

July 3rd , 2020

To: Presidents and Deans
From: Philip Geister S.J.
President of the Kircher Network

Dear friends,

Greetings and peace! As you might remember, the first strategic priority of the Action Plan (2019-2020) of our network seeks to increase academic collaboration and mobility of student and faculties members among the Kircher institutions, and with other Jesuit universities around the world.

In order to continue advancing this priority, we are inviting the vice presidents and international relations officers of our institutions to a meeting of the **Kircher Network International Relation Officers**, on March 22nd, 2021, at the University of Andalucía, in Seville, Spain.

The meeting will seek the following objectives:

- i) to facilitate networking among the participants and formally launch the *Kircher Group of Peers of International Relation Officers*. Likewise, and discuss the strategies and organizational arrangements that could facilitate further collaboration among them¹;
- ii) to promote peer learning through the exchange of best practices and know-how on international collaboration among the participants;
- iii) to identify possible projects of academic collaborations, both in-person and online, among the institutions;
- iv) to discuss the ERASMUS+ programme, Horizon Europe and other funding cooperation options that can be used to support academic mobility and research collaboration among the faculties and universities.

As a part of the preparation of the Executive Secretary, Dr. Susana Di Trollo, has been collecting information from the survey we sent you last March. She will prepare a *report on the status of the current academic collaboration among our institutions* (i.e. student and faculty mobility, research collaboration, and ERASMUS+). The report will be an input for the peers to identify projects and areas of collaboration among their institutions, especially using the ERASMUS+.

¹ The mission of this group will be to foster academic collaboration and faculty and student mobility among the Kircher institutions and with other JHEI around the world.

Likewise, the Executive Secretary will invite the delegates of your institutions to an *online meeting in October* to discuss the draft of the program of the 2021 Seville meeting. During the online meeting, the peers will also have the opportunity to introduce to each other and their institutions.

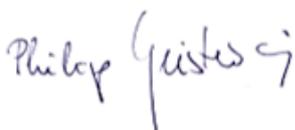
The Kircher meeting of International Relation Officers will be followed by the “II IAJU Conference on International Education of Jesuit Higher Education Institutions²”, also in Seville, in March 23-25, 2021. The combination of two separate but consecutive meetings has the enormous advantages of not only saving money, but also it facilitates collaboration "ad intra" among our member institutions in Europe and "ad extra" with the other sister institutions around the world.

On behalf of the board of the Kircher Council, I would like to thank the Loyola Andalucía University for hosting our meeting. We look forward to seeing your international relation officers in Seville.

Please let us know the names and email address of your vice president or officer of international relation that will attend the meeting (kirchernetwork@jesuits.eu).

Let us pray for the Covid-19 to be completely under control by March.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Philip Geister SJ". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Philip Geister, S.J.
President of the Kircher Network

² As you might see on the invitation letter sent by Fr Michael Garanzini S.J., to the Conference, the IAJU international gathering will seek to continue advancing the collaboration on international education among all universities, colleges and faculties around the world (see letter attached). The vice-presidents, directors and program officers responsible for international relations or global engagement in your institutions will be invited to the IAJU Conference.