

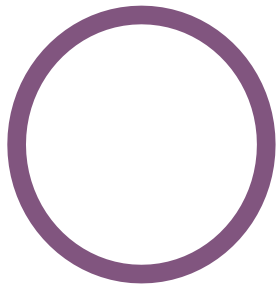
# The „International Talent Journey (ITJ)“

## - a guided career qualification process

- Intellectual Output II | Working Package 3 -

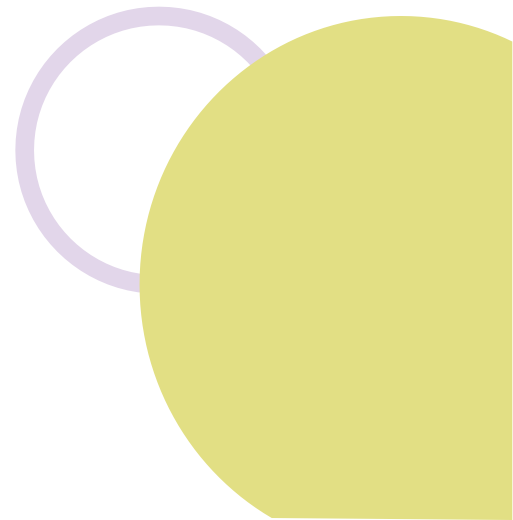
**INTERLOCALITY**

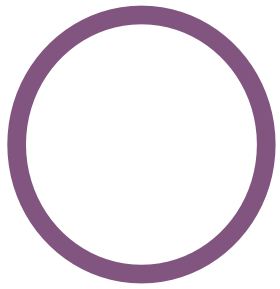
Anna Hölscher & Nadine Pantel  
Career and Talent Service | FH Münster



# Agenda:

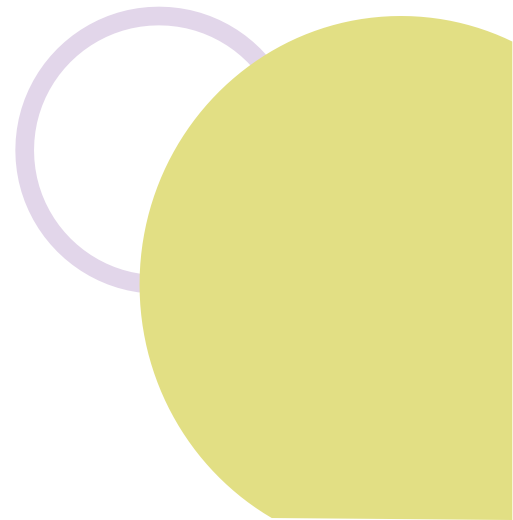
- Need of ITJ and work package outcomes
- The ITJ Concept: an overview
- ITJ @ ARCADA and FH Münster: facts & figures
- Implementation of ITJ @ FH Münster: step-by-step
- Implementation of ITJ @ FH Münster: focus Pre Skills Assessment
- Innovative formats @ FH Münster and UCN
- Lessons learned
- Conclusion & transfer potential

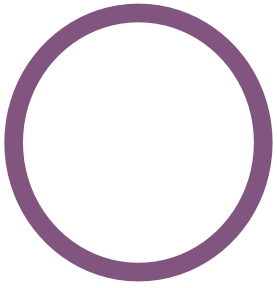




# Identified need of an International Talent Journey

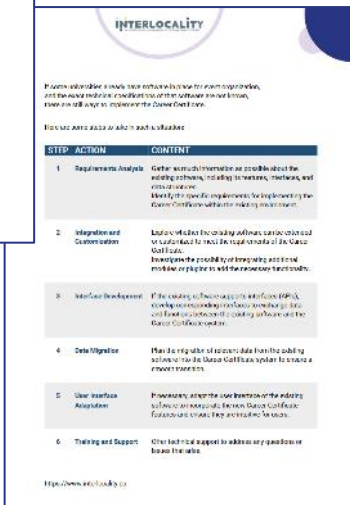
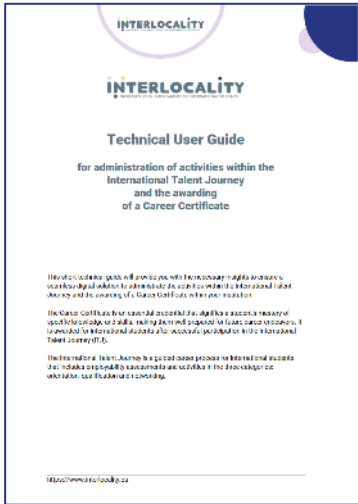
- There are many activities in the participating organisations, which also address international students.
  - These offers alone do not solve the employability and retention challenges that international students face.
  - The activities are offered by various actors and not in a structured and guided process.
- **There is a lack of a program tailored to the target group.**

