The US/Russia Joint Dual Degree Partnership Conference took place January 30-February 1 Annandale on Hudson (at Bard College) and NYC (SUNY Global Center). Organized by the Higher Education Working Group of the US-Russia Social Expertise Exchange Program (funded by Eurasia Foundation), the conference aimed to bring together US and Russian international higher education administrators for a dialogue on the participants’ experience with joint and dual degree programs to explore the best practices and discuss challenges and opportunities. In addition, the conference addressed the broader topic of US-Russia higher education cooperation. ([http://www.bard.edu/civicengagement/us-russia-conference/](http://www.bard.edu/civicengagement/us-russia-conference/)).

Svetlana Filiatreau facilitated two panels on partnership process and lessons learned. The issues included (per conference schedule): “challenges of partnerships and how to make partnerships work, including: motivations, educational philosophy, finances, communication, governance structures, structures for faculty collaboration quality control”. The conference program link: [http://www.bard.edu/civicengagement/us-russia-conference/schedule/](http://www.bard.edu/civicengagement/us-russia-conference/schedule/) Plus, together with HSE and MSU, we presented on our own partnership experience, discussion two frameworks for higher education cooperation – consortium and dual degree. The outcome of the event was a better understanding of cultural, institutional, political, and process differences, and more trust. There is also a greater realization that challenges we experience are typical across the board, and that the benefits go beyond institutional branding and program delivery. We are, in fact, involved in public diplomacy in its purest, grass roots form, as we build people-to-people ties and engage in a dialogue on purposes, philosophies, forms, and processes of cross-border higher education between Russia and USA.