

International UNESCO Chair Conference 2026

International Cooperation in Higher Education and TVET – bridging the gap between theory and practice of SDGs

30st of September – 2nd of October 2026

hosted by

TU Dortmund University and
German UNESCO Commission

UNESCO Chair on TVET and Competence Development for the Future of Work, TU Dortmund



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Draft agenda:

Day 1 – Wednesday, 30st of September:

09:00 Reception and registration

10:30 Opening ceremony:

tbn, City of Dortmund

tbn, Federal Foreign Office

Prof. Dr. Christoph Wulf, Vice President of German UNESCO Commission

Prof. Dr. Manfred Bayer, President of TU Dortmund University

Ms. Birgit Thomann, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)

11:15 Break and photo

11:30 Keynotes

Dr. Friedrich Hübler, Head of UNESCO UNEVOC, *Innovation and Excellence in TVET*

Dr. Wenxi Wu, UNESCO Chair on Digitalization in TVET, Shenzhen Polytechnic University

Prof. Dr. Mariele Evers, UNESCO Chair in Human-Water-Systems, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, *Transdisciplinary research - bridging the gap between theory and practice for sustainable water management*

tbn, West Ukrainian National University, Maintaining higher education in times of war

12:30 Poster Gallery and Lunch break

14:00 Workshops Day 1

16:45 Plenary: Wrap Up and outlook Day 2

19:00 Conference Dinner at Training Center Zeche Hanseemann, HWK Dortmund,
Barbarastrasse 7 | 44357 Dortmund

Day 2 – Thursday, 1st of October

09:00 Reception

9:30 Workshops Day 2

12:30 Poster Gallery and Lunch break

14:00 World Cafe (Clustered Workshops)

16:00 Summary and Outlook

18:00 Evening program

- *Guided Tour of St. Reinoldi Church (with organ music)*

- Theatre Tour and Public Ballet Rehearsal

Day 3 – Friday, 2nd of October

09:00 Cultural Excursions

- DASA World of Work Exhibition, Online: <https://www.dasa-dortmund.de/en/>
- Phoenix West Area (with "Phoenix Lumiere") Online: <https://www.phoenix-lumieres.com/en>
- Colliery Zollern (Industrial Heritage Icon) Online: <https://zeche-zollern.lwl.org/en/>
- German Football Museum: <https://www.fussballmuseum.de/en/start>
- Dortmund U & Union Quarter: <https://dortmunder-u.de/>
- Training Center of Chamber of Crafts in Dortmund (HWK Dortmund): <https://www.hwk-do.de/unsere-bildungszentren-ihre-karriere/bildungszentrum-ardeystrasse/>

12:00 Free time/Guided walk through Dortmund

14.00 German UNESCO-Chairholder Meeting

International Cooperation in Higher Education and TVET – bridging the gap between theory and praxis of SDGs

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Abstract volume (workshops)

Day 1 – Wednesday, 30st of September: 14:00 - 16:30 Parallel breakout sessions/workshops

WS 1.1: Urban development - Strategies for a sustainable transformation for the city and region of tomorrow

Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Christa Reicher, UNESCO Chair for Cultural Heritage and Urbanism, RWTH Aachen University, Germany

Dr.-Ing. Javier Ostos Prieto, UNESCO Chair for Cultural Heritage and Urbanism, RWTH Aachen University, Germany



Abstract: Cities and regions around the world are facing comprehensive transformation processes that must be managed in a way that balances change and continuity. The multiple crises – pandemics, floods, wars, etc. – and their consequences increase the need for a change of perspective in urban planning. Adapting to climate change, preventing rural exodus, managing resources and co-producing urban landscapes are among the key challenges in terms of resilient and inclusive spatial development. This can only be successful, if we manage to preserve the specific cultural heritage and the identity of places, cities and regions

The following questions will be discussed with reference to international concepts and projects:

- Which planning and management strategies lead to sustainable spatial development, and what can we learn from this?
- Which stakeholders need to be involved in the planning process, and in what form?
- What does an effective combination of formal and informal planning instruments look like?
- How can we resolve the conflict between preserving existing structures that create identity and the necessary transformation and innovation?

Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Christa Reicher is Professor for Urban Design and Director of the Institute for

Urban Design and European Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture at the RWTH Aachen University since 2018. From 2002 to 2018 she was the head of the department of Urban Design and Land Use Planning in the School for Spatial Planning at TU Dortmund University. After studying architecture at RWTH Aachen University and ETH Zurich, she worked in various international planning offices and founded the planning office RHA REICHER HAASE ASSOZIIERTE in 1993, based in Aachen, Dortmund and Vianden (Luxembourg), which is active internationally.

From 2010 to 2016 she was chairperson of the Scientific Board of the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development. Since 2014 she has been speaker of the Graduate School "Energy Efficiency in the Quarter", an interdisciplinary PhD college in which more than 20 doctoral students conduct research on creative, technical and social topics relating to the future of the city and the neighbourhood.

She is a member of the International Building Exhibition (IBA)-Expert Council of the Federal Ministry and Co-chair of the Sustainable Building Commission (KNBau) of the Federal Environment Agency. Since 2020, she is shaping the spatial transformation process of the lignite region Rhenish Revier.

Her research focuses on sustainable urban development, urban design, transformation processes, and spatial planning. She advises numerous municipalities and institutions on urban development and planning culture. Her work combines academic excellence with practice-oriented planning strategies for livable cities.

Dr.-Ing. Javier Ostos Prieto, Architect (2017) by Seville University. Master in Architecture and Historical Heritage (2018) and Master in Urbanism, Planning and Urban Design (2020) by Seville University. Doctor in Architecture by Seville University and Doktor der Ingenieurwissenschaften by RWTH Aachen University (2024). Joint Thesis Agreement between the University of Seville and the RWTH Aachen University. Currently Research Associate of the Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture of the RWTH Aachen University, Germany; member of the teaching and coordination team of the Master Transforming City Regions and coordinator of the UNESCO Chair Cultural Heritage and Urbanism (2024-present).

He is working at the project 'Built and Lived Environment' at the RWTH Aachen University. He has also been part of the team of the project "Identification of Values and Heritage Impact Assessment in the surroundings of the Monumental Complex of the Alhambra and the Generalife in Granada" for the Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife (2022). Research stay at the RWTH Aachen University, Germany, at the Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism (2021-2023) with a DAAD Scholarship by the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst. He has also participated in numerous conferences and articles in journals related to his research. It is focused on the study of the monastic system from an architectural, heritage and urban planning perspective across Andalusia, North-Rhine Westphalia and Europe.

WS 1.2: Human–Forest–Water Linkages: Towards Sustainable and Resilient Socio-Ecological Systems

Dr. Pinar Pamukcu Albers, UNESCO Chair in Human-Water-Systems, University of Bonn

Dr. Mingfang Zhang, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China

Prof. Dr. Mariele Evers, UNESCO Chair in Human-Water-Systems, University of Bonn



Abstract: This joint workshop of the UNESCO Chair in Human-Water-Systems and the IUFRO Task Force on the Forest-Water-Livelihood-Governance Nexus will examine the dynamic linkages between forests, water, and human societies under accelerating environmental change. The workshop will explore how forest ecosystems regulate water quality and quantity, influence hydrological processes, and shape local and regional climate conditions, as well as how these biophysical interactions affect livelihoods, wellbeing, and socio-ecological resilience.

A central focus is the integration of scientific research with participatory approaches and local knowledge to better understand forest–water–human systems. Discussions will address how governance arrangements, land-use practices, and community perspectives interact with ecological processes; how adaptive strategies can be strengthened under increasing climate variability; and how forest–water research can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those addressing water security, ecosystem health, and climate resilience.

The workshop will address the following key research questions: (1) How do forest ecosystems influence water quality and quantity, water regulation, and climate, and how do these interactions affect human wellbeing? (2) How can participatory approaches and local knowledge improve understanding and management of forest–water–human systems? (3) How can research and practice on these linkages support progress toward the SDGs and strengthen climate resilience, especially regarding water security?

By bringing together researchers and practitioners, the workshop aims to identify key knowledge gaps, methodological advances, and opportunities for collaboration across regions and disciplines. The outcomes will inform future joint activities, such as policy-oriented outputs and coordinated research efforts.

Programme Workflow

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Keynote Inputs: Forest–Water–Human Systems
3. Short Thematic and Regional Case Study Inputs
4. Interactive Group Discussion: Knowledge Gaps, Synergies, Opportunities
5. Synthesis and Plenary Discussion
6. Next Steps: Joint Outputs and Future Collaboration

Dr. Pinar Pamukcu Albers is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Bonn, working on ecohydrological systems with a focus on feedbacks between biophysical and hydrological

processes, forest hydrology, ecosystem services, and hydro-meteorological extremes. She coordinates the UNESCO Chair in Human-Water-Systems. In addition, she serves as a UNFCCC Technical Review Expert specializing in greenhouse gas inventories in the LULUCF sector.

