

The organization of corporate Forums, Job Fairs and Job Networking Sessions

GUIDEBOOK



UNIVERSITÀ
DI TRENTO



**Tools for Enhancing and Assessing the
Value of International Experience for
Engineers**



Cofinanciado por el
programa Erasmus+
de la Unión Europea



Erasmus+



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Three objectives for this guidebook

Employability is the keyword. The purpose of this guidebook is to help:

- Engineering students, graduates and alumni improve, develop, and secure employability.
- Corporation recruiters improve, develop, and secure recruitment of engineers.
- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) improve, develop, and secure training for their engineering students on employability.



The TA VIE Programme has shown that international experience is a keystone to training engineering students, developing skills and qualities that turn them into open-minded citizens and are widely appreciated by recruiting companies. Globally recruiters seem to expect engineers who can face complexity in a systemic environment, to manage uncertainty, to consider challenges from several viewpoints, to question their own responsibility. Those decisive competences fall into the following categories of soft skills:

- **Conflict transformation** to cope with clashing ideas, emotions, and behaviours and to be able to analyse the different positions with the aim of finding mutually acceptable and constructive outcomes.
- **Teamwork** implies a cooperative and coordinated effort on the part of a group of persons acting together as a team in the interest of a common cause. Teamwork means that people use individual skills and provide constructive feedback, solving creatively possible conflicts.
- **Project development and management** to identify a need, analyse and define context and resources, design, develop, implement, and enhance the action idea(s) with the aim of producing appropriate and feasible response(s).
- **Intercultural competence** to perceive, be curious about, open to and respectful of cultures, including one's own; to be able to understand, express and appreciate different values and norms, ways of thinking, practices, and behaviours and to engage with others by initiating or being receptive to a constructive exchange.
- **Communication** is the comprehensive interaction between individuals and in groups through dialogue. It implies empathetic listening and being able to express thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions clearly and assertively.
- **Leadership** is the use of individual skills to organize, coordinate and delegate tasks, providing constructive feedback, solving possible conflicts creatively and through

dialogue. Leadership requires empathy, initiative and creativity and the ability to express thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions clearly and assertively.

- **Social entrepreneurship** is the competence to respond to social challenges and create opportunities by undertaking innovative and sustainable projects in collaboration with others.

The TA VIE project and this guidebook have been devised to implement a more active communication and co-operation between three “recruitment partners” ---graduates, companies, HEIs---in order, for all of them, to understand, assess and express the added value of international education and training, and consequently to facilitate recruitment.

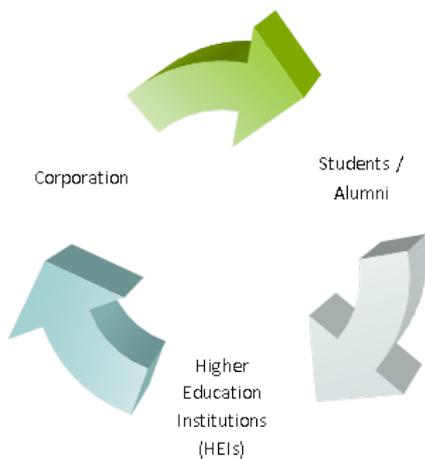
This guidebook is a way to promote direct employment of powerful and highly experienced international graduates (job seekers), corporations (job providers) and HEIs (professional trainers).

Engineers like stools. They are extremely steady in any kind of situation. Stools have three legs, the best possible basis in terms of balance. Just another reason why in this guide several items come by threes.

We will first identify the needs, expectations, and initiatives of the three stakeholders. Then we will provide guidelines on how to organise face-to-face forums, job-fairs, and job networking sessions. Then, thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic teachings, we will develop how to organise online forums, job-fairs, and job networking sessions. Finally, we will explain the virtues of blended—both face-to-face and online--forums, job-fairs, and job networking sessions.

Job hunting is the act of looking for employment. Contacting as many people as possible is a highly effective way to find a job. It is estimated that 50% or higher of all jobs are found through networking. Job recruiters and decision makers are increasingly using online social networking sites, job fairs and job networking sessions to gather information about job applicants. Likewise, job seekers use social networking sites to advertise their skills and post resumes.

Needs and orientations of the three groups of stakeholders



Among the various ways of seeking or offering a job or an internship, events connecting the three populations are especially valuable.

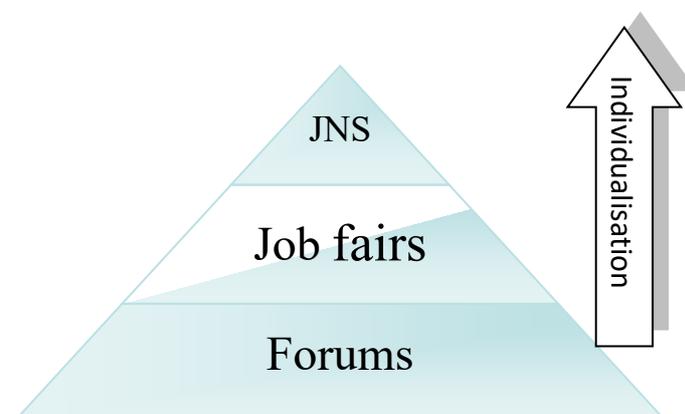
Forums, job fairs and job networking sessions (JNS) commonly connect three types of population – job/internship seekers (graduates and alumni), corporations (recruiters), HEIs (educators and trainers).

Among these types of events, common elements can be identified such as contact, connection, dialogue, discovery, learning, reality, and corporate language. However, some of these common elements can be slightly different depending on the event. Connection

and dialogue between participants are common points but differ in terms of intensity, quality, and objectives from a forum to a JNS.

- Forums address large numbers of participants: HEIs, corporations, students, alumni. The key concept is delivering information on companies and HEIs to students. Forums are Tools of information and awareness.
- Job fairs are generally more selective: corporations address students seeking an internship or a job. The key concept is delivering information on possible internships and jobs. Recruitments are possible but not privileged.
- Job networking sessions (JNS) are highly selective: corporations address students, graduates and alumni clearly seeking an internship or a job. The key concept is recruitment on offered internships and jobs. Recruitment is the priority.

