TRANS-NATION CO-CREATION



Studio Michael Shanks Stanford

This week I am off to join Sabine (Remdisch) and colleagues as part of our collaboration – Trans-nation Co-creation.

Here’s a kind of prospectus.

TNCC Tour and Dialogues: A Week of Innovation, Leadership, and Foresight

From June 13 to 19, 2026, the Institute for Performance Management at Leuphana University Lüneburg holds a week of TNCC (Trans-nation Co-creation) Leadership Dialogues across Germany. The week brings together company visits, discussions, and leadership interviews, all exploring how organizations are transforming in the age of artificial intelligence and how AI finds its way into companies.

At Leuphana University, led by Prof. Dr. Sabine Remdisch and joined this year by Prof. Dr. Michael Shanks, one of Stanford University’s most influential thinkers at the intersection of archaeology, culture and innovation, the tour moves between very different settings, from an AI innovation park to a Celtic museum, on the premise that the conditions for innovation are best understood by seeing them up

close and asking the people inside them how change takes hold. Shanks, whose work examines how organiza tions create and how the spaces and cultures around them shape what they are able to build, gives the program its through-line across the week – treating culture, history, and innovation as a single subject rather than separate ones. Remdisch, whose research focuses on the conditions that enable successful innovation and who brings a particular attention to the psychological factors shaping how individuals and organizations navigate AI transformation, anchors the program in the human dimensions of change.

The study conducts qualitative interviews with organizations of varying sizes and AI maturity levels in Germany to assess their current stage in AI transformation, the key challenges they face in adopting and scaling AI, and their readiness in terms of strategy, capabilities, culture, governance, and technology. The goal is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the current state of AI transformation and to use these insights to create a practical Performance Leadership Playbook with actionable guidance for lead ers driving AI-enabled organizational change.

The week opens with an exchange between Shanks, Remdisch and Kerstin Fischer, Professor of Language and Technology Interaction at the University of Southern Denmark, whose research on trust in human robot interaction asks how people come to rely on machines, and how to guard against trusting them too much or too little. It is a fitting start to a week about innovation in the age of artificial intelligence, where the harder questions are often less about capability than about trust and judgment.

From there, the dialogues pair leading German enterprises with sites of cultural and historical signifi cance. In Heilbronn, participants visit the Innovation Park Artificial Intelligence (IPAI) – one of Europe’s largest AI campuses, bringing together research, industry and startups to advance artificial intelligence as a driver of innovation – and the Campus Founders, a leading accelerator and entrepreneurial hub that supports startups and young entrepreneurs in building scalable businesses, with a leadership interview with Chief Executive Oliver Hanisch.

In the Wetzlar region, they tour the LEICA manufactory and speak with Chief Technology Officer Dirk Voelkel, visit RITTAL – one of the world’s leading manufacturers of industrial enclosures, power distribu tion and IT infrastructure

solutions, known for its commitment to innovation and digitalization – and meet regional small and medium-sized enterprises. At the Keltenwelt, the group tours the Celtic museum with its director, Dr. Marcus Coesfeld.

The program continues in Hannover with a meeting at the Lower Saxony Ministry ofthe Interior, Sport and Digitalization, before heading north to the Institute for Performance Management in Lüneburg, and a lunch hosted by Leuphana President Prof. Dr. Sascha Spoun, who will share insights into Leuphana's dis tinctive study model and how the university, as an organization that began positioning itself in the field of artificial intelligence at an early stage, continues to shape and advance this transformation.

At Leuphana University, the group also holds a leadership interview with Prof. Dr. Michael Frese, an inter nationally recognized scholar of entrepreneurship and work psychology whose research examines how individual initiative and leadership drive innovation and organizational performance.

The tour concludes on Friday with a site visit to IKEA in Hamburg, focusing on the "Reimagining Work places" project (a cooperation between IKEA and Leuphana), where a functional model office has been created that makes innovative work concepts tangible and researchable. The tour then concludes with a visit to the Artificial Intelligence Center Hamburg (ARIC) and a leadership interview with Alois Krtil – CEO and founder of the ARIC and one of the most prominent voices in AI in Germany and Europe.

Context – performance management

Trans-Nation Co-Creation (TNCC) is a cross-border AI & innovation program of the Institute for Performance Management at Leuphana University Lüneburg, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMBFTR). It connects German innovation leaders with experts, networks, and ecosystems of Germany and Silicon Valley, in the belief that meaningful innovation depends on col laboration across organizational and national borders.

Navigating the AI Transformation

Running through the week is a qualitative interview study that hears from organizations of every size, from large enterprises to SMEs and young startups,

about where they really stand with AI.

Big topics

1 Organizational Readiness & Strategic Positioning

Readiness: Where do organizations currently stand in their AI transformation journey – how pre pared are they in terms of AI readiness, including strategy, capabilities, culture, governance, and technology?

Strategy: How does AI transformation affect competitive positioning and existing business mod els?

2 Organizational Culture & Human-Centered Transformation

Culture: How do organizations foster a culture of innovation and openness that enables AI adop tion?

Humans-in-the-loop: How do organizations balance efficiency gains through AI with employee well-being and human-centered work design?

Trust: How do leaders address resistance and build trust during AI transformation?

Communication & Storytelling: How do leaders effectively communicate the vision and purpose of AI transformation across all levels of the organization?

3 Organizational Learning & Change

Challenges: What are the most significant challenges they face when adopting and scaling AI?

Scaling: What distinguishes organizations that successfully scale AI initiatives from those that struggle to move beyond pilot projects?

Learning: How are organizations building the skills and competencies needed to thrive in an AI driven environment?

4 Leadership

Leader Self-Efficacy: How does the way leaders engage with AI themselves shape the transfor mation of their organization?

Leadership: What are the critical leadership responsibilities required to successfully steer AI-driven transformation?

Psychological Safety: How do leaders create an environment of psychological safety that encourages experimentation, learning from failure, and creative problem-solving in the context of AI?

Ethics & Responsibility: How do leaders ensure the ethical and responsible use of AI, and what frameworks are in place to manage associated risks?

5 Organizational Impact & Collaborative Ecosystems

Impact: How do organizations measure the success and impact of their AI initiatives?

Collaboration: How do organizations collaborate with external partners, startups, and research institutions to accelerate AI innovation?

The insights gathered from these interviews will provide a comprehensive view of the current state of AI transformation in German organizations. The findings will serve as the foundation for developing a prac tical *Performance Leadership Playbook*, offering leaders actionable guidance on how to navigate, lead, and accelerate AI-enabled organizational transformation.



Here’s our group at Stanford in March