Dr. Mingfang Zhang graduated from the University of British Columbia with a Ph.D. degree in Environmental Science. She is a full professor, and head of the Department of Environmental Science and Engineering at the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China. She studies ecohydrology with a focus on forest hydrological processes, ecohydrological modelling, water-carbon couplings, remote sensing hydrology, and forest landscape restoration and management.

Prof. Dr. Mariele Evers is a full professor and head of the Ecohydrology and Water Resources Management Research Group at the University of Bonn. Since 2021, she has held the UNESCO Chair on Human-Water-Systems. Her research focuses on water resources management, hydrological extremes, disaster risk reduction, and climate–water–food interactions. Through the UNESCO Chair, she advances participatory approaches to basin management.

WS 1.3: Beyond the SDGs 2030 - which new SDGs 2050 for a more equal world?!

Prof. Dr. Silja Klepp, UNESCO Chair for Integrated Marine Science, Kiel University

Prof. Dr. Julius Heinicke, UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policies for the Arts and Transformation, University of Hildesheim

Avril Joffe, UNESCO Chair in Cultural Entrepreneurship and Policy at University of the Witwatersrand



As normative guidelines for greater sustainability, the SDGs have developed a global appeal. However, they were negotiated for a period ending in 2030. So what comes after that? The international meeting of the UNESCO Chair Network Germany 2026 in Dortmund is an appropriate venue for negotiating possible new SDGs in an inclusive manner based on diverse cultural worldviews. How can the SDGs contribute even more to socio-ecological justice? How could the often-criticised indicator system be aligned even more closely with a diverse global society characterised by inequality? Is an 18th SDG „Culture" needed as discussed on the work conference on cultural policy Mondiacult in Barcelona this year? The workshop will discuss how the SDGs can become even more inclusive and equitable and develop concrete proposals for what new SDGs for 2050 could look like.

Prof. Dr. Silja Klepp is a professor of human geography at Kiel University. She holds the UNESCO co-chair for Integrated Marine Science. Her research group focuses on human-environment relations in the Anthropocene, and her current research on climate change adaptation, coastal erosion, and

disaster governance integrates postcolonial perspectives and critical social theories. Silja's field research experience includes working in countries such as Cabo Verde, Kiribati, Vanuatu, New Zealand, Italy, Libya, Malta, and Zambia. She founded the transdisciplinary environmental justice network EnJust (www.enjust.net) together with colleagues. To achieve inclusive and creative ways of doing science, she incorporates transdisciplinary approaches and artistic research into her work.

Prof. Dr. Julius Heinicke is Professor of Cultural Policy and holds the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policies for the Arts and Transformation. Since April 2025, he has served as Dean of the Faculty. Julius Heinicke is a Visiting Professor at the University of Toronto in Canada and the University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia. He is currently leading several work packages in Horizon Europe research projects (IN SITU, D@rts, Intracomp) and, together with Wolfgang Schröer, the BMBF-funded project “Kulturelle Selbstversorgung: Das Recht junger Menschen auf kulturelle (Selbst)Bildung” (“Cultural Self-Provision: Young People's Right to Cultural (Self-)Education”). From 2017 to 2020, he was Professor of “Applied Cultural Studies” at Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts, where he also headed the Center for Science and Culture. Before that, he conducted research and taught at the Institute for Theatre Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. After studying Cultural and Theatre Studies / Cultural Communication, he completed his doctorate at Humboldt University of Berlin on theatre, art, and politics in Zimbabwe, supported by a scholarship from the Heinrich Böll Foundation.

Avril Joffe holds the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Entrepreneurship and Policy at the University of the Witwatersrand. She is the former Head and current Post Graduate Coordinator of the Cultural Policy and Management Department at the Wits School of Arts. Avril is an economic sociologist working at the intersection of academia and practice in fields such as culture in urban life, culture and the cultural economy in realizing a just and sustainable development, fairness in international cultural cooperation and the rights and status of artists and cultural professionals. Avril obtained her MPhil in Development Studies at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex University (1988) and has completed the Diploma in Education in the field of Higher Education (2019) and the Facilitating Online Course (2020) at Wits University. Her current research project considers the affordances of writing intensive post graduate courses in Cultural Policy and Management.

