

An international conference to mark the 30th anniversary of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme

Transforming knowledge for just and sustainable futures

UNESCO Paris
3-4 November 2022

Last updated: 20 October 2022

Background

Established in 1992, the [UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme](#) is an inter-sectoral network to mobilize and share the expertise of higher education institutions to address complex interdependent development challenges. It promotes international inter-university cooperation and networking to enhance institutional capacities through knowledge sharing and collaborative work.

The 850 university chairs and UNITWIN research networks from over 110 countries represent a unique resource for intellectual and scientific cooperation at national, regional and global levels. They play a key strategic role in strengthening connections between knowledge, research, education, and public policies.

As the world faces multiple overlapping social, economic, political, technological and environmental disruptions, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme is needed more than ever. The inter-disciplinary nature of the Programme is well placed to address some of these issues. As well as recognizing past accomplishments, this conference will take a forward-looking approach and consider the future potential of UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in contributing to the knowledge commons and open science.

This conference, organized by UNESCO with the support of the French National Commission for UNESCO, will celebrate the accomplishments of the Programme over the last three decades and advance authentic interdisciplinary dialogues and the cross-sectoral mobilization needed to confront the complex challenges on the horizon. Dedicated to the theme of “Transforming knowledge for just and sustainable futures”, the two-day event is grounded in the spirit of global scientific, moral, intellectual, and academic solidarity.

Participants

Current members of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, Permanent Delegations to UNESCO and National Commissions for UNESCO, higher education institutions, partner organizations, and other UNITWIN stakeholders and UNESCO colleagues and networks are welcome to attend.

The conference will be held in-person at UNESCO’s Headquarters in Paris, 7, place de Fontenoy, Paris, France. Further information is available on the [UNITWIN home page](#) and the conference webpage is open for [pre-registration](#). UNESCO strongly encourages higher education institutions with funding possibilities to consider sponsoring the travel of collaborators and partners from the Global South.

Objectives

1. Recognize the accomplishments of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme over the past thirty years

Celebration and recognition of accomplishments from across the past 30 years will be woven through the event, with attention focused on the ways that the Programme has generated knowledge and ideas that matter, strengthened capacities, enriched international and inter-cultural cooperation, and promoted intellectual solidarity.

2. Invigorate greater interdisciplinary cooperation and catalyze new research collaborations

The conference will also serve as a platform for generating foresight in priority thematic areas and to envisage the further evolution of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. It will feature plenary and parallel sessions on developing foresight within and across UNESCO's priority programmes and provide opportunities for networking.

Provisional Agenda

Day One – Thursday 3 November 2022	
MORNING 08:30-09:30	Registration Welcome coffee/tea
09:30-12:00	OPENING (Room 1) Moderator: Ms Stefania Giannini , Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO
09:30-09:45	Welcome addresses Ms Audrey Azoulay , Director-General, UNESCO Ms Sylvie Retailleau , Minister of Higher Education and Research, France
09:45-10:15	Looking Back to See Ahead: Reflections on the UNESCO University Chairs and Networking Programme Mr Federico Mayor Zaragoza , President, Fundación Cultura de Paz (Madrid), and former Director-General of UNESCO (1987-1999)
10:15-11:00	The Transformation of the Knowledge Commons: Perspectives from the Global South Professor Achille Mbembe , University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa The growing complexity and interdependence of multiple global development challenges call for more inter-disciplinary and forward-looking research and knowledge generation. As a common good, science, research and evidence can inform decision-making at all levels, and shape agendas and policy actions for more equitable, inclusive and sustainable development in the years ahead. This Public Lecture will examine the value of key concepts and actions in the quest to transform knowledge for just and sustainable futures, such as the global knowledge commons; co-creating knowledge, research and evidence; democratizing research; steering digitalization; gender equality in science; and epistemic justice.
11:00-11:30	Discussants (tbc)
11:30-12:00	Comments from the floor

Day One (cont.) – Thursday 3 November 2022

12:00-14:30	Lunch break (Informal side meetings - please consult separate programme)
AFTERNOON 14:30-16:00	Plenary Panel 1 (Room II) Responding to Multi-dimensional Crises: Implications for research <p>Today's world is experiencing simultaneous crises of a multi-dimensional nature. Environmental damage continues unabated, the growing effects of climate change are far-reaching, inequalities are widening, democratic space is increasingly threatened, and conflicts continue to undermine peace and our collective development efforts. What roles can researchers, scientists and related institutions play in responding to these multi-dimensional crises, as well as the associated power asymmetries and social, economic and environmental imbalances? Do we need a new 'eco-social contract' as a means of addressing multiple crises? What implications for research, science and future international cooperation? How can science as a common good enhance sustainability based on principles of social, economic and environmental justice?</p> Introduction [15 mins] Georges Haddad , Former President Université Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne and UNESCO Chair in Digital Anthropology Opening statements [25 mins] Katja Hujo , Senior Research Coordinator, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) Adrian Parr , Dean, College of Design, University of Oregon and Professor, Planning, Public Policy and Management. Member of the Global Independent Expert Group on the Universities and the 2030 Agenda Panel discussion [30 mins] Alain Chouraqui , Chaire UNESCO « Éducation à la citoyenneté, sciences de l'homme et convergence des mémoires », Aix Marseille Université, France Josje van der Linden , UNESCO Chair on Lifelong Learning, Youth and Work, Gulu University, Uganda (tbc) Sana Al Sarghali , UNESCO Chair on Human Rights, Democracy and Peace, An Najah National University, Palestine Peter Haugan , former Chair, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO Hilligje van't Land , Secretary General, International Association of Universities Open debate [20 mins]
16:00-16:30	Break