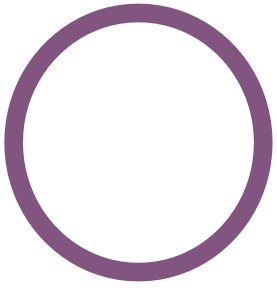




# Work package Outcomes

- 1) The Employability Activities Catalogue (EAC)
- 2) International Talent Journey (ITJ)
- 3) A technical guide for Implementation





# ITJ Concept: An overview

The "International Talent Journey (ITJ)" is a **qualification process for international students**, based on the **identified needs** and match with lack of skills and opportunities.

The ITJ as a structured process **combines career guidance** with the attendance to **different activities** in order to increase various competences.

Therefore, a focus is given on the **assessment and coaching parts** in each process, which are mandatory for each student to attend.

**INTERLOCALITY**  
INCREASED LOCAL EMPLOYABILITY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

**INTERNATIONAL TALENT JOURNEY  
CONCEPT**  
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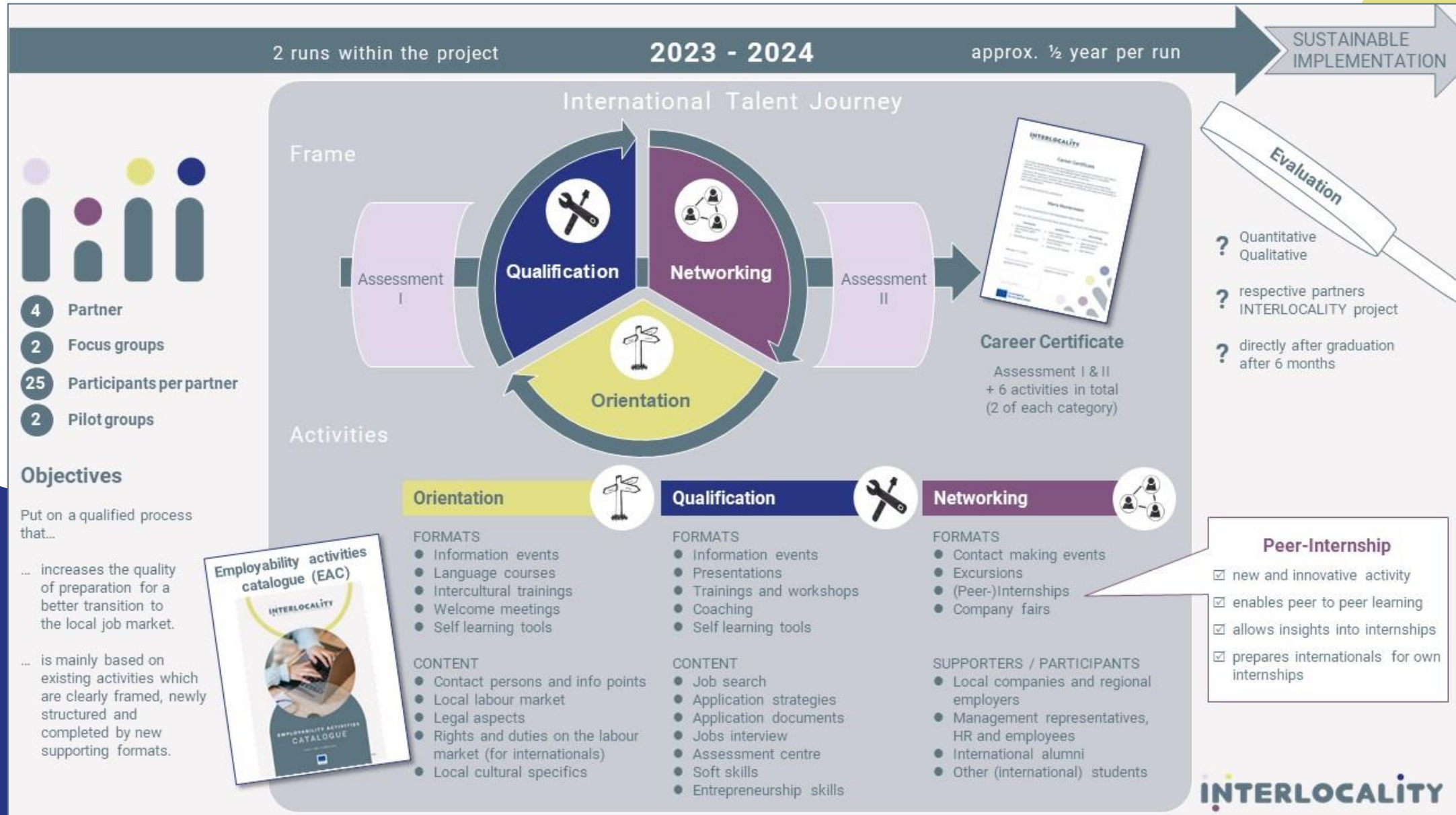
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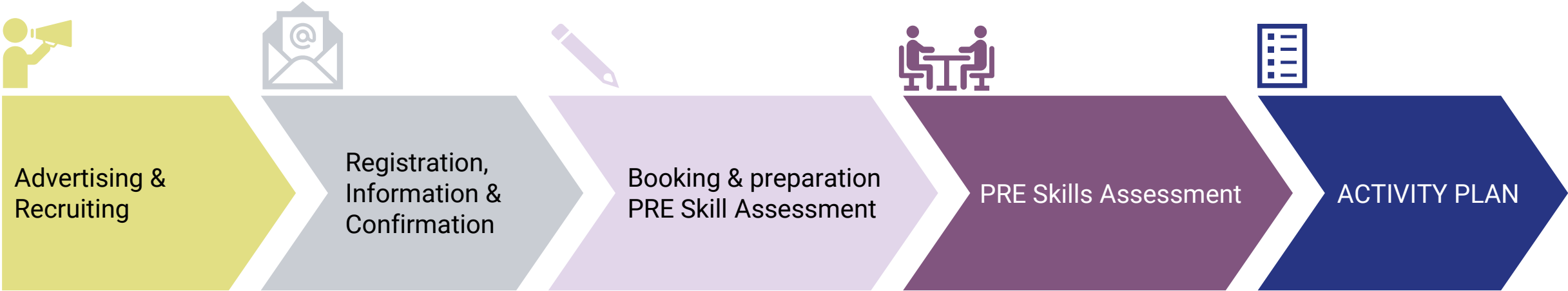
# The concept at a glance