WS 1.4: TVET's contribution to social and technological sustainability

Prof. Hongjie Chen, Director of China Doctoral Education Research Center, Peking University, PR China

Prof. Dr. Junmin Li, Vocational Education with a Focus on Empirical VET Research, Osnabrück University; formerly UNESCO Chair on TVET and Competence Development for the Future of Work, TU Dortmund University (until 30.06.2026)



Abstract: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone for fostering both social equity and technological advancement in the pursuit of UNESCO sustainable development goals (Unesco-Unevoc, 2025).

The integration of sustainability principles into TVET curricula and institutional practices not only addresses pressing environmental challenges but also promotes social inclusion, gender equity, and access to quality education and employment opportunities. The contributions of this workshop bridge the gap between education and industry, individuals and communities to become active agents of change, fostering both social cohesion and technological progress.

Prof. Hongjie Chen Prof. is a distinguished professor at Peking University in China and chef-editor of the international journal *Vocation. Technology. Education*. His research field includes higher education in China and Germany. He has made many publications in German and Chinese higher education, vocational and applied education. In recent years, he has initiated the research on industrial technological culture and vocational education.

Dr. Junmin Li is a senior researcher at the UNESCO-Chair on TVET and Competence Development for the Future of Work at TU Dortmund University in Germany. She has extensive research experience in the field of international comparative vocational education and training, with a focus on Asia, Europe and the Anglo-Saxon regions. Her particular interests lie in the areas of policy transfer, design-based research, teaching and learning, and work-related learning.

WS 1.5: UNESCO's Practical Guide on the Integration of AI in TVET

TBD

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming industries worldwide. The global education sector has responded to AI's rise with growing policy attention and guidance. UNESCO has been at the forefront of this dialogue through the Beijing Consensus on Artificial Intelligence and Education (2019), the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021), Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research (2023), and AI Competency Frameworks for Teachers and Students (2024). These frameworks provide valuable direction for integrating AI into teaching and learning. However, TVET faces challenges that are distinct in nature and scale from those in general education. Recognizing this critical gap, Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg, Shenzhen Polytechnic University, and UNESCO-UNEVOC have developed a Practical Guide on the Integration of AI in TVET to help the TVET sector navigate its unique challenges. The guide is designed for a global audience of TVET policymakers, institutional leaders, and educators. It provides principles and practices for integrating AI across the various dimensions of TVET institutions, from curriculum development and pedagogical innovation to institutional management and industry partnership. This workshop will introduce the guide, offer participants an opportunity to discuss the proposed principles, and highlight innovative and promising practices on the integration of AI in TVET.

WS 1.6: Digital Literacy and Circular Economy

Prof. Dr. Christos Kalloniatis, Department of Cultural Technology and Communication, University of the Aegean

Prof. Dr. Alexandra Bounia, Department of Cultural Technology and Communication, University of the Aegean

Dr. Meike Schmidt-Gleim, UNESCO Chair for TVET and competence development for the future of work, TU Dortmund University



Abstract: This workshop explores the vital intersection between digital literacy and circular economy, highlighting the innovation that modern technologies bring to the circular economic model leading to new upskilling and re-skilling requirements for individuals as well as key domain stakeholders. Examining the new interdisciplinary field of digital deep tech driven circular economy is the main scope of this workshop. In more detail, this workshop seeks papers focusing on digital skills that enable circular strategies across all stages of production and consumption—product traceability, eco-design, supply chain transparency, waste management, and user behavior—and how these competencies can be cultivated across education, policy, and practice. The session emphasizes that digital literacy is not only a technical proficiency but a transformative competency—the capacity to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information with awareness of its ethical, social, and environmental impacts.

Prof. Dr. Christos Kalloniatis is a Professor and former Head of the Department of Cultural Technology and Communication at the University of the Aegean, and Director of the Privacy Engineering and Social Informatics (PrivaSI) laboratory. He is also the Managing Director and Board Member at Company for the Management and Exploitation of Assets of the University of the Aegean. He holds a PhD in Cultural Technology and Communication, an MSc in Computer Science from the University of Essex, and a BSc in Informatics. He serves as a member of the Board of the Hellenic Data Protection Authority and has previously held a board position at the Hellenic Authority for Communication Security and Privacy. His research focuses on the analysis and modeling of privacy and security requirements in AI, cloud-based, and cultural information systems, with special emphasis on forensic-enabled systems and Privacy Enhancing Technologies. He is an author of several refereed papers in international scientific journals and conferences and has served as a visiting professor in many European Institutions. Prior to his academic career he has served at various places on the Greek public sector including the North Aegean Region and Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and e-Governance. He has served as a member of various development and research projects.

