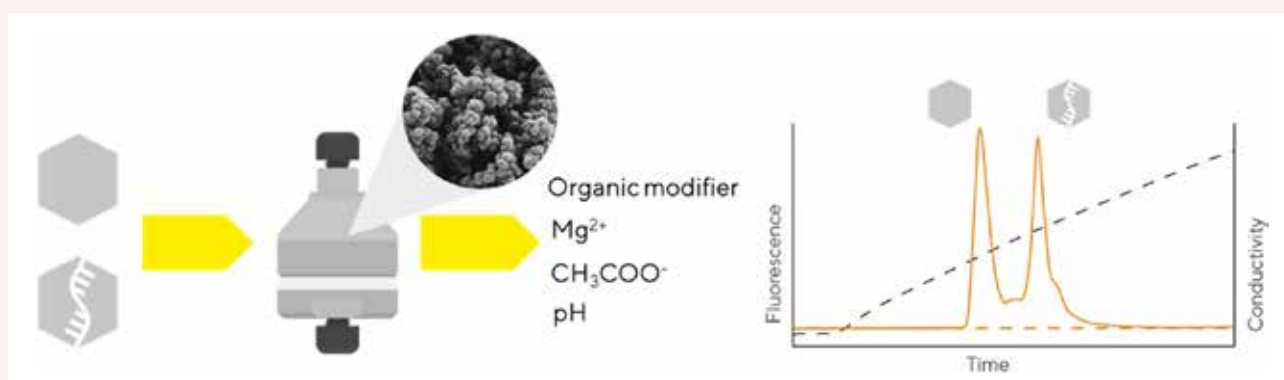
the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) in Trieste. The Materials PhD programme collaborates with the National Institute of Chemistry in Ljubljana, while ZRC SAZU is an important partner of the PhD programme in the Humanities.

An important strategic focus of the Graduate School is the internationalisation of doctoral studies. This is evident in the high proportion of international students enrolled, with the average over several years exceeding 60%. There are also numerous international student exchanges with related study programmes at other universities in Slovenia and abroad through the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the ERASMUS+ programme. These opportunities provide students with a high degree of mobility, selectivity, and interdisciplinarity in shaping their individual paths within doctoral programmes. The

Graduate School has a large number of professors and experts from foreign universities and research institutions serving as lecturers and mentors for doctoral students. The three-member PhD thesis defence committee always includes two members from foreign universities, ensuring that the quality of doctoral theses is comparable to established international standards.

We are continually updating the content and quality of our doctoral programmes to provide students with cutting-edge knowledge that enables them to tackle new challenges in science successfully. The quality and relevance of the content and teaching methods in our doctoral programmes are reflected in our students' achievements. In the academic year 2024/2025, doctoral students published 120 scientific and professional articles, participated in 297 conferences, and produced 26 other scientific publications. This year, 11 students completed their doctoral studies. In 2025, we also successfully conducted the first elections for the Dean of FPS and the FPS representative to the UNG Senate.

The doctoral programmes are fully funded by tuition fees. The professional management of the doctoral programmes is the responsibility of the programme directors, together with the scientific boards. External stakeholders and graduates are involved in the strategic development of the programmes, partly as external members of the scientific boards.



Separation of AAV Capsids Using Analytical Anion Exchange Monolithic Columns. (Analytica Chimica Acta, 2025, 344585. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aca.2025.344585>)