From the forums to the JNS there is a gradual individualisation of the process towards recruitment, three steps as shown in the figure below:



The surveys

This guidebook has been built on the analysis of the needs and expectations of the three panels of stakeholders (corporations, HEIs, job-seeking students, graduates, and alumni), as expressed in three surveys (Annex 1) addressed to each group.

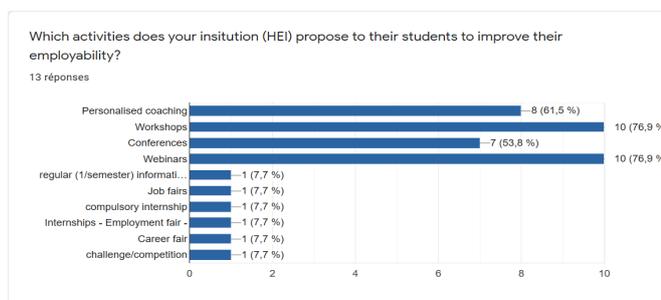
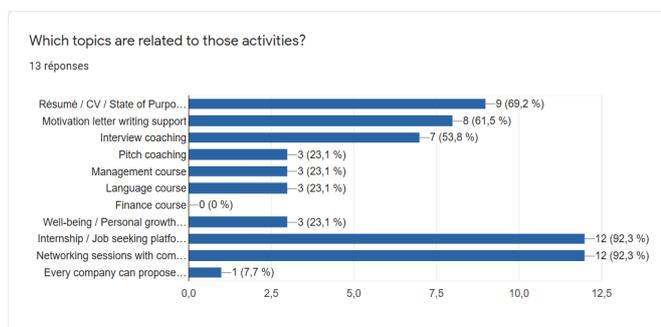
The surveys have been developed and disseminated in the beginning of 2021 by the partner Higher Education Institutions members of the TA-VIE project (KTH Stockholm, Sweden; UPM Madrid, Spain; ECN Nantes, France; UniTrento, Italy and BME Budapest, Hungary).

We received answers from 123 alumni students, 12 corporations and 8 European Higher Education Institutions from the countries taking part in the TA-VIE project.

1. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

The objective of the HEIs' survey was to collect information and data on the organization of forums, job fairs and JNS, the difficulties encountered in the organization of those events and their advice for best practices, the relation with their alumni and finally, the evolution in the organization of these events during and after Covid-19 times.

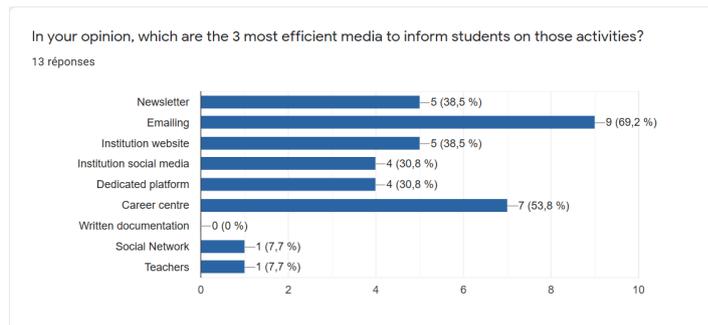
The HEIs survey showed that all institutions offer activities to improve students' employability mainly through workshops, webinars, personalized coaching, and conferences with a focus on internship/job seeking, networking with companies, assistance in writing CVs and mission statement and interview coaching (see figures on the right). To organize activities improving students' employability, 76.9% of HEIs appeal to external speakers such as companies and national representatives in addition to alumni network and internal working staff (academic and administrative).



53.8% of the HEIs organize these activities without any financial support from their institutions but mainly through company registrations fees (69.2% HEIs charge companies

from €1000 and up) to allow free access to students. Funding corporation related events constitute a major difficulty for HEIs. The relationship between HEIs and companies is the key lever to propose the most attractive offers to students and to meet companies' needs.

Every participating HEI offers corporation related events such as job fairs, forums and JNSs, but also company visits, lectures, and speed dating. HEIs organize 5 to 50 events a year, half of them every year. The participants indicated that the best practice in organizing those events is to focus on a particular field of interest, like per business area or per objective (internship seeking, networking, etc.), or to organize side-activities such as challenges linked with



humanitarian causes. To reach the right target audiences, HEIs mentioned emailing as the most efficient media (69.2%), followed by the institution's career services (53.8%), then newsletters and institution websites (38.5%) (see figure on the left).

Another enquiry of the HEI survey was the alumni follow-up and their implication in the organization of employability events. According to the participants' responses, HEIs' alumni follow-up is achieved by the institution administration and the alumni associations, mostly through social media (76.9%), questionnaires (69.2%) and dedicated platforms (69.2%). HEIs create specific activities for their alumni such newsletters, gatherings/meetings, and webinars/conferences. 38.5% of the HEIs reach out to their alumni for the institution promotion nationally and internationally.

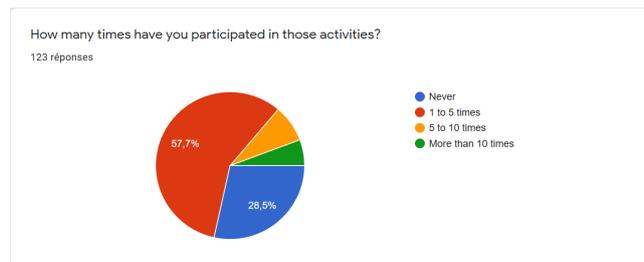
Finally, the survey gathered opinions on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the organisation of students' employability and corporation related activities, and which lessons they will keep afterwards. HEIs are unanimous on the rise of online events during the pandemic but acknowledge the increased difficulty in organizing those events: online events are effective but less personal, the relationships during online events are more formal, and the relationships with companies suffer from the distance. In the post-Covid-19 era, HEIs will keep using online platforms to disseminate information as they prove to be more efficient. But they will combine online and physical activities, mainly in two ways:

- a choice of events will be held online, and other events will be held physically
- digital elements will be added to physical events, such as talent pools, browsing and job search.

2. Alumni

The objective of the Alumni's survey was to collect information and data on the organization of employability and corporation related activities implemented by HEIs, the impact of these events on internship/job-seeking research, and finally the evolution in job-seeking tactics during and after Covid-19 times. The survey participants are graduates from the five partner HEIs of the TA VIE project graduated between 2014 and 2020.

