

Opening Event of the Academic Year 2025/26

October 28, 2025, 2 pm

Location: Chernivtsi National University, Marble Hall (*Venue has an equipped shelter*)
To attend online register via e-mail: sereda@vuias.org

This event marks the opening of the third academic year of the **Virtual Ukraine Institute for Advanced Study** (www.vuias.org). The launch of a new cohort of fellows will be celebrated at Chernivtsi National University. Founded in 2023 by the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin in cooperation with partner institutions from Ukraine, Europe, and the United States, VUIAS supports Ukrainian scholars both within the country and abroad. Its mission is to counter the massive brain drain caused by Russia's full-scale invasion. The long-term vision of the initiative is the establishment of a new Institute for Advanced Study in Kyiv. We warmly invite you to join this event and support our shared efforts.

Program

From 2:45 pm onwards Registration of participants

2:00 pm Words of Welcome

Rector of the Chernivtsi National University, Professor Dr. Ruslan Biloskurskyi

Rector of the Wissenschaftskolleg and VUIAS Chair, Professor Dr. Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger

Scientific Attaché of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Mikhail Leshchenko

Representative of the Volkswagen Foundation (TBA)

2.30 pm Music Performance

Vocal ensemble "Folkmodern" - leader Oleksandra Kirstyuk performing "Bukovyna" and folk-modern song tapestry.

2.40 pm Presentation of the VUIAS and the New Cohort of Fellows

Professor Iris Fleßenkämper, Secretary of the Wissenschaftskolleg & VUIAS Co-Chair

2.50 pm Greetings from a Former Fellow

Dr. Volodymyr Vakhitov, (American University Kyiv; Representative of Scientific Committee of the National Council of Ukraine on Science and Technology)



3.00 pm Keynote Lecture “Singen über dem Dorn: Paul Celans traumatische Dichtung als Spiegelbild seines Schicksals“ (Song Above the Thorns. Paul Celan's Traumatic Poetry as a Mirror of His Fate)

Professor Dr. Petro Rychlo (Chernivtsi National University)

3.20 pm Music Performance

S. Lyudkevych. Trio "Nocturne" by Professor Vadym Lisovyi (Head of the Department of Music of Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University), postgraduate students Mykola Polyanko (violin) and Rodion Chepurnov (cello).

3.30 pm Reception

Virtual Ukraine Institute for Advanced Study

The Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, in close cooperation with partner institutes from Ukraine, Europe, and the United States, has launched an initiative to support Ukrainian scholars in their effort to found a Ukraine Institute for Advanced Study (UIAS) in Kyiv. Full-scale institutional activities in Ukraine will only be possible once the war is over, but a preliminary virtual institution, VUIAS (www.vuias.org), started operations in September 2023. The project for the first six years will be supported with funding by the Volkswagen Foundation.

The goals of the newly founded institution are manifold: VUIAS will mobilize support for scholarships under conditions of war and contribute to rebuilding Ukrainian academia once the war is over. By connecting Ukrainian scholars in and outside Ukraine, VUIAS will more strongly integrate Ukrainian scholars into the international academic landscape and broaden and deepen knowledge on Ukraine within global academia. It will also help combat the brain drain caused by war and displacement. The founding phase of the institute will be overseen by offices in Kyiv and Berlin. As long as the Russian attack on Ukraine continues, academic events are to take place in virtual and hybrid form.

Since 2023, VUIAS has awarded 86 fellowships, 47 of which were awarded in Ukraine and 39 abroad. Fellows come from 20 different fields of study and represent 40 academic institutions in Ukraine from all regions.

VUIAS provides two kinds of fellowships to scholars from all disciplines: **VUIAS Fellowships abroad** funded and hosted by the world's leading Institutes for Advanced Study in Europe and the United States. This year 10 fellows will be hosted by the partner IAS institutions in Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland or USA. **VUIAS Fellowships in Ukraine** are granted by the Wissenschaftskolleg and its partners (like the Open Society University or the Center for Advanced Study Sofia) to scholars who work at universities and research institutions in Ukraine. This year 23 fellows will be supported in Ukraine.



Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY



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