

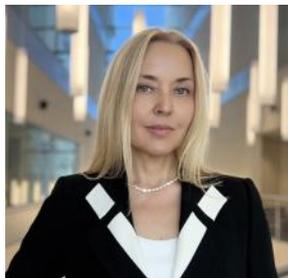


**Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence
FACULTY EU RESEARCH GRANT**



Interview with grantee Dr. Anna Pietraszek

MIAMI-FLORIDA JEAN MONNET CENTER OF EXCELLENCE — FIU — INTERVIEW WITH ANNA PIETRASZEK



Dr. Anna Pietraszek is the Director Executive Board Member, Pino Global Entrepreneurship Center, College of Business, at Florida International University. This year, she received the Miami-Florida Jean

Monnet Center of Excellence Faculty EU Research grant for her project ***“Bridging European and American Entrepreneurship: Spain and France as Strategic Gateways for Transatlantic Innovation, Education, and Student Empowerment.”***

She was kind enough to answer a few questions about her project.

MFJMCE: Could you tell us a little bit about yourself?

I was born in Poland and moved to Spain at 18, where I studied journalism in Madrid. I later relocated to New York, where I continued my education, earning a degree in media arts and a master’s in Spanish literature. I then decided to pursue an MBA, followed by a PhD in Management and Social Communication.

Having such a multidisciplinary academic background has allowed me to adapt, think strategically, and relate to entrepreneurs across different industries. In addition, I have worked closely with industry both in the United States and internationally, which has allowed me to connect academic knowledge with real-world practice and ultimately shaped where I am today.

My first job in the United States was in New York, an incredible place to study and work. I worked at the European Tourism Board, which was a remarkable experience, especially in a city that is one of the world’s tourism capitals, where you truly see how people, cultures, and industries connect.

More than 20 years ago, I moved to Miami and began working at FIU. I initially handled marketing for the newly established Graduate School of Business and later oversaw admissions, financial aid, recruitment, and global operations. During that time, we were designing and building the Graduate School of Business from the ground up, which was an extremely entrepreneurial process and a defining part of my professional experience.

Over ten years ago, I transitioned into a faculty position, where I now teach marketing courses including entrepreneurial marketing, social media marketing, global marketing, marketing management, and luxury marketing.

At the same time, I was appointed Director of the Pino Global Entrepreneurship Center at FIU. At the center, we focus on helping students develop entrepreneurial skills, which I believe are essential not only professionally but also personally, regardless of the career path they choose.

MFJMCE: In a few words, what is the focus of your research project for which you received this grant?

My research examines how entrepreneurship is perceived and developed within the European Union, focusing specifically on Spain and France. Although both countries belong to the EU, they represent very different entrepreneurial ecosystems.





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MFJMCE: How did the idea for this research originate?

The idea came from working closely with entrepreneurs over many years. I've had the privilege of observing how they think, how they envision the future, and which skills truly matter in practice.

Through this close collaboration, I've also been able to understand how they build on their skills and knowledge to grow their ventures. It allows me to bring real insight into the classroom and better prepare our students for success.

We already prepare students very well for the U.S. market and our established collaborations in Asia provide additional international exposure. Expanding into Europe will complete the strategic framework, allowing us to deliver a fully global perspective and equip students to operate competitively across major economic regions.

MFJMCE: Your grant proposal mentions that you will use research material in the classroom. What do you hope students will gain from the course?

I want students to understand cultural differences and what it takes to succeed regardless of where they are in the world — entrepreneurial skills are global skills. I also aim to bring real industry knowledge into the classroom. Entrepreneurship cannot be taught only from a textbook; students need exposure to real experiences, real challenges, and real decision-making.

Adding a European perspective will further enrich and elevate the learning experience at our center.

MFJMCE: Why do you believe the focus of your research is particularly relevant for students in the United States?

With the rise of AI, we will likely see fewer entry-level jobs and more young people starting their own businesses. Universities must help students prepare for that reality.

I often tell my students not to begin by trying to build a rocket to Mars, leave that to extraordinary entrepreneurs like Elon Musk. Early in their careers, they should focus on solving real problems in their communities. When you address a genuine need, you create real market value. This approach allows you to learn quickly because you can adapt your idea to the market more easily. Once you master that process, you can pursue bigger challenges and compete at the highest level. We want to see new entrepreneurial startups emerging from FIU.

We are already seeing growing interest in entrepreneurship among students, and it is our responsibility to prepare them for it.

MFJMCE: Where do you see this research taking you in the future? Do you plan to continue building on this project, or do you have additional plans in mind?

I absolutely plan to continue building on this project. I want to establish mentors in Spain and France who can work directly with our students and create more international opportunities.

Entrepreneurship can only be taught if we truly understand markets and entrepreneurs. This research helps us close that gap.



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MFJMCE: Do you have any final thoughts you would like to share?

The world has become very small, and we must prepare students globally, not just locally. Young people have incredible ideas, and our role as educators is to help them implement those ideas successfully.

I believe we will see many outstanding ventures coming out of FIU. Being in Miami, one of the most entrepreneurial cities in the world, already gives us a significant advantage. Combining that with best practices from the European Union will make our students even more competitive.

I'm very grateful for the opportunity to conduct research in Europe and bring real value back to our students.

Thank you.

By Christine I. Caly-Sanchez