78% of the participants had found a job within 3 months after graduation, mainly through networks, spontaneous applications, and internships. Alumni were aware of the activities carried out by their HEI to help them find a job, especially activities about CV/mission statement writing, networking sessions with companies and the dedicated platforms. Among those activities, 43.8% of them declared to have participated in networking sessions with companies, 33.1% in CV/mission statement writing and 26.4% went on the dedicated platforms. According to them, those activities were most helpful in their job-seeking actions with the addition of interview coaching. Almost 6 students out of 10 participated in institutions' organized events between 1 and 5 times (see figure on the right) during their schooling.

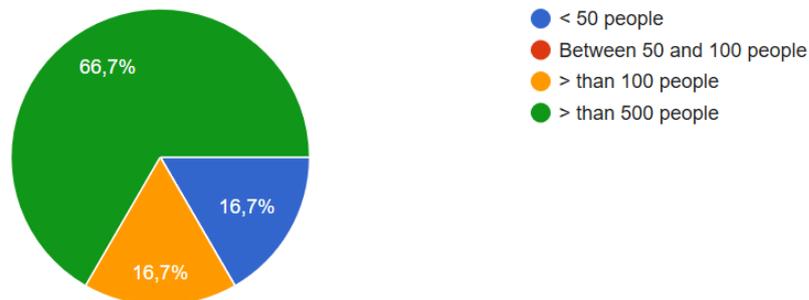


The responses have shown that the Covid-19 pandemic had its advantages and inconveniences in job-seeking. On one hand, remote jobs became more accessible thanks to the rise of distant working. On the other hand, the growing importance of the expression of needs on résumés since contacts with HR Departments are fewer and jobseekers have to be more patient facing longer processes. All in all, because of the Covid-19, alumni tend to think more on a long-term development and rely on competences such as flexibility, smart-working and communication skills in order to succeed in their job-seeking and in their current working position.

3. Corporations

The objective of the Corporation survey was to collect information and data on corporations' relationship with Higher Education Institutions, their attraction to employability and corporation related activities organized by HEIs and finally, the impact of the Covid-19 on recruitment methods.

Corporations who answered the survey can be divided per size, as follows:



When asked about the most efficient media to disseminate their job offers, companies voted online recruiting platforms as n°1 media by 66.7%, followed by the company website (58.3%) and the company social media/networks (41.7%). Even though HEIs are not part from the top three, companies still find a value to contact Higher Education Institutions when recruiting particularly for internship positions as young graduates will more likely grow in the company. Furthermore, companies rely on alumni networks as a source in their recruitment strategy as “alumni networks give a good reference of profiles, skills and expectations of the community”.

Companies declared to be interested mostly in conferences, information stands, and job fairs as efficient events organized by HEIs. During those events, companies tend to prefer workshops and interviews to interact with the target audience, namely students, as it is more effective to clearly present their projects and to interact with potential future co-workers. 66.6% of companies participate in 1 to 10 events per year and 16.7% participate in more than 50 events organized by HEIs per year, which shows a great interest for all three stakeholders into these events. Companies are not opposed to average €1000 participation fees.

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed their recruitment methods thanks to online systems. Companies declared to keep online interviews in the future as a first step in the recruitment process, allowing remote applicants to have better opportunities to access job offers and to proceed on physical interviews.

1.Face-to-face events

Face-to-face events are days of informative dynamic and interactive sessions (presentations, round tables, meetings, interviews) gathering companies / HR managers and engineers, alumni & students, HEI coordinators and representatives.

Face-to-face events enhance direct, physical, and personal information exchange, offering major opportunities of self-promotion for all stakeholders, with clear benefits:

Benefits for students:

- enhance their cross-cultural information by adapting to the recruiters' questions, language, and expectations
- make contacts for future internships or jobs by collecting business cards and delivering their CVs
- train for job interviews by practicing all day long, spontaneously, and quickly improving, learning how to behave and speak about themselves, hence increasing their chances to be identified and recruited

Benefits for graduates and alumni:

- improve their experience of job interviews
- develop their networks by collecting business cards and delivering their CVs
- alumni enhance their careers by finding a more promising job

Benefits for corporations:

- develop their knowledge of the HEIs' academic programs, as well as a more specific understanding of the way graduates are trained, what they can expect and how they can adapt
- have direct access to students, graduates, and alumni, directly identifying their qualities, their adaptability, increasing their willingness to hire them
- discover unexpected talents, adapt, and trigger new hiring strategies, which the value most

Benefits for HEIs:

- develop tighter connections with corporations, graduates, and alumni
- promote their ways of education
- become more innovative by directly discussing corporations' needs and expectations
- become more innovative by directly discussing graduates' and alumni's needs and expectations

1.1 Forums and Job Fairs

Forums and job fairs gather large numbers of students/alumni, corporations and HEIs with identical types of organization. They differ in their main objective.

Usually, forums display and provide general information on corporations and careers. Job fairs also display and provide general information on corporations and careers but are more directly oriented towards students willing to find an internship or a job.

Before the events, students, and graduates – eager to find an internship or a job – must get prepared. HEIs usually offer training sessions on recruitment interviews with professors, coaches, and corporate executives such as workshops on writing resumes, cover letters, interview simulations and pitch methods.

Three targets with three different cultures and communication systems, but a common interest.

How to organize a Forum or Job fair?

Three to six months before the event, the organization requires strong prior co-operations between the various partners and the building of a team of operators. Organizing an event of this size requires several steps:

a. Develop the event goal and objectives

The very first step in the planning is to establish tangible goal and objectives. Questions, such as “*Why are your organizing this event? What is the goal to achieve? Which needs will this event fulfill? Which field are we tackling?*” will provide the organizers with a clear vision and will prevent them from scattering.

Answering these questions will also help the organizers clearly identify the target audiences (students/alumni, corporations and HEIs) of the event which later will be crucial in the marketing planning.

b. Create a team

Forums and Job Fairs require a team effort to ensure that all details are considered. The team can be composed of members of the organizers’ department/office and/or external to the department. A concerted team effort will help divide and address the various tasks to subcommittees, each of them in charge of one or several tasks.

c. Establish a budget

As in any event organization, the budget is not to be overlooked. The budget will determine several critical elements in the organization like the venue, food and drinks, décor, marketing,

audio/video materials, entertainment such as external speakers. Planning a gross budget will help clarify the various possibilities available for the event.