Prof. Dr. Alexandra Bounia is Professor of Museology at the University of the Aegean (Greece). Her research interests focus on the history, theory and management of collections, museum

ethics, museum and cultural heritage sustainability, the role of museums in dealing with difficult and political issues. She has published in Greek and international journals and participates in national and international research projects. Among her most recent publications are: *The Political Museum: Power, Conflict and Identity in Cyprus* (co-authored with Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert) (2016, Routledge); *Museum Media(ting): Emerging Technologies and Difficult Heritage* (co-edited with Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert and Antigone Heraclidou) (2022, Berghahn), and *Emerging Technologies and Cultural Heritage* (co-edited with Despina Catapoti) (2021, Alexandria Publications, Athens, in Greek). Her edited volume entitled *The Ethics of Collecting Trauma* was published in 2025 by Routledge (co-edited with Andrea Witcomb). She has served as the Chair of ICOM Greece, and the Secretary of the Board for COMCOL (ICOM Committee on Contemporary Collecting).

WS 1.7: Doing Justice to the Past? Memory Politics and Education in Transnational Perspective

Prof. Dr. Johannes Drerup, Chair of Philosophy of Education and Educational Theory, TU Dortmund University

Dr. phil. Miguel Zulaica y Mugica, Chair of Philosophy of Education and Educational Theory, TU Dortmund University



Abstract: How should wars, colonialism, and imperialism be remembered in schools? What is an appropriate educational response to controversial historical monuments? How to resolve conflicts between different constructions of the past in public and academic debates about history education? What are the prospects of a universalist culture of remembrance in a world increasingly dominated by nationalist memory politics and revisionist attempts to rewrite history? These and related questions are currently discussed around the globe. How they are answered in public and academic debates depends on different sociopolitical and educational contexts as well as different memory cultures. This workshop brings together scholars who work at the intersection between history education, democratic education, and the politics of remembrance. Our discussion will focus on the contested relationships between different forms of memory politics, history education, and democratic education in (trans-)national and comparative perspectives.

Prof. Dr. Johannes Drerup is a professor of philosophy of education and educational theory at TU Dortmund, Germany and guest professor at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. His research interests include philosophy of education/educational theory, philosophy of childhood, and social, political and moral philosophy.

Dr. Miguel Zulaica y Mugica is a Postdoctoral Researcher in General Educational Research at TU Dortmund University. His work focuses on the philosophy of education, education for sustainable development (ESD/BNE), cultures of remembrance, and social and religion-related controversies in pedagogical contexts. Drawing on affect theory and qualitative reconstructive methods, he examines how social controversies emerge, are negotiated, and become pedagogically relevant in educational settings. He led the empirical qualitative research project Islam in Controversy, which forms the foundation of his ongoing research on social controversy, and co-directs an interdisciplinary research colloquium on religion-related controversies. He also designs pre- and in-service teacher education workshops on dealing with emotionally charged social controversies in schools.

Day 2 – Thursday, 1st of October: 09:30 – 12:30 Parallel breakout sessions/workshops

WS 2.1: Leadership for Holistic Implementation of Education for Sustainable Development in Schools and Universities

Prof. Dr. Daniel Fischer, UNESCO Chair in Higher Education for Sustainable Development, Leuphana Universität Lüneburg

Prof. Dr. Harald Hantke, UNESCO Chair in Higher Education for Sustainable Development Leuphana Universität Lüneburg



Abstract: The aspiration of SDG 4.7 is no less than to ensure that by 2030 all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. The holistic implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in all parts of an educational organization, from curriculum to operations to community relations, has been shown to be a key driver of student learning and engagement for sustainability. However, due to their comprehensive scope, the implementation of Whole Institution Approaches (WIA) to promote ESD poses several challenges that require effective leadership. Surprisingly, the role of leaders and different modes of leadership in advancing ESD to promote SDG 4.7 has been rather neglected by researchers and policy-makers in the past and only recently received growing attention. This workshop provides an overview of current research and practice in effective ESD-WIA leadership and presents three toolkits that have recently been developed for K-12 school education, higher education and TVET/vocational education. Participants will be invited to share their experiences and collectively reflect on the potentials of more focused leadership trainings for the effective implementation of ESD-WIAs to support SDG 4.7.

