



7th International Future Education Conference

December 10-12, 2024
Istinye University, Istanbul

Concept Note

There is a general consensus today that we need responsible and values-based leadership, global social transformation, a new paradigm in education, and a strategy to ethically govern and efficiently harness the power of advanced technology to overcome the multidimensional challenges confronting humanity.

The World Academy of Art and Science, Istinye University, Istanbul, and the World University Consortium are collaborating to conduct the 7th International Future Education Conference with the view of working with leading thinkers from a range of fields to identify strategies that can address global challenges and accelerate progress toward achievement of the UN Agenda 2030.

The Conference will be held in Istanbul from December 10-12, 2024. It will consist of 22 sessions in two parallel streams in hybrid format. This will allow speakers and other participants to join and contribute either in person or online.

The aim of the conference is to develop key elements of a scalable model for world-class, global higher education that offers transdisciplinary content, person-centred pedagogy and a low-cost, interactive, personalized, self-paced, global delivery system. A major emphasis will be on harnessing the increasing power of Artificial Intelligence to offer accessible, quality education for all, meet SDG 4, and support implementation of the other 16 SDGs as well. The event is part of the World Academy's Human Security for All campaign.

Draft Agenda

1. Inaugural Plenary Session: Challenges & Opportunities in Global Higher Education

What are the limitations in the current global system of higher education? Can we envision a better system or a new paradigm? What would be its characteristics? What are the opportunities and capabilities available to achieve it?

CONTENT

2. Education for Positive Peace and Conflict Resolution

Education can help promote positive peace and resolve conflicts. It can impart modes of thinking that reconcile and resolve apparent contradictions. This session explores

ways in which we can educate youth to become leaders in peace and conflict resolution. It identifies the characteristics of a paradigm shift needed in our thinking about development, accomplishment, leadership and success.

3. Education in Science and Technology Diplomacy for Human Security and Sustainable Development

How can education better equip scientists, engineers, policymakers and business leaders to understand the prospects, challenges, social consequences and policy implications of rapid advances in knowledge and technology and more fully exploit their power for human security and sustainable development?

4. Transdisciplinary Learning: Integrating Perspectives of Science, Technology, Governance, Humanities, Art

Fragmented thinking and siloed functioning have brought us to where we find ourselves today. The problems we confront are multidimensional, complex, interdependent and inseparable. We need an education that integrates perspectives from the natural and social sciences, humanities and arts to foster transdisciplinary thinking and holistic solutions. This session identifies ways in which we can impart knowledge that transcends disciplinary perspectives and equips future generations with modes of thinking more capable of preventing and addressing the challenges of the future.

5. Education to Address Climate Challenge, Human Security & Other Sustainable Development Issues

As climate change becomes an existential risk affecting virtually all dimensions of global society with severe disruptions to normal life, we need an education that equips students of all fields of higher education to understand the scientific, political, economic, technological, social and ecological dimensions of the challenges and the remedies.

6. Education in Human Diplomacy: The Art of Mediation, Negotiation and Effective Human Relations

In these times of escalating geopolitical tensions, all forms of diplomacy have a critical role to play in bridging the gap between contrary points of view, aspirations, needs and objectives: political, intellectual, social, scientific, technological, cultural and individual; most of all, the art of mediation, negotiation and effective human relations that promotes the welfare, well-being and harmony of all. Human diplomacy is an essential skill at all levels and in all fields. This session examines the need and value of imparting fundamental skills in diplomacy at all levels and in all fields of education.

7. Education on the Impact of Science and Technology and Social Responsibility of Science

WAAS was founded by scientists and artists who were concerned about the social responsibility of science. 65 years later, rapid developments in science and technology including AI, robotics, bio- and geo-engineering have raised the same concerns globally among leaders, the scientific community as well as civil society. This session identifies strategies for transforming education so that it imparts social responsibility along with academic knowledge.

8. Education for Foresight and Future Vision

How do we prepare our youth for an uncertain future? Does history have a direction? How can we better understand the past and anticipate emerging challenges of the future? What are the prominent biases and blind spots that distort our perception of the future? This session examines our capacity for foresight and discusses ways in which our education can endow students with the capacity to more realistically envision and prepare for the future.

9. Education that Fosters Inter-cultural Understanding and Appreciation

Increasing geopolitical, racial, ethnic and religious tensions make it clear that we need education that enhances inter-cultural understanding and appreciation. This session identifies the characteristics of an education that respects inter-cultural diversity and promotes a shared human identity.

10. Education for Women in Leadership

What are the issues aspiring women leaders face in education, at the work place, in communities and in leadership positions globally? How can we educate young women and men to develop, recognize and foster the development of women to promote greater gender diversity and inclusion?