As seen in the survey's responses, generally HEIs do not have automatically allocated funding for those events and charge companies' participation fees. This aspect has to be taken into account into the marketing planning (when companies are contacted) and a meeting with the financial department of the institution will be necessary to ensure fluidity of the process.

d. Setting a date

As mentioned at the beginning of the section, enough time to plan is required. The answers to the survey recommend as period of 3 to 6 months if it is a new or an established event (repeated every year). Setting a date will unlock major tasks like the venue, caterer, and external speakers.

BEWARE:

If the event includes students, make sure not to schedule the event on holidays.

If the event includes international participants, be aware of statutory and religious holidays.

e. Creating a back-planning

Creating a back-planning with all tasks within a timeline will help the organizers meet all deadlines before the event. The back-planning should contain all aspects of the event:

- Venue
- Catering
- Insurance
- Entertainment (speakers contact, confirmation of intervention)
- Logistics (furniture, electronic materials, software, presentations, décor, visuals for the D-day like nametags, map of the event for participants, signage, and attendance list)
- Activities (interventions, protocol, workshops, conferences)
- Marketing and promotion (print campaigns, digital campaigns, reminders, media relations, goodies/welcome pack, registration)
- Post-event tasks

Before the day of the event, the creation of a specific schedule of all the activities that will take place the day for the event is recommended (ex: day and hour of setting up the venue for the caterer, schedule of presentations, etc.).

f. Securing the sub-contracting parties

Once a date has been set up, it is time to secure all sub-contracting parties for the event.

For the venue, considering the accessibility, size, parking, insurance, the availability of audio/video materials, other services (kitchen for caterer, cloakroom) and its cost is necessary.

For the catering, considering the target audiences who will benefit from this service is also necessary: will all participants benefit a coffee and a snack? Or just speakers? Or speakers and companies? Will it be lunch as well? Will there be water bottles for every company

representative? These questions will help the organizers clearly determine their needs, thus will be communicated to the caterer, and a quote can be issued accordingly.

Those two elements are generally the most sub-contracted ones in a forum and a job fair. Other elements such as audio/video materials, décor, printing materials or goodies can be sub-contracted as well depending on the budget and resources.

Another element that can require sub-contracting is the choice of external speakers. In the planning of the event and its activities, identification of institutional, corporate and HEIs speakers for possible roundtables, debates and individual presentations is required, some of them could imply contracts or expenditures.

g. Establishing the Marketing strategy

The marketing strategy is composed of different tasks before, during and after the event.

Before the event, it is necessary to choose a name for the event, to define a tagline and logo and chose the visual for the event, that will be disseminate on different media (print, digital) as well as the invitation. The invitation to the event should communicate all key information needed for the target audiences to consider their participation (date, place, topic, contact information, registration).

When the visuals are ready it is needed to determine the timeline of the promotion: setting the canals through which to communicate about the event (social media, website, printing, email, radio, TV, etc.) and set up reminders to participants. Then communication tools can be created for the day of the event (kakemonos, posters, brochures, goodies, and welcome packs) as well as logistics materials can be prepared (signage, badges, documentation for every stakeholder).

An additional possibility is setting up an attractive dedicated website describing the whole event: partners, admissions, organization, FAQ and a News and Events rubric. The website must be connected to the partners' websites for all partners to promote the event. Student achievements, learning outcomes and employability rates are shared online in a joint promotion and dissemination strategy as well as success stories of students who found a job via these forums.

To achieve high visibility of the website with short notice the address is included in all printed materials of the partners. Posters and flyers featuring the names and logos of the partner and associated HEIs and companies are widely distributed by e-mail, directly and through associated institutions, on networks. E-brochures are sent to student information offices of the HEIs, and to related companies.

Ideas for welcome packs

Notepads, pens, map of the event, badges, goodies, Wi-Fi codes + connection procedures + vga/hdmi adaptators, agenda of the day, water bottles.

Special service

*Corporations and HEIs can send their communication material prior to the event.
Students and alumni must send their CVs prior to the event.*

During the event, pictures and videos of the event are circulated in real time in order to communicate about your event on the day, especially on social media. The creation of a Hashtag (#) will help identify all publications later about your event. A person in the organizing team can be appointed to supervise and monitor all social media publications during the D-Day and amplify it by retweeting/repost information as the event is taking place.

After the event, all communication materials (videos, pictures) collected during the event will contribute to the post-event report and quality analysis. They will also be included in thank you notes sent to participants on the day after.

h. Setting registration procedures

Separate registration procedures need to be prepared according to the target audiences:

- Students/alumni
- HEIs
- Corporations
- Speakers

Various tools are available for registration such as Google forms Eventia, Eventbrite for example. For every participant, a reminder of GRDR rules (General Data Protection Regulation) and the event rules and information have to be listed. It is necessary to determine which information is needed for each target audience and for registration. For example, corporations must know about the participation fees procedures and the organizers need to know the names of the companies' representatives and contacts.

On the D-day, different apps are available to check-in participants (Cvent OnArrival, Billetto, ScanAttendee, Boomset, Social Tables, etc.) thanks to their phones and a QR code. Creating an attendance list will be useful afterwards for the post-event report and communication.

i. Assessment of the event

After every event, it is important to assess the quality and success of the event for future reference. Preparation of questionnaires to students/graduates/alumni and corporations' representatives is required.

To do so, it is recommended to create a short satisfaction questionnaire that will be circulated during the event or right after it. Don't wait! As an ecofriendly action, you can set up an online form with a QR code easily accessible to all participants.

Assessment of the event in terms of logistics, planning, communication, availability of organizers, quality of activities is needed. Questionnaires are circulated among the participants, especially the students about their results and among the companies, to monitor the satisfaction level, the added value of the Forum, possibly the price companies are willing to pay to participate again and have access to high-level profiles.

An example of satisfaction questionnaire can be found in Annex 1.

j. Disseminate the results

To disseminate the results of the event thanks to the attendance list and satisfaction questionnaires, it is recommended to send thank-you emails to all participants (including the number of participants, the best moments, pictures and videos) as well as to communicate on the event on the Internet and all social media.