# Variations in the implementation of ITJ: Examples ARCADA and FH Münster

FH Münster		ARCADA
68 students registered	<b>Registrations / Participants</b>	30 students started the process
Mostly non-EU students	<b>EU / Non-EU</b>	Only non-EU
More Master students in English-taught programmes	<b>Bachelor / Master</b>	Only Bachelor Students in english-taught programmes
Students from higher semesters (Business and Engineering)	<b>Target group</b>	1st year students (Business and Engineering)
Start with the semester, flexible	<b>Duration</b>	During first semester
extra-curricular and voluntarily	<b>Obligation</b>	Curricular and mandatory
Individually selected activities	<b>Activities</b>	All activities for all students
<b>43</b>	<b>PRE Skill Assessments</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>POST Skill Assessments</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Career Certificates</b>	<b>19</b>
Staff of International Office and Career Service	<b>Journey Guides</b>	Degree program lecturers and career counsellors
Start of creating mentoring programme with employers and students	<b>Innovative formats</b>	Practical training model with partnerships with companies, offering internships of 20 weeks for International Business students
Networking events ("Meet & Mach")		Companies commit to accept 3 interns a year with overlapping periods to let them learn from each other

# Implementation of ITJ @ FH Münster – step-by-step









# Innovative networking format @ FH Münster: „Meet & Match“





## Innovative qualification format @ UCN: „Pre-Internship“

### Idea of a “snoop internship”

International students get introduced to an internship in a Danish company by Danish interns for a few days.

### Objectives:

Broadening the international **students' horizons** in terms of an internship in a local company and help them understand what it takes to achieve the **competencies needed** for entering the Danish labour market.

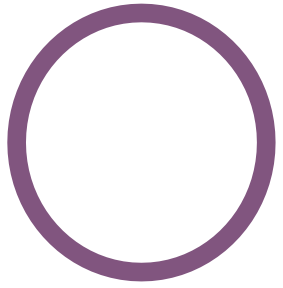
By introducing international students to local companies through a local student hired by the company, it **saves capacities for the company**.