Prof. Dr. Daniel Fischer is professor of Sustainability Education and Communication at Leuphana University Lüneburg, where he also holds the UNESCO Chair in Higher Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). His research explores how more sustainable ways of living and meeting human needs can be facilitated in education, with a special emphasis on Teacher Education. His current projects are on learning assessment, transdisciplinary learning interventions and capacity building in ESD leadership.

Prof. Dr. Harald Hantke is juniorprofessor of Social Science Education and UNESCO Co-Chair in Higher Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at Leuphana University Lüneburg. The core of his work is to take an inter- and transdisciplinary look at the structures and conditions of political, economic and vocational didactics in the context of societal transformation processes.

With this background, he deals for example with sustainability and democracy education, curricular development as part of school development and handling of teachers and learners with complexities, uncertainties and ambiguities.

WS 2.2: Virtual Reality in Competence Development for SDGs Virtual Reality for an SDG-related Competence Development

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Heribert Nacken, UNESCO Chair on Hydrological Change and Water Resources Management, RWTH Aachen

M.Sc. Florian Balmes, UNESCO Chair on Hydrological Change and Water Resources Management, RWTH Aachen



Abstract: How can we use avatar-based teaching and learning in our university teaching in a targeted manner to train specific skill?

In this workshop, we will show a few examples and then engage in an active working phase with all participants. Teams of two or three people will be given the task of describing a VR scenario that they would use for a very specific skill transfer in the SDG area.

There are no limits to the brainstorming process. Each group will describe the results as they see fit, in the form of an (AI-generated) image, a hand-drawn sketch with explanations, a mind map, or whatever their intuition dictates.

Prof. Dr. Heribert Nacken has been Professor of Engineering Hydrology and Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair in Hydrological Change and Water Resources Management at RWTH Aachen University since 2001. He is the Rector's Delegate for Digital Transformation in Teaching; in this role, he has played a key role in shaping the university's digitalisation strategy and has initiated numerous innovative teaching projects.

M.Sc. Florian Balmes has been a research assistant at the UNESCO Chair in Hydrological Change and Water Resources Management at RWTH Aachen University since 2022. His research focus lie in the water-energy-food nexus and VR-based learning methods. As a project manager, he works on international projects related to sustainability, knowledge transfer, and digital education formats such as open educational resources.

WS 2.3: TVET's contribution to social and technological sustainability

Prof. Hongjie Chen, Director of China Doctoral Education Research Center, Peking University, PR China

Prof. Dr. Junmin Li, Vocational Education with a Focus on Empirical VET Research, Osnabrück University; formerly UNESCO Chair on TVET and Competence Development for the Future of Work, TU Dortmund University (until 30.06.2026)



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Prof. Hongjie Chen Prof. is a distinguished professor at Peking University in China and chef-editor of the international journal Vocation. Technology. Education. His research field includes higher education in China and Germany. He has made many publications in German and Chinese higher education, vocational and applied education. In recent years, he has initiated the research on industrial technological culture and vocational education.

Dr. Junmin Li is a senior researcher at the UNESCO-Chair on TVET and Competence Development for the Future of Work at TU Dortmund University in Germany. She has extensive research experience in the field of international comparative vocational education and training, with a focus on Asia, Europe and the Anglo-Saxon regions. Her particular interests lie in the areas of policy transfer, design-based research, teaching and learning, and work-related learning.

WS 2.4: Potential of modern digital Geomedia to foster Sustainable Development

Prof. Dr. Alexander Siegmund, UNESCO Chair on Observation and Education of World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve, Heidelberg University of Education

Prof. Camilo del Rio, PhD, Atacama Desert Centre & Institute for Geography, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile



Abstract: Modern digital geomedia – from remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS) to mobile geotools – plays a crucial role in the effective implementation of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Satellite-based Earth observation now provides precise, scalable information on topics such as land-use change, climate change, biodiversity, resource consumption, and urbanization, and is even explicitly named as a key measurement tool in numerous SDG indicators. GIS-based analyses help decision-makers visualize complex spatial relationships, model scenarios, and guide sustainable planning processes based on evidence. Mobile geo-apps and participatory mapping tools also enable the active involvement of local communities, real-time data collection, and greater transparency in monitoring processes. Together, these technologies open up new avenues for precisely assessing progress toward achieving sustainability goals such as climate resilience, sustainable urban development, food security, and the protection of natural habitats, and for deriving targeted measures. The workshop will present innovative concepts and concrete applications of digital geomedia, discuss them critically, and assess their potential to promote a sustainable future.

