



Futures of Education – Learning to Become 2021

**Education for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals in
the Anthropocene**

22-23 April 2021

An online conference hosted by VIA University College, Denmark

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The Futures of Education – Learning to become 2021 conference gives premium focus to two ambitious global initiatives recently launched by the UN's organization for international collaboration in Education, Sciences, and Culture, UNESCO. These two initiatives in each their way connect the idea of sustainable development with the future(s) of education. The first initiative, Education for Sustainable Development: Towards achieving the SDGs' (ESD for 2030), is oriented towards education's role concerning the SDG2030 Agenda, while the second initiative, Futures of Education – Learning to Become, aims at reimagining "how knowledge and learning can shape the future of humanity and the planet" and operates with a horizon of 2050 and beyond. Therefore, the second initiative is both a continuation and reframing of the first initiative. It raises profound questions regarding the human condition and education as sustainable development in what is often called the Epoch of the Anthropocene.

This conference addresses the nearer and the more distant future of ESD implied by these two initiatives and, more specifically, concerning professions and polytechnic education at Higher Educational Institutions (HEI).

The objectives of Futures of Education – Learning to Become 2021- Education for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals in the Anthropocene are

- 1) to understand the relation between the notion of sustainable development with regard to education concerning both the SDG2030 Agenda and the more distant futures of education
- 2) more explicitly to contribute to the reflection on and empowering ESD in polytechnical education, learning, and edification at Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) inspired by these two UNESCO initiatives.

For more information on how the two UNESCO initiatives are linked to the conference and relating to polytechnic education, read the conference concept note at the conference site.

The Conference organizers welcome participants (and submission of presentations) based anywhere in the world. Submissions should refer to one or more of the topics outlined in the next section.

TOPICS

Participants are welcome to submit presentations that contribute to the reflection on and empowering ESD in polytechnical education, learning, and edification in Higher Polytechnical Education (HPE). HPE takes place at Vocational Colleges, Polytechnical Institutions, and Universities of Applied Science (UAS). This kind of institution offers programs and degrees in a broad range of subjects, and it is, in general, aimed at educating professionals to more or less well-defined professions. Therefore, practical training "outside" the educational institution, besides empirical and theoretical studies, plays a vital role. Further, are these kinds of institutions also expected to "create value" for external public or private stakeholders and civil society. That, on

one side, raises several issues questions regarding what characterizes and ought to portray education and research in these institutions, but on the other side, the triangle of empirical, theoretical, and practical perspectives and "creating value for others" make them attractive concerning working with SDGs and future ESD. Put differently, this form of HE has the opportunity to work with both "head, heart and hand" in ESD.

The submissions can be on, yet are not limited to, the following themes of polytechnic education concerning ESD and SDG:

1. How does ESD "matter in practice" in professional education and training and the professions? How do the generic aspects of ESD in specific ways play together with the more specific skills, knowledge forms, and expertise developed in the various programs, degrees, and professions represented in HPE? How are the particular futures of the different forms of professional knowledge envisioned to evolve further in light of the two UNESCO initiatives both in itself and in cross-professional collaboration?
2. Examples of concrete cases of ESD in HPE: these examples could highlight how various forms of inquiry (broadly understood) takes place in ESD, for instance, as STS analysis, facilitation, phenomenological research, hermeneutics, care as "intervention," hands-on experimentation, prototyping. They could also highlight learning notions in HPE for ESD (communities of practice, socio-material learning, rhizomatic learning, etc. as well as an existential dimension of learning— see also point 3)
3. How are ideas of learning related to edification? How is the professional faculty of judgment and imagination developed (in light of the conference's main themes)? How is Phronesis or practical wisdom existentially situated as "heart" knowledge in-between "head" and "hand" knowledge in the various professions? Besides technical professional expertise and practical wisdom, are there also artistic and poetic elements involved in the "craftsmanship" of the professions"?
4. The theme of value creation: There is a difference between what it means to create value in a product to a consumer and the value creation process in education (Biesta), and the same could indeed be said about other professions, for example, in health care, design, and engineering. HPE institutions have a unique opportunity to rethink and contextualize the concept of value, value creation for others, the idea of "value chain" in a more sustainable way, opening up for a profound notion of sustainable development. That also includes exchanging various forms of values, and the conditions of intersubjectivity these exchanges entail and presupposes. What does it mean to "create value for others" in a sustainable way in various contexts and professions? What is the relation between the intrinsic (internal) value in a given profession and the values this profession creates for others?
5. In recent years newer forms of research, which opens up for broader participation in research processes, have emerged, the so-called citizens or participatory science, where citizens help researchers collect or process data across concerning, for example, astronomy and medicine and cultural heritage. This kind of research has a vast potential concerning working with SDG's and ESD. While (obviously) not the only type of research on the HPE institutions, these institutions have unique opportunities for exploring the potential of this kind of research both concerning student involvement and the surrounding communities of HPE institutions
6. The evaluation criteria of education and research at HE institutions and, in particular, activities at HPE institutions has to be discussed both in general and in relation to research activities related to the SDGs. The "evaluation industry" of higher research is at best debatable regarding the universities and is problematic with regard to HPI institutions. The questions regarding the evaluation of research are as relevant as ever both in general and more specifically in relation to the research activities at HPE institutions (who, why/to what purpose, which kind of activities and how). These questions have been raised as a global international concern (see,

for example, <https://sfdora.org/>), and are also very relevant to consider concerning the evaluation of education and research in sustainable development.

HOW TO APPLY

- Please start by registering as a participant and indicate if you will participate with or without a presentation.
- If you want to give a presentation at the conference, you must submit an abstract (6-700 words). You will then be notified if your abstract has been accepted. If so you will then have to send in a full paper (6 pages, approximately 2700 words). After the conference, you will be notified if your paper also has been accepted in the conference proceedings

(Dates and deadlines see below)

- ✘ The conference language is English, and all submissions are therefore to be submitted in English
- ✘ If you want to participate, a reliable internet connection is required

BENEFITS

- As it is an online conference it is possible to attend from all over the world
- The conference is a no-fee conference.
- Selected papers will be published in the conference proceedings and will be accessible online (with ISBN/ISSN number)

IMPORTANT DATES AND REGISTRATION

Deadline for application submission	25 January, 2021
Notification on selected presenters	15 February, 2021
Submission of full paper	10 April, 2021
Submission of deadline for any additional presentation materials	10 April, 2021
Notification on paper accepted in conference proceedings	May 2021
Deadline for registration without presentation	18 April, 2021

All applicants are requested to adhere strictly to the above deadlines.

Registration: <https://www.tilmeld.dk/futures2021/signup>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Conference Coordinator: Victoria Justine Ulriksen Draborg, vjud@via.dk

Academic Coordinator: Jesper Garsdal, jega@via.dk

MORE INFO ON THE TWO UNESCO INITIATIVES ESD for

SDG:

- <https://en.unesco.org/news/esd-2030-whats-next-education-sustainabledevelopment>
- <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370215.locale=en>

Futures of Education – Learning to Become

- <https://en.unesco.org/futuresofeducation/>

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