The initiative also aims to give local students insight into the international students' lives and cultures, thus enhancing their **internationalization** and improving the student environment on campus.



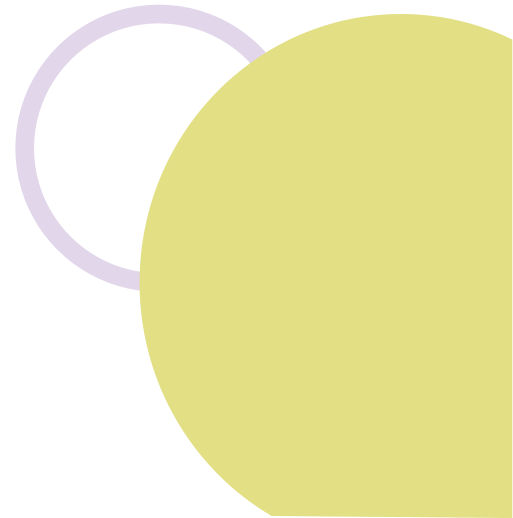
### BUT:

Political decisions shortly after start of the project to close down English taught programmes!  
No longer international students at UCN, therefore implementing the ITJ hasn't been possible!



# What we have learned

- 1) Overall lessons learned
- 2) New or confirmed findings on the target group
- 3) Conclusions & transfer potential



# Overall lessons learned

## ITJ @ ARCADA

- Students' proactive behaviour fell short due to the **different reality of local job market conditions** and **late visa decisions**.
- Students wished to have **better pre-arrival counselling** to be both emotional and practical ready.
- **Introduction weeks** were useful in bridging the initial knowledge gap.



## ITJ @ FH Münster

- **Limited time budget** and limited **language skills** hindered to participate in activities.
- Less interest in **Career Certificate** than expected.
- Challenges in **gaining students' interest** and awareness about the ITJ's benefits
- A significant number of registered students did not proceed at the stage of **preparing the PRE-Assessment**
- **High invest of staff capacity** in individual assessments, which turned to be important components

## ITJ within both HEI

- **Closer collaboration** within different disciplines and internal partners
- Deeper understanding of the **(emotional) journey of internationals**, their needs and worries
- Better visibility of **advisory structures** among all involved parties
- More insight into **wrong assumptions und expectations** and **ineffective strategies** of internationals
- Better overview of individual **profiles** of international students, full of **valuable skills, experiences and characteristics**
- **Raised awareness** of the target group's needs among HEI staff

# Findings on the target group

## Expectations & challenges:

- **Language barrier** as highest challenge
- Huge spectrum of perceptions and preparedness regarding career prospects
- **Transferring skills to the local job markets** due to clearer career paths in home countries
- More cultural differences between job search in home country and country of residence than expected



## Influences on the willingness to stay:

- local language skills
- Internationalisation and open-mindedness of the region
- Family and friends in the region
- How the invest in building a network pays out
- Well-being and mental health



## Benefit of ITJ for students:

- Awareness about dimensions and details of **local employability** (three categories)
- **Networking** events were highly welcomed
- More knowledge about **support structures** and fewer barriers to using them



## Limits of the ITJ for the students:

- ITJ cannot compensate basic **skills** for studying and career development (communication, study field related,...)
- ITJ does not replace **individual preparation** and to-dos
- ...cannot prepare for every individual situation



# Conclusions & transfer potential: If there was a version 2.0...



Do an early **expectation management**, preferably before arrival:  
Sensitize continuously for underestimated **cultural differences** and **knowledge deficits**.

Be honest in the communication about **local language requirements** also in english-taught programs.

Provide enough **activities in English** specifically for students on these programs.

**Cooperation** between guides and teachers (also language teachers) is fundamental.

Understand **HEI as „bridge“ to local companies and employers** and build it with networking events and hands-on experiences with open-minded employers.

Students' journeys are highly emotional – take the importance of **mental health** and **well-being** into account.

There is no such thing as “THE” international student, but **only individuals** with own strengths, weaknesses and needs in different stages of their career.

Extend the ITJ to **all study phases** with a stronger interlink, as they are mutually dependent.

At least some activities should be selectable as **a part of the curriculum**.



**Thank you for participation!**

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