ORICI

TINA SMREKAR • OLGA SOLAJA • SARIVAL SOŠIČ • ANDREJ
BOVINČ • MATEJ STANIČ • SAMO STANIČ • JENNEJ STARE •
MATEJA STARIČ • ALESSIO STASI • PENKA STATEVA • JASON
STAVROULAS • MAJA STEGOVEC • ARTHUR STEPHANOV •
MELITA STERNAD LEMUT • TEA STIBILJ NEMEC • REBEKA
STRAH • BENEDIKT STRAJNAR • AMY STRECKER • TOMA STRELE
IRENA SUBOTIKJ • MARJANA SULIČ • ELENA SVALDUZ •
ANEZ ŠČANČAR • TINA ŠČEK KRUSČEK • URŠKA ŠČUKA
URŠIČ • STANKA ŠEBELA • ROBERTINA ŠEBJANIČ • MARKO
STIČ • MIHA ŠIMAC • LUKA ŠINKOVEC • MARTIN ŠKERLEP •
ŽICA ŠKOFIČ • TINA ŠKORJANC • HELENA ŠKRL • ANDREJA
VARČ • ALEKSANDAR ŠOBOT • EMA STARKL • NIVES
EFANČIČ • DARKO STRAJN • URŠA ŠTRANČAR • KATJA
ILJE ANTALICK • KRISTIFOR ŠULC PETRIČ • LAURA
TERŠIČ ZORN • GUY MANDELSTAM TABACHNICK • ENRICO
OTTI • DAŠA TEPINA • MAJA TERČON • PETRA TESTEN •
NVEER THAJUDHEEN • TINKARA TINTA • VADYMTKACHUK
VORIN TOME • OLGA TONI • ANA TOROŠ • JANI IVAN TOROŠ
MAŽ TREBŠE • MICHELE TRIMARCHI • TUE TRINH • MARTIN
VALENTINA TURK • ANDRZEJ TYC • ALEŠ UDE • SHIMA
SHIVASHANKARA • JURIJ URBANČIČ • MOJCA VAH
NIK • DOMEN VAKE • MATJAŽ VALANT • VANESA
TTINČIČ MUROVEC • ANDREJA VANZO • ZORAN VAUPOT
VA VAUPOTIČ • FERNANDO VEGAS LOPEZ-MANZANARES
ON VELUŠČEK • MARJETKA VELUŠČEK • MATJAŽ VESEL
CESCO VESPIGNANI • MARTA VIA GONZALEZ • TAMARA
N • JERNEJ VIČIČ • MARTINA VIDMAR • NATAŠA VIRŠEK
R • JULJANA VISOČNIK • SAŠA NABERGOJ •
NCA AJŠA VIŽINTIN • SILVESTER VONČINA • SERGEY
VEV • MOJCA VRČON MIHELJ • BOŠTJAN VRHOVEC •
ČKO • MARKO VUDRAG • MARCO VUERICH • DINKO
Š • JASNA VUKMIR • SARA VUKOTIČ • IAIN WHITE •
SCO XOTTA • KNARIK YERITSYAN • JESUS YUS DIEZ •
A ZABRET • NATAŠA ZABUKOVEC LOGAR • ANDRIY
DNYUK • GABRIJELA ZAHARIJAS • IVANA ZAJC • MIHA
K • DANILO ZAVRTANIK • LUCIJA ZAVRTANIK • MARKO
NIK • MARKO ZAVRTANIK • RIM ZGUEB • MALTE
ANN • MOJCA ZLOKARNIK • ANJA ZORKO • DANILA
TUMAR • GREGOR DRAGO ZUPANČIČ • NADJA ZUPAN
ROK ŽAUCER • BOŠTJAN ŽEKŠ • JAKA ŽELEZNIKAR •
ŽEROVNIK • TERY ŽEŽELJ • IVAN ŽEŽLINA • ŽELIMIR
DIN ŽIVALJ • JANJA ŽMAVC • TADEJ ŽUPANČIČ



1995-2025

UNIVERZA
V NOVI GORICI

We
are
here

200+
employees

500+
colleagues

Other Activities

For the researchers, students, and general public, all the professional (research) and study literature is available at the very modern *University Library*, while the *Publisher of UNG* is in charge of the publication of text books, lecture notes, collections of scientific papers and other works. The university also has a *Student Office* that helps both undergraduate and graduate students, as well as all those interested in obtaining information about the study at the UNG. The *International and Project Office* is there for coordinating international projects and gives administrative support for carrying out international projects. Apart from that, the University of Nova Gorica also has a *Career Center* that creates a link between the university, the students and potential employers. Lastly, there is the *Alumni Club* that joins alumni from all generations of graduates, of both graduate and undergraduate programs. It basically connects all individuals who have contributed in any way to the development of the University of Nova Gorica.



University Library

Head: Vanesa Valentinčič Murovec



University Library of the University of Nova Gorica is open to the public, but it is primarily intended for the students and staff of the University of Nova Gorica. We collect materials from all fields of science, mainly to support the educational and research activities of UNG. The library collection currently includes approximately 25,500 monographic publications, as well as printed serial publications and non-book materials. Access to electronic editions of scientific publications is provided through services such as ScienceDirect, Springer-Nature, Web of Science, MathSciNet, Scopus, APS Journals, EBSCO, ACS Publications, JSTOR, CREDO Online, IOPscience, Taylor & Francis - Science & Technology, ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global, and others.

The library collection is almost entirely arranged in open stacks and organized by subject. In addition to lending services, the library offers online searches of publicly accessible databases and, through interlibrary loan services, ensure access to materials not held by the library.

We maintain bibliographies of researchers and lecturers employed at UNG and for some other institutions. We also enter data on all peer-reviewed scientific publications and other research results co-funded by public resources that were created at the University of Nova Gorica into the COBISS Digital Repository (dCOBISS) and the Repository of the University of Nova Gorica (RUNG).

The library is a full member of the COBISS cooperative cataloguing system, and lending services are automated. The library website offers online training in searching for materials, and we also provide information literacy courses. The library is open to users 44 hours per week. Users also have access to a reading room with wireless network access for using electronic resources. Students from the dislocated faculties can use library loan through a courier service.

