

INVENTING EDUCATION

second international conference

<http://www.scuolademocratica-conference.net>
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The **2nd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE of the JOURNAL SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA "REINVENTING EDUCATION"** will be hosted online **June 3 through 5 2021**, by **Scuola Democratica, Centro Interuniversitario per la Ricerca Didattica** (University of Cagliari and University of Sassari), **il Mulino**. The challenges posed by the contemporary world have long required a rethinking of educational concepts, policies, and practices. The question about education 'for what' as well as 'how' and 'for whom' has become unavoidable and yet it largely remained elusive due to a tenacious attachment to the ideas and routines of the past which are now far off the radical transformations required of educational systems. Scenarios, reflections, and practices fostering the possibility of change towards the reinvention of the educational field as a driver of more general and global changes are centerstage topics at the Conference and will have a multidisciplinary approach from experts from different disciplinary communities, including sociology, pedagogy, psychology, economics, architecture, political science, etc. We hope with this opportunity to confirm the participation obtained at the first edition of the conference. Organizers, promoters and partners of the Conference wish to invite educators, teachers, researchers, scholars, academics, scientists, professionals, experts and policy makers to join the conversation and bring the disciplines towards a more integrated set of alliances by:

- promoting a trans and inter disciplinary discussion on urgent topics;
- fostering debates among experts and professionals;
- diffusing research findings all over international scientific networks and practitioners' mainstreams;
- launching further strategies and networking alliances on local, national and international scale;
- providing a new space for debate and evidence to educational policies.

We invite you to submit ABSTRACT/PAPER for your presentation at the **Panel session**:

H.5 REINVENTING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Convenors

Howard Stevenson (University of Nottingham); Aileen Kennedy (University of Strathclyde)

Keywords

Professional learning and development; teacher education; critical pedagogy; counter hegemonic practice; adult education

It is widely believed that professional learning and development (PLD) for those who work in educational institutions, from Early Years through to Higher and Adult Education, is a 'good thing' (Stevenson, 2019). Change in all education sectors is rapid, considerable and complex and it is only right that education workers should be supported to navigate these developments. PLD is widely recognised as the means to provide this support. That education workers require 'more PLD', or perhaps 'more relevant' PLD, has become accepted as an unquestioned orthodoxy. The central problem therefore is often presented as a lack of resources to make such a goal possible.

However, accepting this orthodoxy fails to recognise the critical role that PLD often plays in reinforcing education systems that continue to reproduce structural inequalities, despite claiming to do the reverse. It also fails to question the political nature of the 'changes' that frame educators' lives and the ways in which PLD is used to promote particular changes, or to privilege particular responses to particular changes. Rather PLD is too often used as a tool to 'implement' particular policy reforms, or to help to re-fashion and reculture the workforce in order to 'align' educational workers with organisational objectives. At its worst such PLD serves to deskill and even infantilise educators by providing 'top tips' and 'one best way' solutions. Educators are given little opportunity to critique the processes involved and even less opportunity to question the goals. The focus is on 'what works', with little or no opportunity to discuss 'what matters' (Biesta, 2007). Such PLD is reductivist and instrumental and has been fundamental to re-fashioning our educational institutions as neoliberal business units focused on the cost-effective delivery of improved 'output'. In this Panel we want to challenge this orthodoxy, as the start of a process that can help us reimagine professional learning as genuinely transformative (Kennedy 2005). To what extent is it possible for PLD to transcend a narrow concern with professional learning for work and position itself as a process that allows educators to question work itself? How can professional learning and development contribute to transformative practice that disrupts the status quo and, in a post-pandemic context, offers the genuine possibility of 'building back better'? In this Panel we seek to connect a rich tradition of radical adult education (Gramsci, Freire, hooks offer just some examples) with diverse contemporary contexts to develop new theorisations that can contribute to reinventing professional learning and development.

We hope the questions below can provide a starting point for discussions in the Panel. They are offered as a way of opening up a dialogue between participants.

- What do we mean by 'reproductive professional learning' and in what ways does professional learning act in reproductive ways?
- What do we mean by 'transformative professional learning'? To what extent are frameworks of transformative professional learning, such as those developed by Jack Mezirow and others in radical adult

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education movements, relevant for understanding, analysing and critiquing contemporary developments in PLD?

- To what extent can 'professional learning' be transformative? Are there particular forms, and sites, of professional learning that afford greater potential to be transformative? (see Evans, 2019).
- What are the challenges for those who work in the field of 'professional learning' and who seek to work in transformative ways? To what extent is it possible to work 'in and against' the system we seek to transform? Can professional learning open up genuine possibilities to work in counter-hegemonic ways?

References

- Biesta, G. (2007) Why 'what works' won't work: Evidence-based practice and the democratic deficit in educational research. *Educational Theory*, 57: 1-22.
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- Kennedy, A. (2005) Models of Continuing Professional Development: a framework for analysis, *Professional Development in Education*, 40:3, 336-351.
- Stevenson, H. (2019) Editorial: professional learning – What is the point?, *Professional Development in Education*, 45:1, 1-2.

ABSTRACTS/PAPERS SUBMISSION

HOW TO SUBMIT

ABSTRACTS/PAPERS should be submitted by **April 4, 2021** ([check Conference Dates and Deadlines](#)).
 ABSTRACTS/PAPERS should be submitted via the [pre-conference tool](#).

Please do not submit your ABSTRACT/PAPER by e-mailing it to the Convenor(s) of the Panel session you chose. Convenor(s) will receive submitted ABSTRACTS/PAPERS automatically from the [pre-conference tool](#) and they are going to reject ABSTRACT/PAPER submitted to their e-mail addresses.

Language for ABSTRACTS/PAPERS is English.

You can submit an ABSTRACT or in case you prefer a PAPER. **Be careful: DO NOT SUBMIT BOTH ABSTRACT AND PAPER. EITHER YOU SUBMIT THE FORMER OR THE LATTER.**

ABSTRACT/PAPER should include:

1. Title (limited to 20 words in UPPER CASE)
2. Author's name and surname, institution, and email address
3. Five keywords
4. ABSTRACT's text (limited to 500 words). In case you decide for the PAPER, text will be 3.500 words min. 5.000 words max. In the submission text, please write: ABSTRACT or PAPER after the title. Example: FAMILY BACKGROUNDS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS. A CASE STUDY (PAPER)

The Conference formula is: **1 SUBMISSION = 1 FEE** ([check FEES webpage](#))

It is possible to submit a maximum of 2 ABSTRACTS/PAPERS per person (double submission must concern 2 different Panel Sessions). Each ABSTRACT/PAPER is eligible if it is backed by an **APP FEE**.

Co-authors who do not submit ABSTRACT/PAPER as first author may access to the Conference via the discounted P FEE ([check FEES webpage](#)).

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ABSTRACTS/PAPERS may not be edited/uploaded after final submission.

Before you submit, please make sure the following requirements are met:

- ABSTRACT/PAPER must be allocated to a specific Panel session. Therefore, you must select the proper Panel when submitting. For a complete listing of Panel sessions please [click here](#).
- If possible, write your ABSTRACT/PAPER highlighting methods, outcomes, references. Word count is affected by inclusion of references.
- Convenors and the Scientific Committee will review all submitted ABSTRACTS/PAPERS. Notification regarding acceptance and scheduling will be sent to the submitting author via the [pre-conference tool](#).

Please note, if your ABSTRACT/PAPER is accepted, you will be permitted a maximum of 20 minutes for oral presentation.