

## 8. BREMER SYMPOSION ZUM FREMDSPRACHENLEHREN UND -LERNEN AN HOCHSCHULEN

Die Rolle von Sprachenzentren neu denken: Flexibilität, Relevanz & Vision  
Rethinking the Role of Languages Centres: Flexibility, Relevance & Vision

01.03.2023 – 03.03.2023 an der Universität Bremen

<b>Format</b>	Vortrag Sektion 1 / Presentation session 1
<b>Beitragstitel</b>	Beyond the Ivory Tower: Building Relationships with Local Communities
<b>Referent:innen</b>	Yvonne Unnold / Claudia Schekulin (Kufstein, Österreich)

While cutting-edge research and high-quality education remain at the core of universities' role in the 21st century, there is increasing pressure from governments and other funding bodies that they extend their mission beyond the confines of these primary functions. Viewed this way, universities should not be isolated ivory towers but need to engage with local communities to share their expertise and resources with a wide range of stakeholders. In this contribution, we will argue that Language Centers can play a key role in this development because they focus on skills and competencies (viz., language and communication) that are generally more accessible than other, more arcane academic fields. Specifically, we see three areas where synergies between Language Centers and local communities can be harnessed and the knowledge and competencies of their faculty can be shared: (1) Language and communication consultancy for local businesses and language training for their staff; (2) Workshops for local school students to raise awareness for language and communication and to potentially light a spark that could lead them to pursue academic programs in this field; (3) Outreach to the general public in the form of language cafés and similar low-threshold offers. In our presentation, we will highlight the first steps we have taken within this tripartite strategy, report on

successes and setbacks, and discuss further ideas and concerns regarding these matters with the audience.