

Nexus EXCELLENTIA Summit 2025



Resilient Trajectories

Mentoring Young Researchers and Innovators on Future-Proof Infrastructures in Times of Uncertainty

Monday 07 July 2025, 10:00 CET

Online

[Register here](#)

Organized by

[COST Action NexusNet](#) | CA20138

In collaboration with

[University of Thessaly](#)

[Aristotle University of Thessaloniki](#)

[Transport Engineering Laboratory](#)

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Welcome message

The involvement of youth and early-career researchers is not only a pillar of resilience and innovation, but it is increasingly the core actor of transformative action. We live in a World full of uncertainty, complexity, and many urgent transitions that young people have begun their actions as central agents of change. Youth brings agility, creativity, and interdisciplinary rationale — all essential qualities to address complex systems thinking and analysis.

This belief inspired the establishment of Nexus EXCELLENTIA, a dedicated mentoring programme for young researchers and innovators under the [NexusNet COST Action](#). The Action, chaired by Prof. [Chrysi Laspidou](#), University of Thessaly, and co-chaired by Dr. Floor Brouwer, TU Dresden, aims to empower collaborations between EU and international researchers and stakeholders, synthesize the existing empirical Nexus research and produce an intellectual toolkit, demonstrating a clear link to improved resource management and governance outcomes that underline the value of Nexus.

Nexus EXCELLENTIA was launched in 2023, by a small group of enthusiast academics to address a pressing need to engage and support young researchers and innovators.

By today, the Program has brought together more than 40 early-career researchers and innovators (mentees) and experienced individuals (mentors) representing academia, research, industry and business from across Europe and beyond. Pairing young talents with seasoned experts, the Program enabled members to deepen knowledge in their domain, expand their professional networks, and develop critical career skills — laying the foundation for resilient, interdisciplinary leadership in sustainable societal development. Many participants shared how the experience reshaped their professional path — helping them see themselves not just as researchers, but as system innovators ready to address complex nexus challenges.

We are now inviting young researchers and innovators, along with senior executives and leaders from academia, large and medium enterprises, consultancy firms, international organizations to join us at the Nexus EXCELLENTIA Summit 2025. The online event is scheduled for the 7th of July 2025 at 10:00-15:00 CET.

Closing this message, allow me to reflect on that “**Resilience is not a destination — it is something we construct day by day, through trust, inclusion, and courageous collaboration**”. If NexusNet has taught us one thing, it is that building networks across generations, disciplines, and geographies is not optional — it is essential.

Yours sincerely,

Giannis Adamos

Assistant Professor, School of Civil Engineering, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
Founder & Scientific Director of Nexus EXCELLENTIA

AGENDA

01 Welcome & Opening Addresses

10:00 – 10:30

- **Giannis Adamos**, Founder & Scientific Director of Nexus EXCELLENTIA
- **Chrysi Laspidou**, NexusNet Chair
- **Floor Brouwer**, NexusNet Vice-Chair
- **Aikaterini Tsikaloudaki**, Chair, School of Civil Engineering, AUTH
- **Fotini Kehagia**, Director, Transport and Project Management Division, AUTH

02 Science Talks

Thematic track 1: From Nexus EXCELLENTIA to Business & International Organizations

Moderator: **Serena Caucci**, Technical University of Dresden, Germany

10:30 – 10:40

Overcoming the gap between theory and practice and establishing authority in business

- **Andrija Popović**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, VAMA Consulting Group, Serbia

10:40 – 11:00

- **Lea Tatry**, VITO, Belgium
- **Jairo Guzman**, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Austria
- **Loreto Lopez Gamboa**, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile
- **Aatralarasi Saravanan**, United Nations University, Germany

Thematic track 2: From Nexus EXCELLENTIA to High Education Pathways

Moderator: **Maria Vracholi**, Technical University of Munich, Germany

11:00 – 11:10

Integrating the WEFE Nexus approach into corporate sustainability practices

- **Edoardo Bigolin**, PhD candidate, Institute for Advanced Studies – IUSS Pavia, Italy

11:10 – 11:30

- **Argyrios Balatsoukas**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- **Milena Mancic**, University of Nis, Serbia
- **Georgia Tseva**, University of Thessaly, Greece

Thematic track 3: From Nexus EXCELLENTIA to Competencies Upskilling

Moderator: **Marko Mancic**, University of Nis, Serbia

11:30 – 11:40

Exploring green skills and competencies to support transition towards sustainable societies

- **Tamara Radjenovic**, Assistant Professor, University of Nis, Serbia

11:40 – 12:00

- **Marco Falda**, University of Bologna, Italy
- **Taiwo Temitope Bamgboye**, University of Oulu, Finland
- **Felipe Marín Rivera**, University of Bordeaux, France
- **Brian Kipruto**, Uppsala University, Sweden

Thematic track 4: Insights from Nexus EXCELLENTIA training and educational activities

Moderator: **Tamara Radjenovic**, University of Nis, Serbia

12:00 – 12:15

- **Catarina Roseta-Palma**, ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal
- **Vladimir Kitanovski**, Mother Teresa University, North Macedonia

12:15 – 12:30

Break

03	Gender Perspectives and IP Protection
Moderator: Catarina Roseta-Palma , ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal	
12:30 – 12:40	Promoting gender balance and inclusivity in the field of science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juliana Gomes Chediek, Research Associate, Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal
12:40 – 12:50	Intellectual Property Protection for European Researchers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argyrios Zilos, Attorney at law, ATHENA Research Center, Greece
04	Special Session I: How climate crisis affects democracy, governmental policy & social justice
Moderator: Giannis Adamos , Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece	
12:50 – 13:10	Climate diplomacy: the challenges ahead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emmanuella Doussis, Professor, NKUA, UNESCO Chairholder on Climate Diplomacy, Greece
13:10 – 13:30	Translating climate diplomacy ambition into hireable skills: What ESG and sustainability leaders look for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arjun Avasthy, Strategic Sustainability & Net Zero Advisor, ESG & Decarbonization Leader, Former Associate Director, PwC, India
05	Special Session II: Innovations and challenges across the transport, shipping and logistics landscape
Moderator: Vladimir Kitanovski , Mother Teresa University, North Macedonia	
13:30 – 13:40	Tackling extreme events impacts through sustainable transportation and emergency risk management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaan İlker Demirezen, PhD candidate, Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, Türkiye
13:40 – 13:50	Directions in transport planning under the climate crisis: A critical infrastructure resilience approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argyrios Balatsoukas, PhD candidate, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
13:50 – 14:10	Decarbonization and adaptation using a Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response model: the case of the Limassol port <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olympia Nisiforou, Assistant Professor, Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus
14:10 – 14:30	Guiding sustainable development: Mobility as a driving force for prosperous cities and communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giannis Adamos, Assistant Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
14:30 – 14:45	Break
06	Building human-centred, sustainable and socially-just urban futures
14:45 – 15:00	Resilient Futures e-Community of Practice (e-CoP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andras Merza, Chief of Operations, Regional Centre for Information and Scientific Development, Hungary
	Closing remarks
15:00 – 15:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giannis Adamos, Assistant Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece