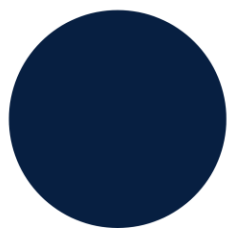
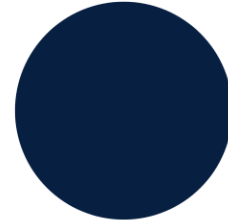


UNICA

CAPITALS SERIES



LONDON 2026

IN-PERSON EVENT

JOINT CONFERENCE UNICA x KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

Frameworks of reference for academic freedom: institutional, national, and supra-national. What works best?

Hosted by the Global Observatory on Academic Freedom (GOAF) - School of
Education, Communication & Society, King's College London

7-8 May 2026

TOPICS

At present, threats to academic freedom come from many directions—primarily from outside higher education institutions, but also, at times, from within. Over the past decade, we have witnessed a series of attempts to (re)codify and regulate academic freedom, either as part of efforts to protect and promote it under new and evolving circumstances or, conversely, to restrict or even repress it.

The concept of frameworks of reference for academic freedom has proven a useful tool in analysing and explaining these developments, as well as in identifying new—and supporting existing—avenues for action in defence of academic freedom.

This conference will bring together university leaders, researchers and other key higher education stakeholders to take stock of the emergence of new

For any questions, please contact the UNICA Secretariat:

federica.nestola@unica-network.eu

and King's representative:

ahmad.akkad@kcl.ac.uk



Programme

(all times are in BST – British Summer Time)

Day 1 | 7 May 2026

Venue: Room MB4.2, Macadam Building, Strand Campus

12:30–13:30	Registration & welcome lunch
13:30–14:00	Welcome & introductions
14:00–15:30	Session 1 Beyond statements of principle: how frameworks of reference translate into practice Chair: Liviu Matei, Head of School of Education, Communication and Society, King's College London Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Andrew Ginger, Former Vice Provost for International Engagement, Northeastern University• Susana Peralta, Professor of Public Economics and Political Economy, NOVA Lisboa• Robert Post, Sterling Professor of Law, Yale Law School
15:30–17:00	Session 2 It starts from within: institutional frameworks of reference for academic freedom Chair: Ksenija Vidmar Horvat, Vice-Rector for Study and Student Affairs, University of Ljubljana Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kirsten Busch Nielsen, Dean of Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen• Rachel Mills, Senior Vice-President, King's College London• David Robinson, Executive Director, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)• David Smith, Deputy Head of College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (CAHSS), University of Edinburgh
17:00–18:00	Workshop The 'Rubik Cube' of academic freedom Chair: Daniele Joly, Advisory Board Chair, Global Observatory on Academic Freedom
19:00–20:00	Reception Venue: Council Room (K2.29), King's Building, Strand Campus



Day 2 | 8 May 2026

Venue: Room MB4.2, Macadam Building, Strand Campus

9:00-9:30	Welcome Coffee
9:30-11:00	<p>Session 3 Advocating with public authorities for better regulations for academic freedom</p> <p>Chair: Romiță IUCU- President of the Board of Trustees at the University of Bucharest & Chair of the UNICA EDuLab</p> <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jan Palmowski, Secretary-General, The Guild• Jane Reichel, Vice-President, University of Stockholm• Naomi Waltham-Smith, Professor of Music, University of Oxford
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	<p>Session 4 Supra-national frameworks of reference for academic freedom</p> <p>Chair: Naomi Waltham-Smith, Professor of Music, University of Oxford</p> <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Terrence Karran, Professor of Higher Education, University of Lincoln• David Lock, Secretary General, Magna Charta Observatory• Lana Par, President, European Students' Union• Robert Quinn, Founding Executive Director, Scholars at Risk Network
13:00-14:00	Farewell Lunch