In 2025, we reorganized all library spaces to make materials more accessible and easier for users to locate. The reading room, lending area,

and storage facilities were renovated. Outdated materials, items of which we had more than two copies and were rarely borrowed, as well as older journal issues available electronically, were written off and removed. We reviewed and updated our journal subscriptions, unsubscribed from some titles and ordered new ones. We had information literacy training for students. We organized two events titled *Mini Workshop on Open Science*, where we prepared lectures on open science for researchers and postgraduate students.

We actively participate in the Open Library portal and attend meetings of the repository managers' group, where we prepare proposals for changes and improvements to repositories. We also participate as observers of the OPERAS. SI consortium meetings, where we keep up to date with current developments in open scholarly communication in the social sciences and humanities.

In 2025, we mainly attended training programs in the field of open science, copyright law, personal data protection, open publishing, citizen science, and certification of repositories for obtaining the CoreTrustSeal certificate. We also took part in training courses related to cataloguing and the use of COBISS Lib and COBISS Cat software.

For the first time, we prepared new bookmarks with information about the library and open science.

We continued updating the lists of recommended study literature.

Publisher of UNG

Head: Mirjana Frelih



Publishing activities at the University of Nova Gorica have been carried out since 2001. These activities include the publication, distribution, and organization of printing of textbooks and other study materials intended for the teaching process, as well as professional and scientific works that relate to or are integrated into the activities of the University of Nova Gorica. The publication of works is regulated by the *Rules on Publishing Activities*, and the *Publishing Commission* is responsible for monitoring the quality and appropriateness of publications.

So far, we have published 77 publication titles. Among them there are teaching materials with exercise instructions for undergraduate students of the University of Nova Gorica, university textbooks also intended for students and faculty at other universities, conference proceedings, as well as scientific and other monographs.

In 2025, six works were published, of which four were new, one translation and one revised edition, all in open access under a Creative Commons license.

Four university textbooks have been published in open access on the Pressbooks platform: *Osnove astronomije* by Andreja Gomboc; *Introduction to contract law* by Maja Ovčak Kos; *Kulturna zgodovina spola na Slovenskem v dobi meščanstva* by Katja Mihurko in *Uvod v astronomsko opazovanja za dijake in dijakinje* by Jure Japelj in Andreja Gomboc

We have also published one collection in open access: *Škrabčevi dnevi 13: zbornik prispevkov s simpozija* edited by Franc Marušič, Maja Melinc Mlekuž, Petra Mišmaš and Rok Žaucer, a revised edition of the e-book *Ljubim lepa pisma: dopisovanja avtoric slovenske moderne* by Katja Mihurko, Primož Mlačnik and Ivana Zajc, which was first published in 2024, and three digital originals of printed publications that were published in print by UNG Publishing House in 2004, 2009 and 2014 and were withdrawn from sale at the end of last year, namely: *Vprašanja in naloge za preverjanje znanja iz fizike* by Iztok Arčon
Evine hčere: konstruiranje ženskosti v slovenskem javnem diskurzu 1848-1902 by Katja Mihurko Poniž

Zapisano z njenim peresom: prelomi zgodnjih slovenskih književnic s paradigmo nacionalne literature by Katja Mihurko Poniž

We published in print the textbook *Uvod v astronomsko opazovanja za dijake in dijakinje* by Jure Japelj and Andreja Gomboc, which was originally published as webbook in open access.

In 2025, we published all published books in open access for the first time.

In 2025, we participated in the Liber.ac academic book fair in Ljubljana as well as online. Some of our book titles are available in 10 bookstores across Slovenia. In addition to the catalog of printed books, we have also published an e-book catalog on the UNG Press website. Bookmarks with UNG Press information are also in preparation and will be printed at the beginning of next year. In 2025, we worked intensively on preparing new publishing rules, which will most likely be published early next year.

Student Office

Head: Renata Kop

The Student Office of the University of Nova Gorica represents an important link between students, faculties, and university services. The office is located in Nova Gorica and Vipava.

The mission of the Student Office is to provide high-quality support to students and applicants in study-related, administrative, informational, and extracurricular processes, with the aim of improving the study experience and ensuring the smooth operation of the university. Its work covers a full range of services—from support with application and enrolment procedures, student advising, and recognition of education to record keeping, preparation of analyses, and management of the student dormitory. Through continuous professional development, upgrading of knowledge, and adaptation to legislative and organizational requirements, the office ensures a high level of service quality and effective support for the university environment.