This moment is also an opportunity for you to capitalize on contacts made during and thanks to the event.

The event results will also appear in the organizers' yearly activity reports and will help as a reference for future events.

1.2. Job Networking Sessions (JNS)

JNSs are different from forums and job fairs. JNSs stand for step three on the way to finding a job (p.5). JNSs are essentially direct one-to-one privileged, exclusive and personal meetings between corporate recruiters and graduates and alumni. Another specificity of the JNSs is that they usually address international corporations and graduates / alumni with strong international academic and/or professional experience (Double Degrees for example). The organization of the event usually gathers two or more international HEIs, international and national representation bodies.

JNSs enhance recruitment between international experienced graduates and students, international corporations and higher education institutions with tailor-made high-level offers and expectations.

JNSs gather several stakeholders that have the following major specificities:

- Powerful and highly experienced international graduates and students.
- Powerful and highly experienced international HEIs.
- Powerful and highly experienced with international distinctions double degrees.
- Validation and contribution from national and international bodies.

JNSs benefits for students who study abroad:

- Enhance their international cross-cultural experience.
- Make international contacts for future internships or jobs.
- Train for job interviews.

JNSs benefits for graduates and alumni who studied abroad:

- Develop their networks.
- Enhance their careers.

JNSs benefits for corporations:

- Develop their knowledge of the Double Degrees and the academic programs offered by the HEIs.
- Have access to double culture graduates: increased willingness to hire them.
- Discover of new talents.

JNSs benefits for HEIs:

- Powerfully promote their Double Degree innovative ways of education.
- Develop their visibility by the local national bodies (ministries, consulates, embassies) and companies.
- Tighten their connections with international companies.

JNSs benefits for national and international bodies:

- Promote corporate connections between both countries.
- Develop their visibility by corporations.
- Tighten their connections with local and international companies.

How to organize a JNS?

A JNS is a full day of information, dynamic and interactive sessions: presentations, roundtables, and scheduled students/graduates/alumni one-to-one interviews with HR managers.

One of the main advantages of the JNSs is the organization of quite specific meetings gathering students, graduates, and alumni with specific profiles (specializations, training level, experience, competences, etc.); companies in specific fields with specific projects, needs and expectations; as well as highly specialized HEIs.

JNSs may gather a limited number, hence an elite, of stakeholders, in a smaller and more private and comfortable venue (hotel lobby, embassy, consulate, corporation, HEI, etc.). The atmosphere is then quite different from the one on forums and job fairs. With fewer people in a quiet private atmosphere, interactions can last longer, be more personal with a better quality of the process and of the outcomes. Stakeholders have time to spend with each other, recruiters and job seekers can deepen their interviews, and have a clear vision of possible outcomes.

At the end of the day, personal contacts have really been established, and recruiters and job seekers often share their enthusiasm about the day to the organizers. Recruitments usually occur in the following weeks and months.

The general organization planning is like as for forums and job fairs but with additional specificities:

- identify and contact the potential students and graduates – specific profiles
- identify and contact the potential corporations by HEIs and local Chamber of Commerce with a signed financial agreement
- rent the venue: room for 100 people maximum
- organize logistics: tables, booths, catering (possibly by local Chamber of Commerce with a signed financial agreement)
- prepare documentation for communication to students, corporations (students' profiles) and HEIs,
- prepare all procedure documents (see Annex 2)
- train or/and inform students and graduates on professional interviews
- gather an HEI team of operators to process
 - o registration procedures, students' CVs
 - o finance from institutions, corporations (invoices); to providers (invoices) and non-local students (see Annex 2)

Since the number of job-seeking attendees is rather limited, it is possible to offer a refunding of the students' travel and accommodation expenses, or at least part of it. It is a major incentive that should not be neglected in terms of attractiveness and quality for both students and corporations.

Example of a JNS schedule

Morning (3 hours)

Welcome speech by the Embassy / Consulate and the HEIs

1st job-dating round (20min) with one-on-one interviews

Lunch with all participants

(Students, companies, HEIs)

Afternoon (4 hours)

Several job-dating rounds
Closing speeches

Example of JNS

Event: JNS Milan
Date: May 28, 2018
Venue: Copernico Centrale
Milano, incubator.

Financed by the T.I.M.E.
Association Network
(<https://timeassociation.org/>)
and the committed
corporations.



Organized and supported by the Groupe des Ecoles Centrale (France), the French/Italian Chamber of Commerce, the Politecnico di Milano, the Politecnico di Torino, the University of Trento, the University of Padova.

Stakeholders: French Consulate, Business France, French-Italian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Corporate Union Cofindustria, French TECH, partner HEIs sharing part of their company networks.

Participants:

- 14 French/Italian/international companies paying €1,000 each, including several start-ups not paying any fees.
- 20 Double Degree graduates and students + Erasmus students + alumni
- Local TV media.

Gross costs of JNS Milan (based for 100 people)	
Venue	5,000 €
Catering (lunch and coffee breaks)	12,000 €
Communication materials (JNS leaflets, communication, and promotion materials)	1,000 €
Transport (for students and alumni not on location)	12,000 €
TOTAL	30,000 €

2. Online and blended events

Tragic crises may generate fruitful changes. The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us that online working can be perfectly efficient and positive despite the lack of affective depth in the exchanges, a major aspect which we all have noticed.

The pandemic has generated a positive acceleration of the use of pre-existing communication tools (Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.), which were previously resorted to by default, and which now belong to the everyday norm, even for private use. Despite the difficulties these tools are now generalized and have proven their efficiency. They do not allow usual easy-going meetings only, but also world-wide events, including plenary conferences and sessions as well as one-to-one discussions. Now we know that in the post-Covid-19 times, in the construction of a new normality, their use will remain.

2.1. Online Forums and Job Fairs

Compared with physical events, the organization of an online event differs slightly.

Indeed, a great amount of a physical event budget does not occur in this situation. Venue, catering, goodies, and all different expenses are not considered in an online event. The budget can change mainly thanks to digital tools smoothening the processes such as the website, registration procedure and the general event platform.

Students/graduates/alumni register or log in online, upload their resumes, digital and video CVs, then browse the “booths” hosted by employers. Corporations register or log in online, upload their offers and corporate information. Once “inside,” Students/graduates/alumni may be treated to listings of current job openings, or possibly to animation or video to introduce the company.

