



**Lea Colner, Principal
International bilingual (English-Swedish) school and preschool Vittra Rösjötorp**

Lea Colner is a certified primary school teacher, with Slovenian and Swedish teaching licenses. In 2009, she finished her studies at the Faculty of Education at the University of Ljubljana, where she received the Student Prešeren Prize, an award for outstanding achievements in the field of studies, by introducing the pedagogical approach Storyline into the Slovenian school field. During her studies she spent nearly one year in Sweden at Halmstad University, where she did an internship and studied different courses within International Teacher Training and Education Studies. She started her career as a teacher in Slovenia in 2009 and two years later continued her teaching career in Sweden. Since 2019, she is the principal of the international bilingual (English-Swedish) school and preschool Vittra Rösjötorp, located in Sollentuna, which is one of 25 Vittra schools in Sweden. In 2021, Lea's School was ranked among the 100 most inspirational schools in the world for teaching for sustainable development and Inclusion of the 2030 Agenda. In the same year, her school was one of the five winners of the award "the most sustainable school in Sweden for 2021." In 2022 her school received the label "School for Sustainable Development" from the Swedish National Agency for Education. Visiting different schools worldwide throughout the years, chairing conferences, meeting practitioners and researchers in the field of education, have helped Lea gain deep understanding for school development, its complexity and challenges. Lea's holistic and transformational school leadership approach plays an important role in her mission of promoting educational innovation, creating a vision for the future, building a culture of collaboration, and empowering others to find ways to grow and develop. She is now in the third, last year of her studies at Stockholm University, where she is studying The Principal Education, a Swedish state-regulated executive education for principals. In August 2023, Lea received a "Principal of the Year 2023" nomination by Skolledare21, which is a meeting place for all school leaders and most important managers in Sweden.



Dr. Gregor Torkar
Associate Professor at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education

Dr. Gregor Torkar is an associate professor at the Faculty of Education of the University of Ljubljana. Teaching students is one of his favourite tasks. His scientific and research activities are mainly in the fields of biology and environmental education. Currently, he is mostly focused on systems thinking and measurement tools for environmental literacy. His professional work focuses on developing sustainability education for climate change education, renovation of school curricula, working with gifted students, and translating and writing of professional contributions for teachers and the general public. He is active internationally as a member of the executive board of the Association of European Researchers in Didactics of Biology (ERIDOB) and as a member of the international advisory group of the UNESCO Chair on Education for Sustainable Lifestyles.



Dr. Stojan Kostanjevec

Assistant Professor at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, Department of Biology, Chemistry and Home Economics

Stojan Kostanjevec works at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, and he is a lecturer at the Faculty of Education and the Biotechnical Faculty. His scientific activities focus on home economics education, nutrition literacy, consumer education and sustainability. He authored various professional and scientific papers that have been presented or published at international conferences as well as in professional and scientific journals. He is also the author of textbooks for Home Economics education. He was the president of the Slovene Nutritionist and Dietetic Association, member and national representative of the European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians and he is the coordinator of the Eco-faculty programme at the Faculty of Education at the University of Ljubljana.



Dr. Štefan Merkač
biologist, eco farmer, nature conservationist

Dr. Štefan Merkač was born and grew up in Šmihel, a small village in Carinthia, Austria. He finished the Slovene Gymnasium in Klagenfurt (Celovec) and continued his education in Graz, where he graduated from the field of biology. After graduation he furthered his studies, specialising in eco farming. For many years he was closely cooperating with eco farmers as well as working in the field of renewable energy sources at Provincial Government of Carinthia, Austria. One of his main responsibilities was making the energy plan which included more than 2 000 people. Meanwhile, he continued his education and gained additional knowledge in project management and leading, as well as expertise in nature conservation (Naturschutzfachkraft). Since he established his own enterprise, he has mostly been involved in nature conservation. He is a self-sustainable eco farmer. He is also fully occupied as an independent counsellor and a manager of different eco projects.



Heinz Mayer, Biosphere Reserve Nockberge

Heinz Mayer is the deputy director of the Biosphere Reserve Nockberge. Beside project management, his tasks include international cooperation, liaison office to UNESCO and the Austrian national committee, "Science Link Nockberge", which is a cooperation with the University of Klagenfurt, the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences in Villach and the Biosphere Reserve Nockberge, public relations and journalist support. He is also responsible for the Biosphere Reserve magazine *Meine Biosphäre* ("My Biosphere").

In his opinion, young people face many challenges today. Therefore, it is important to support the youth in such a way that they do not completely lose their "roots". He wishes to pass on his knowledge, enthuse the youth about Biosphere Reserve Nockberge and help them recognise new opportunities, important for their future through trying, achievements and further education.

His motto "strength lies in calmness" helps him keep an open mind and investigate other opinions before making his own.