The tasks of the Student Office include a wide range of services, such as:

- Study counselling: information on application procedures, deadlines, and study opportunities.
- Administrative processing of applications: reviewing and recording applications, notifying candidates about missing documentation, and observing deadlines.
- Guiding candidates through application and enrolment procedures: verifying documentation, sending notifications, preparing decisions on candidate selection, organising first enrolment.
- Recognition of education: reviewing and recording applications, collecting documentation, communicating with candidates, expert assessment, and preparing decisions.
- Student enrolment procedures: organising and carrying out enrolment into higher years, repeating a year, entering and preparing data for other university services.
- Issuing certificates: certificates of acceptance, enrolment, completed exams, and other confirmations.
- Grade entry: processing exam and thesis results.
- Support for Study Affairs Committees: expert assistance and counselling.
- Extracurricular counselling: information on accommodation, transport, meals, health insurance, banking services, and obtaining a tax number.
- Organisation of mandatory medical examinations.
- Services for international students: assistance with procedures for obtaining residence permits.
- Management of student records and archives.
- Participation in the preparation of university regulations and preparation of graduation documents (degrees, diploma supplements, document legalization, procurement of materials).
- Coordination of the admission call and data entry on study programmes, application deadlines, and available places in the eVŠ system.
- Participation in preparing the schedule and common provisions for undergraduate programmes.
- Membership and participation in the VPIS Coordination.
- Preparation of statistical analyses on students, graduates, applications, enrolment, and study programmes for faculties, the university, the ministry, and other stakeholders.
- Managing websites related to applications, calls, enrolment, extracurricular activities, and fee schedules.
- Management of the student dormitory in Lanthieri Mansion: preparing the call, preparing contracts, allocating accommodation, registering and deregistering residence, keeping records, monitoring room conditions and maintenance, and coordinating private accommodation offers.

Training and Education in 2025

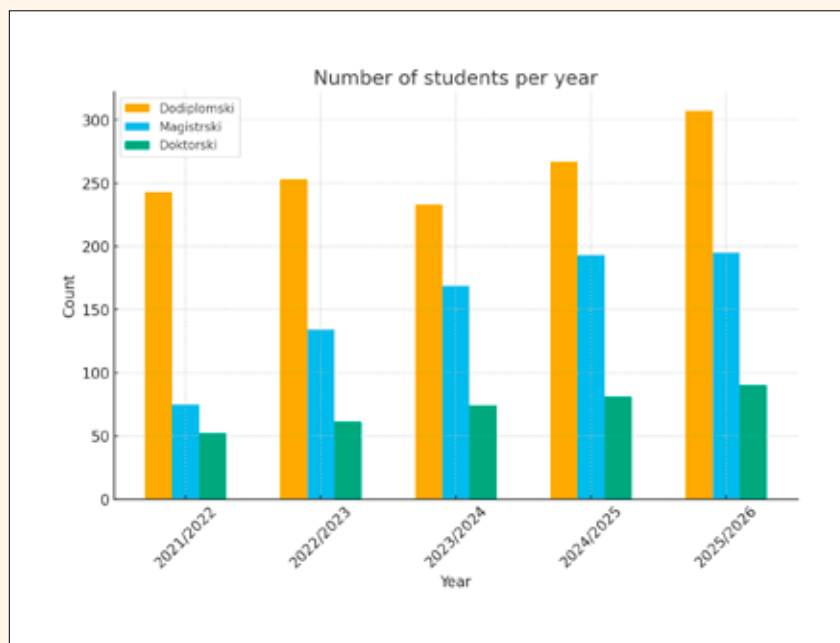
Planned training

- consultations, seminars, and training in the field of admissions services,
- legislation and best practices in the recognition of education,
- legislation concerning residence permits for foreigners,
- training provided by the ministry responsible for higher education and by ENIC-NARIC,
- legislation in the field of higher education,
- strengthening intercultural competencies.

Examples of training courses conducted

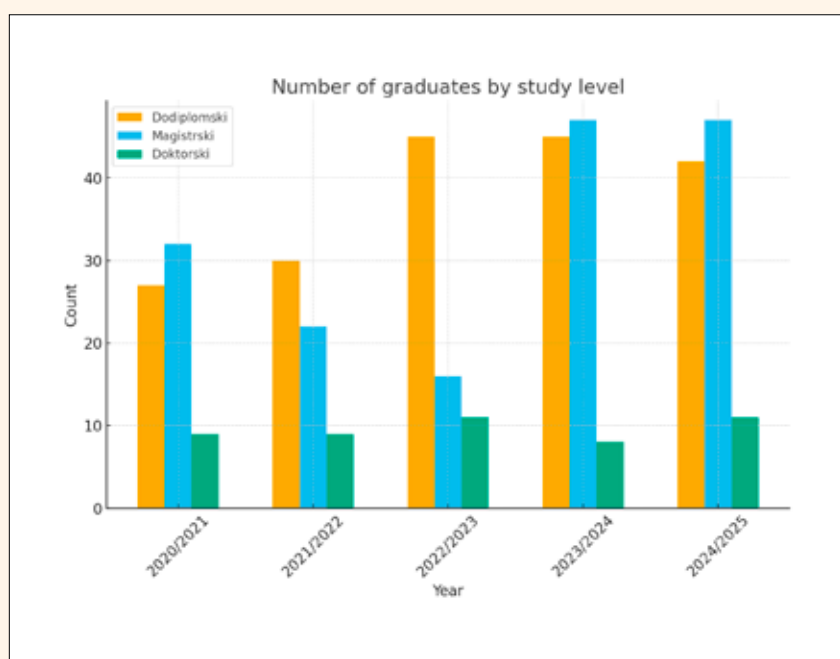
- working meetings of admissions services with secondary schools,
- training for the eVŠ portal (OZR, EMŠO creation, ZViS-1),
- working meetings of the VPIS Coordination,
- DATA-LAB: personal data protection,
- lecture/training titled *How to Hear, Understand and Communicate with a Person with Experience of Violence*,
- Erasmus+ training (University in Yerevan, Armenia),
- Across round table: *Across borders and biases – Inclusion in Action*,
- ACEI webinar: *Utilizing Emerging Technologies in Credential Evaluation*,
- ECB online event for European universities,
- ECE training *30-minute Snapshot* (document, resource, and knowledge management),
- AUREA Online Multiplier Event: *The long road to automatic recognition in the context of mobility*.

In the 2025/2026 academic year, a total of 592 students were enrolled: 307 in undergraduate, 195 in master's, and 90 in doctoral study programmes.

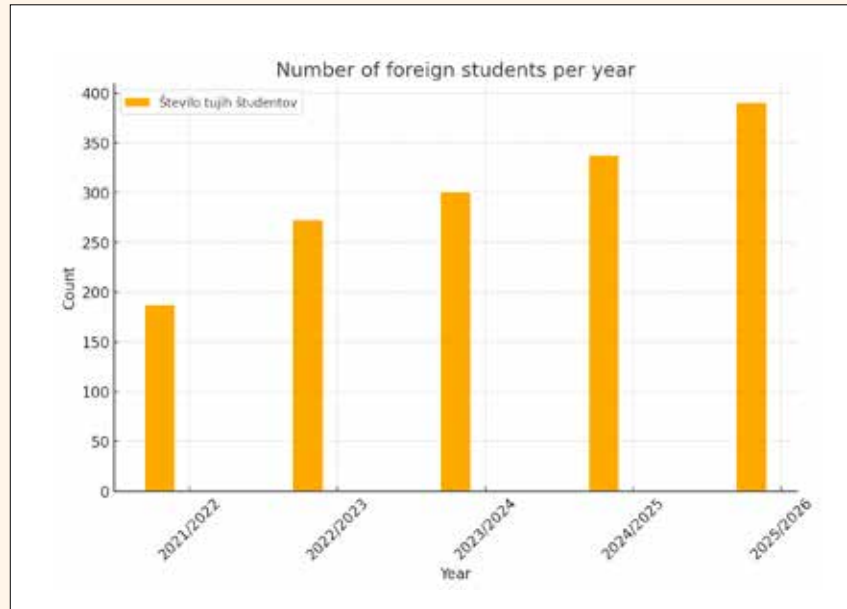


The number of graduates in the 2024/2025 academic year by study level was as follows:

- 42 graduates of undergraduate study programmes,
- 47 graduates of master's study programmes,
- 11 graduates of doctoral study programmes.



In 2025, a total of 904 procedures for the recognition of foreign education for the purpose of further education were processed and completed, resulting in 649 positive decisions being issued.

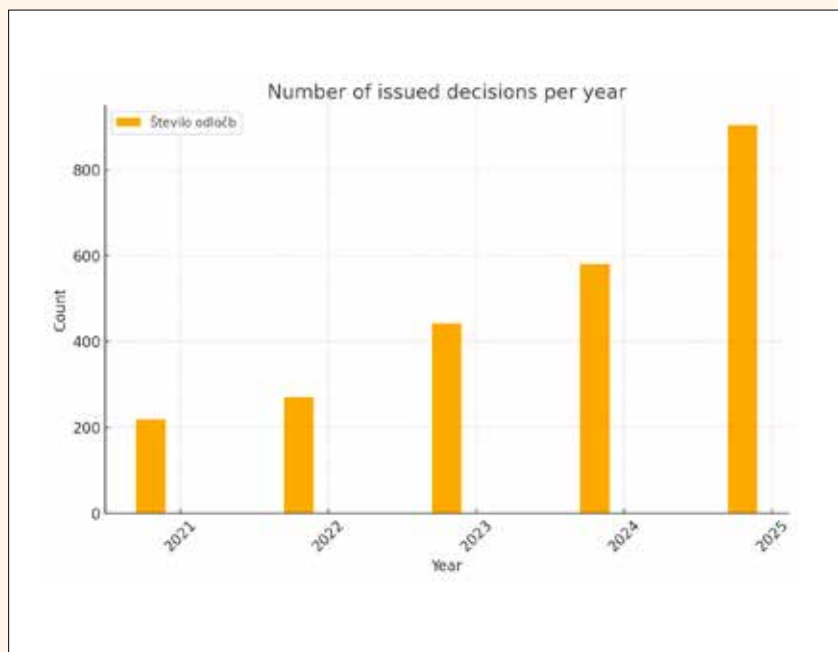


The number of foreign students at the University increased in 2024/2025 compared to 2023/2024, and the percentage of foreign students in relation to the total number of students at the University in the observed period is also higher, i.e. 62,3%.