What are the advantages of an online event?

- Less hassle and preparation, for both sides of the table.
- A more forgiving timeline, as online fairs sometimes last a week or more, instead of one or two days only.
- A 24/7 availability, making it easy to participate.
- A real-time emphasis on current job openings, as online “booths” always include links to job postings for those companies.
- The opportunity to view archived webinars you could not “attend” in real-time.

What are the drawbacks of an online event?

- It is recommended to
 - be careful about the time schedule of the event, as an online event is more tiring than a physical event
 - not to be immune to technical issues that could damage the whole event

- know it can be more difficult to attract the target audiences
- to find a balance between the visual contents – to be attractive and creative without overwhelming participants with useless information

2.2. Online JNSs

Same as for online forums and job fairs with additional specificities.

It is recommended to schedule the event on several days or half-days in order not to exhaust the participants and add more breaks between one-on-one interviews.

Since JNSs are specific events, it is essential for the digital support or platform to be robust and interactive enough to welcome all presentations from HEIs, corporations and students.

A specific attention should be given to transition jingles, music and videos in order to bring more fluidity to the event.

2.3. Blended events

The best of two worlds at the planet scale. It now appears clearly that the teachings of the pandemic period will not be forgotten in the future. Blended forums, job fairs and JNSs will be set up for the best: welcoming numbers of distant participants online as well as local participants face-to-face. We should not forget that physical events can also be attended by far-away participants.

Will virtual fairs replace the physical version? While they can be more convenient for everyone involved, it seems unlikely that they will overtake the traditional job fairs entirely, for one key reason: they don't provide a real person-to-person contact including body language and spontaneity, which belong with the primary criteria for many recruiters.

Conclusion

Despite the human and economic disaster, we have experienced ways of communication that have enabled us to connect any time from all possible places. Distant teaching and learning have now become the norm, as well as distant meetings. Distant forums, distant job fairs and distant JNSs, some of them preexisting, developed dramatically. It has been a radical change for the present and for the future.

Getting back to the new normal, we are not forgetting the benefits of the digital communication tools. A new job fair format has developed, mostly blended. Even if the affective depth of the face-to-face meetings must be preserved as a priority, one can now clearly contribute and participate in a forum or a JNS from far away, having one's slots with recruiters or graduates on advance reservation. This is an invaluable opportunity to cover a much wider scope of availability for companies and job seekers.

It is now time to capitalize on the benefits of the pandemic crisis.

Just don't forget to check the time zone!

ANNEXES

Annex 1

Document 1: Satisfaction questionnaire to students, graduates, alumni

Date / Place JNS Questionnaire to students & alumni

1. Your name:
2. How many companies have you met today?
3. Have you interacted in a fruitful way with one or several recruiters?
 1. If so, which way?
 2. If not, why not?
4. Have your corporate interlocutors been interested in your double competences?
5. If so, which ones?
6. Do you think you managed to describe your international experience in terms of meaningful learning outcomes and professional skills?
 1. If so, which way?
 2. If not, why not?
7. Did you get a job/ an internship?
8. What have you learnt from the event that you can use in the future?
 - About the corporate world:
 - About your training as an engineer:
 - About yourself:
9. Do you think this event was useful to you?
 - Which way?
10. Should we do it again?
11. Which improvements would you suggest?

Many thanks!!! Don't forget to join us on our JNS LinkedIn private group:
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8782766/>

Document 2: Satisfaction questionnaire to corporations

Date/ Place JNS Questionnaire to Corporate Recruiters

1. Name of your company:
2. How many students/alumni have you met today?
3. Did you interact in a fruitful way with the students/alumni?
4. Were you interested in our students'/alumni' "double" competences?
5. If so, which ones?
6. Do you think they managed to describe their international experience in terms of meaningful learning outcomes and professional skills?
7. If so, which way?
8. If not, why not?
9. Have you offered a job/an internship to any of them?
10. What have you learnt from the event?
 - About our engineers:
 - About the training of a Double Degree engineer:
 - About our institutions:
11. Do you think this event was useful to you?
 - Which way?
12. Which improvements would you suggest?
13. Should we do it again?
14. Your comments and suggestions:

Many thanks!!! Don't forget to join us on our JNS LinkedIn private group:
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8782766/>

Annex 2

Document 1: General Conditions of Participation

Registration for the “Job Networking Sessions” events implies that the participants (companies and students) agree with the objectives set out in this document and the provisions of the general by-law mentioned below.

SECTION 1 – Registration

Registration is conducted in order of arrival and is final only after confirmation from the organization hosting the JNS event. Following the sending in of a registration and subject to availability, a confirmation of registration will be sent to you within one month.

- a) Companies and/or students wishing to participate must send their commitment to *Organizing Institution* before the given deadline. Deadlines are strict and must be respected.
- b) The reception of the participation commitment document duly completed and signed, as well as of the amount of the participation fees constitute the conditions to participation in the event.

SECTION 2 – Payment of corporation participation fees

- a) The participation in the JNS will be determined by the payment of an invoice produced by XXX after reception of the “participation commitment document”, which is filled in by the company.

SECTION 3 – Invoicing the corporation participation fees

On registering the company undertakes to provide the requested information on the “participation commitment document” and to transmit all the information deemed necessary to *Organizing Institution* for the establishment of the invoicing of the participation fees.

Upon reception of the information, *Organizing Institution* undertakes to establish the invoicing and to send it by the means selected in the “participation commitment document” entered by the company.

Upon receiving the invoice, the company undertakes to pay the participation fees within 30 calendar days. In the event that the amount of the participation fees are not paid, *Organizing Institution* reserves the right to suspend the company’s registration at the event.

ARTICLE 4 – Cancellation

- a) Cancellation by the JNS organizing institution:

The JNS organizing institution reserves the right to cancel the planned event when its organization has become impossible (insufficient number of participants, force majeure) and/or may endanger the public order and the safety of the participants.

In this case, the sums paid by the undertakings are eligible for reimbursement by the financial coordinator unless the organizing institution has had to incur non-refundable costs for the organization of the event. If the organizing institution has incurred non-refundable expenses, these expenses will be deducted equitably and pro rata from the participation of each company.