WS 2.5: Cultural Entrepreneurship and Policy

Prof. Dr. Christine Volkmann, UNESCO Chair in Entrepreneurship and Intercultural Management, Bergische Universität Wuppertal

Prof. Dr. Julius Heinicke, UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policies for the Arts and Transformation, Universität Hildesheim



Abstract: Cultural Entrepreneurship and Policy in the Context of the SDGs and Beyond
Guiding research question: How can the co-evolution of cultural policy frameworks and cultural entrepreneurship practices be conceptualized and fostered as a driver of innovation, sustainable development, and societal transformation within and beyond the SDG framework?

This workshop investigates the interrelations between cultural entrepreneurship and cultural policy as co-evolving forces in driving innovation, sustainable development and societal transformation. Situated within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the session examines how cultural and creative entrepreneurs operate within,

respond to, and actively shape policy environments that promote inclusion, diversity, and resilience.

Particular attention will be given to the reciprocal relationship between cultural entrepreneurial capacity for action and political framework conditions. While effective cultural policies can create enabling conditions for cultural entrepreneurial innovation, entrepreneurial practices themselves can inform, challenge, and renew policy agendas. Through a transdisciplinary and dialogic approach, the workshop will explore how cultural agency, policy design, and creative experimentation intersect in shaping sustainable futures and fostering global citizenship.

Moving beyond the SDG framework, participants will reflect on emerging paradigms that link cultural entrepreneurship with entrepreneurship policy, intercultural dialogue, and systemic transformation. Interactive discussions and case-based reflections will aim to identify policy models and entrepreneurial strategies that effectively enhance innovation, inclusion, and cultural resilience across diverse contexts.

Prof. Dr. Christine Volkmann holds the UNESCO Chair for Entrepreneurship and Intercultural Management at the University of Wuppertal. Since 2008, she has been shaping research and teaching at the Schumpeter School of Business and Economics, with a focus on entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainable development. She founded the Jackstädt Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Research, the Startup Center at the University of Wuppertal and initiated the network Women Entrepreneurs in Science. As an expert, she advises regional, national and international organizations such as UNESCO, the EU, and the World Economic Forum. Her current research focuses on sustainable and social entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurship, cultural entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Prof. Dr. Julius Heinicke is Professor of Cultural Policy and holds the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policies for the Arts and Transformation. Since April 2025, he has served as Dean of the Faculty. Julius Heinicke is a Visiting Professor at the University of Toronto in Canada and the University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia. He is currently leading several work packages in Horizon Europe research projects (IN SITU, D@rts, Intracomp) and, together with Wolfgang Schröer, the BMBF-funded project “Kulturelle Selbstversorgung: Das Recht junger Menschen auf kulturelle (Selbst)Bildung” (“Cultural Self-Provision: Young People’s Right to Cultural (Self-)Education”). From 2017 to 2020, he was Professor of “Applied Cultural Studies” at Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts, where he also headed the Center for Science and Culture. Before that, he conducted research and taught at the Institute for Theatre Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. After studying Cultural and Theatre Studies / Cultural Communication, he completed his doctorate at Humboldt University of Berlin on theatre, art, and politics in Zimbabwe, supported by a scholarship from the Heinrich Böll Foundation.

WS 2.6: Limits of Change? - Industrial Heritage between preservation and sustainable development

Friederike Hansell, World Heritage Focal Point, Germany

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Michael Kloos, UNESCO Chair on Historic Urban Landscapes and Heritage Impact Assessments, Universität Wiesbaden



Abstract: With regard to Agenda 2030 and the implementation of the SDGs, the UNESCO World Heritage Convention requires not only to preserve the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity UNESCO World Heritage properties, but also to balance this with strategies for sustainable development. In this context, industrial World Heritage properties cause special challenges, inter alia due to their sheer size and their embedding in living urban agglomerations. Using the UNESCO World Heritage property Zollverein Coalmine Complex – one of the most iconic industrial heritage sites of the Ruhrgebiet and listed as UNESCO World Heritage site since 2001 -- as a case study, this workshop will discuss how to identify values and attributes of such complex sites, how to assess impacts on their integrity, and how to use these steps as a baseline for sustainable development.