The number of international students at the University increased in the 2025/2026 academic year compared to the previous year. The proportion of international students relative to the total student population remains comparable to last year and stands at 65.8%.

Most international students in the 2025/2026 academic year are enrolled in master's study programmes, primarily at the School of Humanities and the School of Engineering and Management.

In the 2025/2026 academic year, students at the University come from 62 different countries.



In 2025, the Student Office of the University of Nova Gorica successfully carried out a wide range of tasks that significantly contribute to the smooth implementation of study processes and the efficient functioning of the university. With a high level of professionalism, adaptability, and responsibility, the office provides support that is crucial for a high-quality educational environment and a positive student experience. Looking ahead, it remains committed to further development, professional growth, and the introduction of improvements that will contribute to even more efficient, accessible, and student-friendly operations.

International and Project Office

Head of Office: Aljaž Renar

The activity of the International and Project Office is intended for the management and organization of international activities and the coordination of international (and domestic) UNG projects.

The office supports students, professors, researchers and other employees who participate in mobility activities. It takes care of incoming and outgoing mobility under the Erasmus + program, Bilateral Scholarships and of mobility carried out under various interinstitutional agreements or arrangements. It also provides support in concluding inter-institutional agreements.

The office provides administrative support to applications of project proposals to open calls and the implementation of international projects. The office provides support to researchers and other employees in preparing applications for tenders, primarily from a financial, administrative and legal-formal point of view. For ongoing projects, the office ensures the preparation of financial reports for international research projects and provides support and advice in the implementation of projects.

The office employs four people (Head of the Office, Project Coordinator, Mobility Coordinator and Professional Associate).

Mobility projects implemented during the academic year 2024/2025

- Erasmus+ 2025, KA131 (2025-2027)
- Erasmus+ 2024, KA131 (2024-2026)
- Erasmus+ 2023, KA131 (2023-2025)
- Erasmus+ 2025, KA171 (2025-2028)
- Erasmus+ 2024, KA171 (2024-2027)
- Erasmus+ 2023, KA171 (2023-2026)
- Erasmus+ 2022, KA171 (2022-2025)
- Multidisciplinary Approach to Education and Research in the Field of Digital Media Production, CEEPUS (2024-2025)
- Advanced Trends in Education and Research of Biochemistry, Biophysics and Biotechnology of Macromolecules, CEEPUS (2024-2025)
- Food Safety for Healthy Living, CEEPUS (2024-2025)
- Women Writers in History, CEEPUS (2024-2025)
- ADRIART.CE, CEEPUS (2024-2025)
- Education of Modern Analytical and Bioanalytical Methods, CEEPUS (2024-2025)
- Research and Education in the Field of Graphic Engineering and Design, CEEPUS (2024-2025)

224 exchanges of students, young graduates and staff were realized in the 2023/2024 academic year.

The Office provided support in concluding inter-institutional agreements and took care of the promotion of programs and projects and their results. Office organized several informative presentations of mobility projects for both staff and students. It also participated in virtual Info Days of the University, promotional campaigns organized by the University.

The work in the office in 2025 in the field of international research projects was mainly focused to support the implementation of ongoing projects.

In 2025, the International and Project Office provided administrative and financial support in the implementation of the following projects and in the preparation of financial reports:

Acronym	Project title	Programme
NEP	"Nanoscience Foundries and Fine Analysis - Europe PILOT"	H2020-INFRAIA-2020-1
WeBaSOOP	Research Reinforcing in the Western Balkans in Offline and Online Monitoring and Source Identification of Atmospheric Particles	HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02
SRC-EDIH	Smart, Resilient, and Sustainable Communities – European Digital Innovation Hub	HORIZON EUROPE-DIGITAL-2021-EDIH-01
Re-Value	Re-Valuing Urban Quality & Climate Neutrality in European Waterfront Cities	HORIZON-MISS-2021-CIT-02
MI-TRAP	MITIGATING TRANSPORT-RELATED AIR POLLUTION IN EUROPE	HORIZON-CL5-2023-D5-01
GREENINCITIES		HORIZON-MISS-2023-CLIMA-CITIES-01
SPOILCONTROL	Improvement of the quality and safety of fermented beverages through the management and control of spoilage microorganisms	HORIZON-MSCA-2023-DN-01
TALES	Time-domain Analysis to study the Life-cycle and Evolution of Supermassive black holes	HORIZON-MSCA-2023-DN-01
EXPAND-EV	Expanding the value of Extracellular Vesicles as carriers of biomarker and therapy in precision healthcare	HORIZON-MSCA-2023-SE-01
CC-Chip.si	Slovenian Competence Center on Chips and Semiconductor Technologies - Chip.si	DIGITAL-Chips-2024-SG-CCC-1
GreenOMorph	Green materials for neuromorphic signal processing by organic synaptic transistors	HORIZON-EIC-2023-PATHFINDERCHALLENGES-01
RISTANC	Research and Innovation cooperation for Sustainability and reaching EU missions objectives	HORIZON-MISS-2024-CROSS-02
SLAIF	Slovenian AI Factory	HORIZON-JU-EUROHPC-2025-AI-01-IBA
SMASH	Machine Learning for Sciences and Humanities	HORIZON-MSCA-2021-COFUND-01
EMMIR	European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations	ERASMUS-EDU-2021-PEX-EMJM-MOB
Across	European University for Cross-Border Knowledge Sharing	ERASMUS-EDU-2024-EUR-UNIV
NanoBioTech NEXUS	Bridging Nanotechnology & Biotechnology for Business and Growth	"EIT Higher Education Initiative Fourth call for proposals: October 2024"
HyMetBat	Hybrid metrology for sustainable and low-carbon footprint battery materials	The European Partnership on Metrology
PV	Peripheral Visions	"Skład za male projekty GO! 2025, ki ga upravlja EZTS GO, Razpis 1/2023"
4P	Čezmejne Poti, ki odkrivajo dediščino Piera Paola Pasolinija	Razpis za standardne projekte
ALL-MICRO	ALLiance to boost cross-border innovation through MICROscopy -ALLiance za spodbujanje čezmejnih inovacij z metodo MIKROskopija	Razpis za standardne projekte
GO! STUDIO	Krepitev čezmejnih zmogljivosti na AV področju z mladimi za mlade	"Skład za male projekty GO! 2025, ki ga upravlja EZTS GO, Razpis 1/2023"
ENO(SATIRA)	Trajnostni vinski turizem: kulturna krajina, vino in satira	"Skład za male projekty GO! 2025, ki ga upravlja EZTS GO, Razpis 1/2023"
AGROTUR+	Kraški lokalni produkti in turizem	Razpis za kapitalizacijske projekte
RESPOND	Climate Resilient alpine wine orchards	
GENIUS	Greener permanent magnets without or with less critical raw materials	ERA-MIN Joint Transnational Call 2023
CULTURAL BEES	Creating cultural heritage businesses through hybrid learning models & hands-on curricula across borders	CREA-CULT-2023-COOP
DECORATOR	Danubians Cradle-to-Cradle Architecture and construction processes	Razpis za standardne projekte
CDKL5	Looking for differences: in vitro isolation of hCDKL5-specific antibody fragments and setup of a method to quantify hCDKL5 and possibly distinguish between its isoforms	CDKL5 PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE GRANT PROGRAM
EARTH	Euclid Astronomical Transient Hunt	ESA PRODEX
LFT3 Spectrometer	LFT3 Spectrometer	Breakthrough Prize Foundation subaward through The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford, "Breakthrough Listen" project

Career Center

(Head: Nives Štefančič)



Activities in 2025:

Activities in the context of practical training; coordination and assistance of students in finding companies for practical training and participation in online presentations of interim reports of the practical training of students of School of Engineering and Management in companies Pipistrel d. o. o. (2 students in practical training), Pipistrel Vertical Solutions d. o. o. (2 students in practical training), Incom d. o. o., Vitanest d. o. o., BT INOX d. o. o., Acinel d. o. o., SNEP Nekretnine d. o. o., Institute of Metals and Technology, and Editor d. o. o.

Contacts with employers; meetings with employers from companies Alemo, d. o. o. where we discussed the possibilities of cooperation with individual schools in the framework of practical training, student work and other possibilities of cooperation. Publication of vacancies of different companies.

Informing students and graduates of suitable job vacancies, internships, current events, tenders; published around 170 job vacancies, which correspond to profiles of UNG graduates.

Periodically checking the employability of graduates six months and one year after graduation; in January, March, May, July, September and November 2025 (graduates from 2021 to 2025).

Organization and/or participation at events with the aim of promoting the University and the Career Center:

- Coordination and participation in the Career Fair at Vegova School in Ljubljana;
- Coordination and participation in the Career Fair at the Secondary School of Health Care and Cosmetology in Celje;
- Organization and coordination of the team at the 16th Informativa Fair;
- Meetings with other universities regarding the organization and implementation of the UNI-SI Festival of Slovenian Universities in 2026;
- Participation in the Career Day at the cross-border secondary school (Liceo) hub in Gorizia, Italy;
- Coordination of internship placements for 4th-year students of the Slovenian classical lyceum track from Gorizia – six students completed a five-day internship at UNG units;
- Preparation of an agreement between UNG and the Institute for Youth Policy Ajdovščina, and coordination of one-day job shadowing for 3rd- and 4th-year grammar school students from Nova Gorica, Ajdovščina, Vipava, Postojna, Idrija, Sežana, and Ilirska Bistrica – 22 students participated in job shadowing at UNG units;
- Coordination of job shadowing at UNG units, preparation of an agreement between UNG and the Nova Gorica Adult Education Center, and coordination of one-day job shadowing for 3rd- and 4th-year students of the Nova Gorica Grammar School – 3 students participated in job shadowing at UNG units;
- Coordination of room rentals in a leased apartment in Nova Gorica;