In case of force majeure inherent to the organizer, the financial coordinator will reimburse the non-refundable travel expenses of the students, on presentation of the refusal of reimbursement of the transport company.

- a) Cancellation by Company:

The receipt by the financial coordinator of the only participation commitment signed by the company, renders payable the payment of all the sums claimed to it for participation in the event.

However, if the establishment notifies the JNS organizing institution or/or the financial coordinator of the cancellation of its participation up to one month before the start of the event, the undertaking shall not be liable to the JNS organizers, as damages, only 50% of the amounts due in respect of its interest. Between one month and the start of the event, the company will be responsible for the full costs of participation.

a) Student Cancellation:

The receipt by the JNS organizers of the only commitment of participation signed by the student, makes payable the refund of all the sums claimed to him for the participation in the event.

SECTION 5 – Commitment of the organizing institution

The organizing institution is committed to putting the necessary human resources in the organization and realization of the JNS.

The organizing institution undertakes to send *Organizing Institution* a provisional budget as well as estimates for the following services prior to the event:

- Restoration
- Booking the place
- Room equipment
- Communication with the ICC
- The “business” participants

The organizing institution undertakes to send the financial elements (estimates, invoices, bank domiciliation) of the service providers to *Organizing Institution* for the payment of their service.

ARTICLE 6 – Commitment by *Organizing Institution*

Organizing Institution, as financial coordinator, undertakes to reimburse the travel expenses of "student" participants to a maximum of €150 per "student" participant within an average of two months after receipt of the supporting documents submitted by the participant.

Organizing Institution, as financial coordinator, undertakes to pay for the services within an average period of two months after receipt of the invoice and information from the service provider (vat, Siret, postal address, Iban).

Document 2: Students Guide

You are going to participate in a Job Network Session, and we thank you.

As a reminder, JNS and *Organizing Institution* will reimburse your travel up to 150€. You need to keep in mind several information for your reimbursement to be accepted by *Organizing Institution*.

The documents to transfer to *Organizing Institution* are the following:

- The days and exact hours of the travel (ex. The recap itinerary sent by the travel company after your purchase)
- The originals travel tickets (boarding passes, train tickets, airport shuttle, bus ticket)
- A banking information called RIB in France
 - o If the RIB doesn't apply in your country, you need to give a document from your bank indicating: IBAN number, SWIFT code, postal address of your bank. You will have to inform us of your personal postal address.
- *Attendance certificate (this document will be given on-site and will be retrieved by the organization team)*

All these documents will have to be sent by email to *email address of organizing institution* indicating the JNS you have participated in (ex. JNS Padova 2020). You will have 8 days after the end of the event to send us all the required documents.

Organizing Institution will then edit your Mission Order and Fees State that they will send to you by email. These documents will have to be sent back by email signed by yourself within 8 days after the reception of it.

Document 3: Student's commitment to participating in a JNS

To send signed and stamped to *email address of organizing* before DD/MM/YYYY

I the undersigned (First name LASTNAME)
.....

Address: Postal code:
..... City:
Mail:
Tel:

Declare, after having read the General Participation Rules and the Student Guide, confirming the registration of the company to the event: JNS

You can find all the information on the procedure for paying travel expenses on the Student Guide, and the information in the event of cancellation on the General Conditions of Participation.

Agreed and signed
Date and signature

Document 4: Corporations' commitment to participating in a JNS

To send signed and stamped to *email address of organizing* before DD/MM/YYYY

I the undersigned (First name LASTNAME) (position)
....., acting on behalf of
(name of the company) hereafter:

Company:

Address: Postal code:
..... City:

Website:
Mail:
Tel:

SIRET n°:
Corporate name:
VAT intra-community n° :

Declare, after having read the general participation rules, confirming the registration of the company to the event:
JNS

PARTICIPATION: global tariff of 1 000€

This tariff includes:

- A dedicated area (table/chair)
- Refreshment
-

Registered participants: write the First name LASTNAME, email, position in the company, phone number

- Participant 1 :
- Participant 2 :
- Participant 3 :

An invoice will be established by the Direction of Financial Affairs of *Organizing Institution*. Please indicate by what means the invoice will be sent:

By email address. Please indicate the email address to use:
.....
.....

By postal mail. Please indicate the postal address to use:
.....
.....

By internal billing platform. Please indicate the name of your company's internal platform:
.....
.....

Please pay the invoice before the date of the event.

Agreed and signed
Date, stamp of the company and signature

Document 5: Student’s attendance sheet

I hereby Ms/Mr.....

Confirm to have participated in the JNS (name of the JNS)
.....

on/...../20.....
(DD/MM/YYYY)

Place:

Date:

LAST NAME and name
.....

Signature:

Document 6: Corporation Attendance sheet

We hereby confirm that the company.....
has participated in the JNS (name of the JNS)
.....

on/...../20.....

(DD/MM/YYYY)

Place:

Date:

LASTNAME and Name of the company representative at the
JNS.....

Signature:

Annex 3

Document 1: Guidebook Survey to Alumni

1. When did you graduate?
2. When did you get your first job?
 - a. Before graduation
 - b. 1 month after graduation
 - c. 3 months after graduation
 - d. 6 months after graduation
 - e. 1 year after graduation
 - f. +1 year after graduation
3. How did you find your first job?
 - a. University website
 - b. Company website
 - c. Another organization website
 - d. LinkedIn
 - e. Spontaneous application
 - f. Network
 - g. Through an internship
 - h. Other
4. Did your university help you find a job?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. What are the activities your university propose to find a job?
 - a. Resume/CV/ Statement of Purpose writing support
 - b. Motivation letter writing support
 - c. Interview coaching
 - d. Pitch coaching
 - e. Management course
 - f. Language course
 - g. Finance course
 - h. Well-being / Personal growth course
 - i. Internship/Job research platform
 - j. Networking sessions with companies
 - k. Other
6. Which activities have you participated in?
 - a. Resume/CV/ Statement of Purpose writing support
 - b. Motivation letter writing support
 - c. Interview coaching
 - d. Pitch coaching
 - e. Management course
 - f. Language course
 - g. Finance course
 - h. Well-being / Personal growth course
 - i. Internship/Job research platform
 - j. Networking sessions with companies
 - k. Other
 - l. Never have participated in any job-finding events