Friederike Hansell holds a Magister Artium in Pre- and Early History, Ethnology and Classical Archaeology and an MA in World Heritage Studies. She worked as a Research Assistant in the World Heritage Project Group “Erzgebirge Mining Region” at the Institute for Industrial Archaeology, History of Science and Technology, TU Bergakademie Freiberg (2010–2011). Between 2015 and 2020, she served as the Saxon Focal Point for World Heritage on behalf of the Saxon Ministry of the Interior/Regional Development, and from 2010 to 2019 she was project officer for the Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region World Heritage nomination. She subsequently worked as World Heritage Desk Officer at the Saxon State Office for the Conservation of Monuments. Since 2022, she has been the German Focal Point for World Heritage at the Federal Foreign Office.

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Michael Kloos studied architecture and urban planning at Karlsruhe University, Germany. He focuses his work on the interface between preservation and sustainable development of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, with a focus on Management Plans and Heritage Impact Assessments. Since 2016, Michael runs his office michael kloos planning and heritage consultancy in Aachen, Germany and he holds the professorship for Preservation and Sustainable Development of Cultural and Historic Urban Landscapes at RheinMain University of Applied Sciences, Wiesbaden, Germany. Since 2022 he is Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair of Historic Urban Landscapes and Heritage Impact Assessments.

WS 2.7: Work-integrated Learning and Competence Development - the Future of Work and Learning?

Prof. Dr. Philipp Grollmann, Chair on Education in the context of Work and Occupation, TU Dortmund University

Prof. Dr. Adeline Goh Yuen Sze, Sultan Hassanah Bolkiah Institute of Education, Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Dr. Anne Busian, UNESCO Chair on TVET and Competence Development for the Future of Work, TU Dortmund University



Abstract: Informal learning is highly valued internationally and in certain economic sectors, and its importance is rapidly increasing globally against the backdrop of current disruptive technological developments. In the context of vocational training and higher education, the workplace is of central importance as a place for experiential learning. According to research, experiential learning through work activities in a work organisation that promotes learning and skills development is responsible for a large part of individual skills development. Countries such as Germany have a wealth of experience in the targeted use of the workplace for skills development processes, for example through work-integrated learning formats such as work and learning tasks, as well as conceptually compatible standards and work-oriented teaching methods in formal education. However, they have very little tradition and few practical approaches to validating and recognising informal learning outcomes in existing qualification profiles.

The workshop aims to highlight future-oriented development perspectives, discuss the use of the workplace in the context of disruptive technologies such as digitalisation and AI, as well as the conditions conducive to learning in workplace design and their connection to validation procedures.

Prof. Dr. Philipp Grollmann is Professor for Education Science in the Context of Work and Occupations at Technische Universität Dortmund and a leading expert in vocational education and training (VET). His research focuses on comparative approaches to work-based learning, apprenticeships and the development of VET systems and professional practice of teachers and trainers. He has more than two decades of experience in research, teaching, and policy advisory roles. As former Senior Researcher at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), he led international comparative research and worked on the improvement of international reporting in TVET. He has collaborated with ETF, Cedefop, the ILO, and OECD on future skills strategies and the Europeanization of VET systems. Among his contributions are key studies by Cedefop and ETF on future scenarios for VET. Dr. Grollmann holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Bremen (summa cum laude) and a diploma in education from the University of Regensburg. He is co-editor of the International Handbook on Vocational Education and

Training and has taught at Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology among others.

Prof. Dr. Adeline Goh Yuen Sze, Information will follow.

Dr. Anne Busian: After finishing a dual study programme in Business Administration, Dr. Anne Busian worked as an in-company trainer and subsequently qualified as a TVET teacher. Since 1998, she has held various academic positions in vocational pedagogy at TU Dortmund University and at FernUniversität Hagen, including interim professorships, long-term research projects and reform activities in TVET Teacher Training. She has been a Senior Researcher and Lecturer (Akademische Oberrätin) for many years at the UNESCO Chair on TVET and Competence Development for the Future of Work at TU Dortmund University, with research interests in Vocational Didactics, Teacher Training and TVET Systems.