- Participation in interim presentations by PTF students on the progress of practical training;
- Participation in final presentations by PTF students on the completion of practical training;
- Participation in the Council of the School of Engineering and Management (PTF);
- Delivery of the workshop “CV and Motivation Letter” for students of the School of Engineering and Management;
- Coordination and co-moderation of a round table at the School of Engineering and Management titled “*Practical Training – An Excellent Opportunity to Enter the Business World*”;
- Coordination and co-moderation of a round table “*Challenges of Environmental Technologists and Viticulture and Oenology Engineers*” at the School for Viticulture and Enology;
- Coordination and moderation of a round table at the School of Humanities and the School of Arts;
- Coordination of a student team and participation at the Career Festival in Koper;
- Organization of the ceremony of the University of Nova Gorica Foundation;
- Coordination of the exhibition “*Artists for Caritas*” at Lanthieri Mansion;
- Coordination of a student team and participation at the career fair “*Fair of Professions and Education for Secondary School Students*” in Maribor;
- Coordination of a student team and participation in the fair “*Choose Your Studies*” at Nova Gorica Gymnasium.

Participation of the Career Center in working meetings and trainings:

- Participation at the online consultation “Career Paths of Graduates” organized by NAKVIS;
- Participation at the online seminar “Disabled Students”;
- Participation at the two-day DPSS congress “Effective Communication with Challenging Interlocutors and Managing Emotions and Stress”;
- Participation in an Erasmus+ exchange at Yerevan State University in Armenia;
- Participation at the training “Supporting Compassion and Cooperation with Young People” organized by URSM;
- Participation at the seminar “Supporting Compassion and Cooperation with and Among Young People”;
- Participation at the online seminar “ECB Online Event for European Universities – 17 September 2025”;
- Participation at the international conference “Digitalisation in Lifelong Career Guidance”, organized by Euroguidance.

Employability in 2025

With the academic year 2021/2022, we started with a new way of monitoring employability of graduates. We follow the percentage of graduates who:

- are employed in the profession,
- are employed,
- are UNEMPLOYED,
- continue their studies,
- we fail to verify them or they refuse to provide information - grey area.

The tables present the employability of UNG graduates for all programs together and separately by Schools for 6 months and 12 months after graduation. Data from the UNG Career Center are from November 2025 and include graduates of the last three years.

Employability of UNG graduates, all together and separately by School, 6 months after graduation (data covers graduates from 2020 onwards):

School average in %	6 months % employed in the profession	6 months % employed	6 months % unemployed	6 months % continue with studies	6m % grey area
University of Nova Gorica - together	51,48	59,63	5,93	27,41	7,04
School of Engineering and Management	65,38	67,95	6,41	19,23	6,41
School of Environmental Sciences	16,13	32,26	6,45	48,39	12,90
School of Humanities	20,83	50,00	4,17	33,33	12,50
School of Sciences	23,81	23,81	9,52	66,67	0,00
School of Viticulture and Enology	60,00	76,00	0,00	24,00	0,00
School of Arts	48,89	53,33	8,89	35,56	2,22
Graduate School - TOGETHER	81,82	86,36	4,55	0,00	9,09

6 months - % employability of the Graduate School (GS) separately by doctoral programmes	% of graduates from GS					
Environmental Sciences	83,33	100,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	13,64
Physics	71,43	78,57	7,14	0,00	14,29	31,82
Karstology	100,00	100,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	11,36
Humanities	100,00	100,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	9,09
Cultural Heritage Studies	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	100,00	4,55
Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology	100,00	100,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	6,82
Cognitive Science of Language	0,00	0,00	100,00	0,00	0,00	2,27
Materials	100,00	100,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	20,45

Alumni Club

Head: Nives Štefančič



Alumni Club of the University of Nova Gorica in 2025 continued with activities to increase connection between University and Alumni:

- we upgraded informations about Alumni and informed them about activities of Alumni Club;
- we informed Alumni about scholarships, competitions, opportunities for postgraduate studies at home and abroad;
- we invited them to become promoters within their schools, at variety promotional events;
- we informed them about job vacancies and other events suitable for individual profiles of graduates;
- we invited them to different events of the University of Nova Gorica (scientific afternoon, information days, semester and annual exhibitions, etc.);
- Alumni participated at round tables at the School for Viticulture and Enology, School of Humanities and School of Arts.



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