16:30-18:00	<p>Parallel thematic sessions</p> <p>These thematic sessions examine these implications for research in more detail, from the perspective of experts working in key areas of UNESCO's mandate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Towards a Research Agenda to Transform Education Moderator: Sobhi Tawil, Future of Learning and Innovation, UNESCO 2. Multiple Knowledge Systems for Sustainable and Resilient Societies Moderator: Nigel Crowthall, Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems, UNESCO 3. Ocean Science and Knowledge for Sustainable Development (1) Moderator: Justin Ahanhanzo, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO 4. Human Rights Enhancing Economies and the Right to Science Moderator: Konstantinos Tararas, Social and Human Science Sector, UNESCO 5. Rethinking Interdisciplinary Cooperation for Culture in Emergencies Moderator: Sonia Zerroualy, World Heritage Center, UNESCO 6. Information as a Public Good in the Digital Era Moderator: Marielza Oliveira, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO
<p>EVENING</p> <p>18:00-20:00</p>	<p>ANNIVERSARY COCKTAIL</p>

Day Two – Friday 4 November 2022

<p>MORNING</p> <p>09:00-10:30</p>	<p>Plenary Panel 2 (Room II)</p> <p>Reimagining our Futures Together: Insights from Futures Literacy</p> <p>As the challenges and uncertainties of our times continue to persist, the need for connecting knowledge to inclusive policy design and decision-making using research, evidence and innovation is more important than ever for social transformation. This panel seeks to reveal how Futures Literacy and Futures Studies can enable creative leadership, innovation, and address complexity through a capability-based approach to development. How can we use the inter-disciplinary nature of Futures Studies to address the emerging complexities of the climate crisis, increasing inequalities and the needs of our future generations? This expert discussion will uncover how UNESCO, in its role to promote the UN Common Agenda, and the UNESCO Chairs in Futures Literacy and Futures Studies can strengthen dialogue across the UN ecosystem and its Member States, with the objective of forging a stronger link between research and policy and to enhance capabilities to design forward looking policies and programmes. Futures Literacy is part of UNESCO Social & Human Sciences Management of Social Transformations Programme.</p> <p>Introduction: [10 mins]</p> <p>Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General, Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO</p> <p>Panel discussion: [60 mins]</p> <p>Lydia Garrido, Director, Futures Laboratory Network & UNESCO Chair on Sociocultural Anticipation and Resilience, South American Institute for Resilience and Sustainability Studies (SARAS), Uruguay</p> <p>Alexandre Caldas, Chief of Country Outreach, Technology and Innovation Branch in the Science Division, UN Environment Programme or Sandor Frygik, UNEP</p>
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	<p>António Nóvoa, Honorary Rector and Professor of Education, University of Lisbon, Portugal. Member of the International Commission on the Futures of Education</p> <p>Chris Earney, UN Futures Lab, UN Global Pulse</p> <p>Martin Calnan, UNESCO Chair on Future Literacy, Ecoles Des Ponts Business School</p> <p>Open debate: [20 mins]</p>
10:30-11:00	Break
11:00-12:30	<p>Parallel Workshops</p> <p>These workshops engage UNESCO Chairs and other experts with recent activities and international cooperation initiatives with a focus on enhancing future collaborations and promoting normative instruments in key areas of UNESCO’s mandate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Futures of Higher Education Moderator: Francesc Pedro, UNESCO International Institute of Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) Open Science, Artificial Intelligence and Implications for Future Researchers Moderator: Ezra Clark, Science Policy, UNESCO Ocean Science and Knowledge for Sustainable Development (2) Moderator: Justin Ahanhanzo, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Interdisciplinarity at the Intersection of Sustainability, Inclusion, Resilience and Well-being Moderator: Nicola Tollin, UNESCO Chair on Urban Resilience, University of Southern Denmark (tbc) The Free Flow of Ideas in the Digital Age Moderator: Marielza Oliveira, Director, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO Special Session for National Commissions for UNESCO Coordination: French National Commission for UNESCO and UNITWIN Programme
12:30-14:30	<p>Lunch break</p> <p>(Informal side meetings - please consult separate programme)</p>
AFTERNOON 14:30-16:30	<p>Concluding Session and Way Forward (Room II) UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme: A global observatory?</p> <p>Moderator: Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO</p> <p>Recalling the aims, objectives - and evolution - of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, this session seeks to envisage its future potential for strengthening inter-university cooperation, international partnerships, research, teaching and community engagement and intellectual solidarity. Considering possible and preferred futures this panel will reflect on how the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme could best serve as an interdisciplinary global think tank and an observatory of emerging issues and trends.</p> <p>Insights from UNESCO Chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution of UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme to Transdisciplinarity Leon Tikly, UNESCO Chair on Inclusive and Quality Education for All Mobilizing networks to transform higher education Rajesh Tandon, Co-Chairholder, UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogues of UNESCO Chairs: A global laboratory of ideas Raimondo Cagiano De Azevedo, UNESCO Chair on Population, Migrations and Development <p>Visions for the Future of the Programme: Perspectives from UNESCO Senior Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Directors-General for Priority Africa and External Relations, Culture, Social and Human Sciences, Natural Sciences, Communication and Information, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.
16:30-17:00	<p>CLOSING (Room II)</p> <p>Representative of France (tbc)</p> <p>Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO</p>