7. How many times have you participated in those activities?
 - a. Never
 - b. 1 to 5 times
 - c. 5 to 10 times
 - d. More than 10 times

8. According to your opinion, which activities were the most helpful to you? (3 choice)
 - a. Resume/CV/ Statement of Purpose writing support
 - b. Motivation letter writing support
 - c. Interview coaching
 - d. Pitch coaching
 - e. Management course
 - f. Language course
 - g. Finance course
 - h. Well-being / Personal growth course
 - i. Internship/Job research platform
 - j. Other

9. Which activities NOT organized by your university have you participated in?
 - a. Student fairs
 - b. Job fairs
 - c. Corporate fairs
 - d. Resume/CV Statement of Purpose writing by other organization
 - e. Other

10. How has Covid-19 affected your job seeking tactics (ignore if N/A)?

11. Which Covid-19 tactics will you keep in the post-Covid-19 era?

Document 2: Guidebook Survey to Corporations

Corporate information:

1. Name of the company
2. Size of the company
 - i. < 50 people
 - ii. From 50 and 100 people
 - iii. > than 100 people
 - iv. > than 500 people

Needs and offers:

-
3. How do you make your job offers attractive?
 4. In your opinion, which media is most efficient to recruit an engineer? (3 choices)
 - i. Newsletter
 - ii. Emailing
 - iii. Company website
 - iv. Company social media
 - v. Online recruiting platform
 - vi. Active agencies
 - vii. Career center
 - viii. Head-hunters
 - ix. Networks
 - x. Job fairs
 - xi. Other
 5. Do you contact universities when recruiting?
 6. If no, why not?
 7. Do you rely on alumni networks when recruiting?
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No
 8. Do you attend university related events?
 9. If so, why?
 10. If no, why not?
 11. In your opinion, which type(s) of university related events are most efficient to recruit an engineer? (3 choices)
 - i. Job fairs
 - ii. Business lunches
 - iii. Information stands
 - iv. Conferences
 - v. Webinars
 - vi. Other
 12. In your opinion, which type(s) of communication techniques are more efficient during those events?
 - i. Interviews
 - ii. Speed-dating
 - iii. Lectures
 - iv. Workshops
 - v. Webinars
 - vi. Other
 13. How many universities related events does your company attend in one year?

- i. From 1 and 5
- ii. From 5 and 10
- iii. From 10 and 20
- iv. From 20 and 50
- v. More than 50

14. Is your company charged by universities for those events?

- i. Yes, always
- ii. Never
- iii. Sometimes

15. Approximate charge:

- i. Less than €1000
- ii. more than €1000
- iii. more than €2000
- iv. more than €5000
- v. more

16. With Covid-19, how have your methods of recruitment changed?

17. Which Covid-19 methods of recruitment will you be keeping in post-Covid-19 times?

Document 3: Guidebook Survey to Higher Education Institutions

Name of the university

Name of the department/school

Human resources

1. Who in your institution (HEI) is involved in students' employability activities?
 - Academic staff
 - Administrative staff
 - External speakers
 - Student organizations
 - Alumni
 - Other
2. Which external organizations does your HEI collaborate with to implement those actions?
 - Companies
 - Event planner
 - Other

Financial resources

3. Does your institution financially support students' employability actions?
 - Yes
 - No
4. If no, by which means does your HEI finance those actions?

Actions

5. Which are the objectives of those activities?
 - Finding internships
 - Finding a first job
 - Creating start-ups (young entrepreneurs)
 - General knowledge
 - Other
6. Does those actions focus on:
 - National job market?
 - European job market?
 - International job market?
7. What are those actions?
 - Personalised coaching
 - Workshops
 - Conferences
 - Webinars
 - Other
8. Which topics are related to those activities?
 - Resume/CV/ Statement of Purpose writing support
 - Motivation letter writing support
 - Interview coaching
 - Pitch coaching
 - Management course
 - Language course
 - Finance course

- Wellbeing / Personal growth course
 - Other
9. Are those activities free of charge for students?
- Yes
 - No
 - Some of them
 - Do not know
10. In your opinion, which are the 3 most efficient media to inform students on those actions?
- Newsletter
 - Emailing
 - Institution website
 - Institution social media
 - Dedicated platform
 - Career centre
 - Written documentation

Actions with companies

11. What type of corporation-related events do you offer to your students?
- Job fairs
 - Speed-dating
 - Business lunches
 - Information stands
 - Lectures
 - Visits
 - Other
12. How many corporation-related events does your HEI organize in one year?
- From 1 and 5
 - From 5 and 10
 - From 10 and 20
 - From 20 and 50
 - More than 50
13. Do those events take place every year?
- Yes, all of them
 - Yes, some of them
 - No
 - Do not know
14. Does your HEI charge companies for those events?
- Yes
 - Some of them
 - No
 - Do not know
15. If no, why not?
16. If yes, why?
- Approximate charge:
 - Less than €1000
 - more than €1000
 - more than €2000
 - more than €5000
17. Does your HEI organize those events by themes?
- Yes
 - No

- Do not know
18. If yes, which are those themes?
- Per business area
 - Per size of companies
 - Per localization of companies (local, national, international)
 - Per objective (for internship searching, for job searching, networking)
 - Other
19. What are the main difficulties you encounter in the organization of those events?
20. Which best practices would you advise for the organization of those events?

Alumni

21. How does your HEI follow its alumni?
- Questionnaires / surveys to alumni
 - Testimonies
 - Social Media (LinkedIn, Facebook)
 - Dedicated Platform
 - We do not follow our alumni
22. Who in your institution (HEI) is involved in following alumni?
- Academic staff
 - Administrative staff
 - External speakers
 - Alumni Association
 - Other
23. Which activities does your HEI create for alumni?
- Coaching for job/PhD search
 - Webinars
 - Conferences
 - Newsletters
 - Gatherings/Meetings
24. Are your alumni involved in your HEI promotion activities (ex: fairs)?
- Yes, nationally, and internationally
 - Yes, only nationally
 - Yes, only internationally
 - No
 - Do not know
25. With Covid-19, what has changed in your methods?
26. Which Covid-19 methods will you keep in the post-Covid-19 era?
-
-