



Comparative Education Society in Europe

CALL FOR PAPERS

Worlds of learning: comparative perspectives on the future(s) of education

June 29 – July 2, 2026
Roskilde University, Denmark



Roskilde UNESCO-listed Gothic Cathedral

Much contemporary attention in education centers on notions of learning and the learner. One powerful critique of this tendency is that the many broad and diverse aims of education are being reduced to a type of ‘learnification’ in which teachers are viewed as technical providers and students as recipients of agreed learning outcomes. It is argued that neoliberal policy frames of learning lead to an isolated focus on the subject of learning at the risk of instrumentalizing and individualizing education aims and contexts. Some have argued that such narrowness does little to address the multiple challenges facing humanity and our planet.

Whilst important, learning and education are concerned with more than cognitive skills, teacher ‘inputs’ or assessment outcomes: they comprise multiple processes of engagement, dialogue and reflection where the goals are many and outcomes rarely reducible to the skills of doing, but rather, to socialization into cultural worlds and ways of being.

In recent years, the agendas of education have widened considerably by a growing recognition that the worlds of learning and education are themselves parts of larger, fragile eco-systems of human and other-than-human life. In spite of growing polarizing and oppositional forces, we see renewed calls for inclusion, equity, cooperation and solidarity in education. But, how inclusive can such education be when it still involves forms of intellectual flattening where a dominant mode of reasoning and purpose marginalizes alternative ontologies, experiences and ways of being and, thus, a fuller range of possibilities for expressing what it means to be human?

Contributions might explore different understandings of learning and education over time and in diverse historical and cultural contexts. Contributions might also examine the materiality of learning, for example how an awareness of touch, movement and bodily enactment shapes what is learnt and how. It might also include educational traditions that treat myth, superstition and the magical as important ways to express both belonging and otherness. Performative, artistic and literary genres of representation are also important in any expanded vision of learning. Contributions might also explore the entanglement of comparative education with various colonialisms, ideologies, technologies and politics that continue to shape what is studied, by whom, how and why.

The conference will also provide opportunities to explore the dynamics of educational policy formation in European and global spaces. This might include the changing role and threats to the university in different national contexts, and the place of technology, not least artificial intelligence, in remaking educational processes and connectivities. Contributions might focus on matters of curricula and pedagogy, issues of assessment, or learning through creative engagements with gaming and the virtual.

The following key speakers are invited to help us unfold the conference theme through **Plenary Lectures**:

- **Jacob Feldt**, Roskilde University.
- **Arathi Sriprakash**, University of Oxford.
- **Sharon Todd**, Maynooth University.
- **Jeremy Rappleye**, University of Hong Kong.

The Conference will be organised around CESE's distinctive **Working Groups** where colleagues engage together over a number of sessions to explore a thematic focus. The WGs will include but not be restricted to the following:

- **Ideas and ideals of learning.**
- **Governing learning.**
- **Learning and the university.**
- **Learning and the curriculum.**
- **Alternative epistemologies of learning.**
- **Learning for political engagement.**

In addition to these six Working Groups, there will be a Working Group dedicated to **new scholars**, as well as opportunities to submit papers for **Thematically-Focused Panels** in which the many worlds of learning will still be in perspective but may touch upon themes that are not covered by any of the WGs.

Finally, there will be opportunities to submit proposals for **Cross-Thematic Sessions** where papers can go beyond the conference theme by touching on epistemological issues related to comparative education, international education and development, early learning, special needs education, intercultural education, global policy studies and other related areas of study.

Conference format: Individual or co-authored, theoretical or empirical papers and panels will be presented at the Working Groups, the Thematically-Focused Panels and the Cross-Thematic Sessions. Additionally, multi-author panels of 3-4 papers can be suggested, with their placement negotiated with the Conference Organisers.

The **deadline** for proposal submission is **February 15, 2026**.

Roskilde is a major regional city with origins in the pre-Christian, Viking age. It is noted for its UNESCO-listed Gothic cathedral and historic harbour, as well as the internationally-renown Roskilde Music Festival held each summer.



Roskilde University (above image of library building) emerged from the 'reform' movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s and continues to be defined by a pedagogical philosophy based upon participant-led, problem-oriented, group-based project work. The broader context of the Conference includes the Danish folk enlightenment tradition of 'learning for life' and education for democratic participation. Roskilde University lies approximately 30 km west of Copenhagen and is easily reached by public transport.

For more information about the conference: www.cese-europe.org/2026