



Illuminating the Power of Idealism *Elevating ourselves in time, place, and possibility*

CIES 2022

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*“Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and by the same token save it from that ruin, which except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and young, would be inevitable.” (Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, p. 193).*

The CIES 2022 theme *Illuminating the Power of Idealism* arises from the intersection of two immutable realities of our time and the impact both are having on the field of comparative and international education. The first is our global experience with the COVID-19 pandemic. The second is the rise of nativism and fundamentalism representing both ideological rigidity and political divisiveness. The CIES 2022 theme seeks to find ways to address these challenges by bringing forward new ideas with a sense of idealism in the work we do as educationists.

As we plan for CIES 2022, hoping to gather in person after a three-year gap, our theme is grounded in the context of **time**, **place**, and **possibility**. The context of time refers to the global pandemic that has upended the practice of education for learners in all environments. The context of place refers to Minneapolis, a city at the crossroads of global and local, a place of refuge for new arrivals to the U.S., but also at the forefront of racial justice protests since the 2020 murder of George Floyd. The context of possibility returns to the notion of ideas where at this time and in this place, we seek to foster dialogue, while anticipating gathering as practitioners, academics, and students - indeed, **a global community of idealists**.

From our conversations over the past few years focusing on *Education for Sustainability* (2019), *Education beyond the Human* (2020), and *Social Responsibility within Changing Contexts* (2021), it is more imperative than ever to look at the ways in which the current political, economic, social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and other forces intersect with education. There are existential fears that impact what we know to be true. Divisions on what constitutes science, knowledge, justice, and education threaten our humanity. Global movements aimed towards progressivism and transparency are undercut by entities that promote nativism and fundamentalism, further politicizing fear and loss. These powerful negative forces are coalescing. Education that fosters compliance and conformity makes it easier for them to take root and thrive. As a result, the planet is responding to a range of tensions. How will the CIES community address these strains?

As a community, we need to be aware of these pressures. However, we are also buoyed by our collaborations, engagements, knowledge, resources, and the breadth of our expertise and experiences. These past few years have taught us that even in the face of such circumstances, innovation and creativity can also thrive. CIES 2022 seeks to illuminate innovative and creative practices, and inform us on the rich and rigorous work being undertaken in an effort to open conversations that get us to boldly ask ourselves as a field: Why do we do things the way we do? What would happen if we threw caution to the wind and

asked ourselves – what do we really want to accomplish? What would education look like if we took risks and dared to dream? How do we nurture our idealism into reality?

How can we use our time at CIES to discuss the impact of these challenges and the ways in which we have and will continue to address them? How can we elevate our time together as a community to build our expertise and strength for greater solidarity in times of global shifts?

Our conference will be designed to explore these questions through variations on the theme. We are keen to foster and facilitate dialogue in one or more of the following central concepts:

Tectonic shifts – adapting to trauma in the moment.

- Empirical and theoretical approaches to address the pandemic and its impact on education, including the intensification of pre-existing trends.
- Initiatives and critiques from international, national, and local attitudes/actions to support students in the midst of COVID-19.
- Unintended consequences of COVID-19 on other traumatic/emergency situations and the impact on education.
- Voices of front-line teachers, parents, students and others involved in education during COVID-19.

Battling the currents – the influence of politics and economics on education.

- Making transparent the role of politics and economics on education and vice versa.
- Sharing tensions between where education is crafted and where education is being ‘done’.
- Understanding the role of decolonial, inclusive, anti-racist and pro-democracy movements in education.
- Learning and teaching from these movements and anticipating the impact on future generations.
- Framing the goals and outcomes of education and its influence on marginalized and minoritized communities and identities.

Orbits aligned – how place makes the difference.

- Educational accounts from spaces on global front-line challenges including climate change, religious fundamentalism, militarization, dictatorships, misogyny, nationalism, white supremacy, and threats to elections, well-being, and individual and community rights.
- Curricular innovations from contested spaces.
- Comparative explorations of history, policy, practice, and implementation of educational innovations.
- Theoretical and empirical approaches to research that examines the idea of space and place.

Beyond the horizon – reimagining *everything*.

- Playing with new ideas, theories, and ways of knowing in education and educational research.
- Imagining what can be done based on what has been learned and can be unlearned.
- Designing a future that is yet to be dreamed.
- Advocating for an educational future that speaks for all.

These ideas expand our understanding, but do not bind us to a single interpretation of the CIES 2022 theme. We invite you to think about the challenges we face, while coming prepared to share not just your ideas, but your idealism. We anticipate gathering together to address the complexity and the nuance of a very different world.

**More details will be shared in the coming months.
We look forward to gathering together in Minneapolis in 2022.**