11. Forces for Good in Education: The Social Role and Potential of Capital, Technology and Business

Capital, Business and Technology all have indispensable roles to play in promoting peace, human security, social progress and sustainable development for all. This session discusses ways in which we can align and enrich business, financial and technical education to address the full spectrum of human needs and social aspirations to fully achieve Agenda 2030 and secure a sustainable future for humanity.

12. Values-based Education

WAAS was founded out of a sense of responsibility for the social consequences of scientific discoveries and striving for the welfare of all humanity. At different times, WAAS has focused on different issues - atomic energy, war and peace, the Cold War, education, religion, population growth, food, environment, digital communications and most recently AI. This panel explores ways in which the implementation of universal human value can be inculcated in all academic fields of education at all levels, to promote human security and sustainable development for humanity and all life on earth.

PEDAGOGY

13. AI for Personalized, Self-paced, Interactive, Multilingual Life-long Learning Systems

How can we use the capabilities of AI to overcome many of the quantitative and qualitative constraints of traditional classroom learning and provide interactive, personalized, self-paced education to each student? This session highlights some of the opportunities made possible today with generative AI, the challenges to be overcome, and strategies for achieving SDG 4.

14. AI as an Aid for Transdisciplinary Education and Integrated Thinking

The need for new ways of thinking permeates the work of the World Academy. Solutions to complex social problems require knowledge that transcends disciplinary boundaries and can be effective only when underlying root causes and transdisciplinary processes are comprehended. This session examines the capacity of AI to aid the human mind in overcoming its tendency to divide and compartmentalize dimensions of reality that are interdependent and inseparable.

15. Strategies for Accelerated Vocational Training, Career Development and Lifelong Learning

In an age of rapid advances in knowledge and radical changes in technology, economy and business development, the acquisition of skills during formal education is insufficient preparation for lifelong career development. Therefore the process of vocational education must be continuous and lifelong. This session will examine the potential of various educational strategies and technologies including AI to help youth adapt to these rapid changes in global social evolution.

16. Educating Instructors, Researchers, Students and Administrators for Use of AI in Learning

Among all of us who are experiencing AI, few are really equipped to harness its power fully or guide students in the use of AI in learning. This session focuses on strategies for enhancing knowledge and skills for fully utilizing the developing potentialities of AI in teaching and learning.

17. Life-centered, Contextual Learning

The process of encapsulating all knowledge into an educational course by abstracting, abridging and organizing it into subjects and grades often results in fragmentation of knowledge and a mental divorce from life. Real learning comes when education of each part is in the context of the whole. In the education of the future, the gap between abstract concept and social relevance must be bridged. This session finds answers to the question of how to make learning life-centered and contextual.

18. Addressing Errors, Cultural Bias and Hallucinations in AI-based and Traditional Education

Hallucination is neither new nor is it a monopoly of AI. Humans have always made errors, our thinking has mental, social and cultural biases. This is reflected in our traditional education. This is seen in AI-based learning and other systems. This session will feature a discussion about ways to address these errors and biases in all forms of education.

19. AI, Virtual and Augmented Reality Learning Systems

This session highlights ways in which AI, VR and AR are being and can be used to complement and augment conventional ways of learning, and how they can be exploited to make learning more engaging, immersive, experiential, relevant and impactful.

DELIVERY SYSTEMS

20. Closing the Educational Time Warp

There is a growing gap between contemporary human experience and what is taught in our educational system, and that gap is widening rapidly with each passing year. What is needed is a major reorientation of educational content and pedagogy from transmission of acquired knowledge based on past experience to development of the knowledge, skills and capacities needed in a future we cannot fully and clearly envision. This session identifies ways in which our education can keep pace with the ever-accelerating pace of technological and social evolution, thereby breaking free of the educational time warp.

21. Concept of World University: Delivery & Certification Systems for Accessible, Affordable World Class Education

Twelve years ago, WAAS posed the question in this conference series: How we can provide affordable, interactive, quality, lifelong education to all? This session presents the idea that led to the founding of WUC, six international conferences and more than 15 curriculum development workshops conducted to explore possible answers to this question. With the potential of cutting-edge technology available today, particularly AI, the range of feasible opportunities has multiplied with respect to pedagogy, content and delivery systems. This session focuses on how to integrate the available solutions to offer more quality, affordable, accessible, transdisciplinary, student-centered, multilingual education for all.

22. Concluding Plenary Session

What steps can we take, as educators, researchers, policy makers and thought leaders, to promote a new paradigm in global higher education?