



## **Call for applications to participate: Workshop on educational dialogue: Moving thinking forward**

**Cambridge, Sept. 1-3, 2025**

The field of educational dialogue has rapidly expanded over the last 20 years. Its innovative combinations of psychological, ethical, developmental, philosophical, linguistic and technological theories have created valuable new perspectives on productive communication for learning and social interaction. We as a field have created a wealth of research that has enabled the development and validation of many evidence-based pedagogical tools and professional development across a broad range of educational contexts.

Dialogic theory and practice are increasingly relevant to the rapidly-escalating and polarising crises – political, environmental and economic – that pose a global threat to our societies, and young people in particular. In addition to demonstrating its success in improving educational achievement against traditionally-valued measures, this field is distinctly placed to connect such achievements to the wider educational, cultural and political issues and aims that education can no longer afford to segregate or deprioritise. Central to this is the assertion that people’s differences in knowledge, understanding and belief, and their commitment to understand, reconcile and reconsider these differences together, are foundational to learning and living together. The field itself contains a healthy diversity of disciplinary, methodological and ideological stances that promote ongoing critical refinement.

Nevertheless, many challenges and questions remain. For example, how can we promote teacher learning and enactment of dialogic teaching in a context of increasingly authoritarian and divisive voices in education and wider society, focus on standards and test-driven accountability, and a narrowing of teacher professionalism? Who benefits more and less from dialogic education and what are the implications for equity? What is the significance for dialogic education of the interaction of human, nonhuman and hybrid participants in learning?

This interactive workshop will facilitate in-depth discussions among experienced and early career researchers, in both whole group plenary sessions and themed working groups. In these breakout workshop sessions, we will work on concrete activities, using multimodal artifacts and digital tools, with the goal of producing tangible outputs. We take an inquiry stance with an intention to learn together, to explore what we do know already and what questions remain. We aim to move the field forward in a way that is harder to do within a conventional conference format. We do not need to spell out to this community the importance of dialogue in our research and practice. By coming together before, during and beyond the workshop, we hope to explore synergies and common challenges.

## *Focus, formats and activities*

The workshop will be organized by three thematic strands and attendees will choose one:

1. The 'dialogic pedagogy/professional learning strand' will be led by [Professor Sarah Michaels](#), Clark University, and [Professor Catherine O'Connor](#), Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development, USA.
2. The 'dialogic communities, participation and equity strand' will be led by [Dr Andrea English](#), University of Edinburgh, Scotland
3. The 'educational dialogue alongside AI strand' will be led by [Professor Sten Ludvigsen](#) and [Professor Ingvill Rasmussen](#), University of Oslo, Norway

The workshop will be limited to a maximum of 60 delegates in order to support focused working and in-depth discussion. Selection will be based on applicants' best fit to each strand, aiming for a rough balance of numbers in the strand working groups and diversity amongst the delegates – in terms of perspectives and experience, geography, career stage, gender balance. Contributions might focus on theory and philosophy of education or derive from empirical research. Participants with current or recent experience as educational practitioners are warmly welcomed to apply (please indicate this in your application statement). As places are limited and likely to be over-subscribed, all delegates will be expected to attend all 3 days in full and no exceptions can be made.

For those that require a presentation opportunity in order to secure funding, an option of providing a 5-minute presentation (including work in progress or emerging new perspectives on issues in the field) within a (strand-specific) mini roundtable is available. Other formats of interaction will include:

- Keynote presentations in each thematic area;
- Hands-on workshops involving working groups in each strand (about half of the schedule);
- Cross-strand plenary and group sharing activities.

Delegates will be expected to engage and collaborate with each other using online technologies both before and after the face-to-face workshop, including commenting on others' reflective statements so as to sustain momentum and deliver on intentions. This will include engaging in asynchronous online discussion during August 2025, commenting on others' application statements, and beginning to identify synergies and differences.

We have strong intentions that there will be concrete outcomes from the workshop, such as articles and grant proposals, and are in negotiation around a journal special issue - with details tbc.

## *Costs*

The workshop fee will be £250 including refreshments and lunches for 3 days, and one formal dinner. A reduced fee of £195 will apply to doctoral students. We can offer 3 fee waivers for those who have no access to other funding, prioritising those based in low- and middle-income countries. (Recipients will still need to cover their own travel, accommodation and other subsistence not included in the fee.) The workshop is sponsored by the Brigham Young University McKay School of Education and the University of Cambridge.

## How to apply?

Each individual applicant should provide a 500-700-word (critical) reflective statement giving equal weight (250-350 words each) to the following:

1. introducing your own work and research interests and experience in the field of educational dialogue (this can extend beyond the strand of interest), including 1-2 sentences on why you want to attend this workshop;
2. responding to the following prompts according to the strand you apply to join.

Applicants are encouraged to refer to key theories, authors and evidence as appropriate - but need not include full references.

You will also be asked to suggest up to 5 keywords to describe your research interests in your chosen strand area.

### Strand 1: Dialogic pedagogy/professional learning

This strand focuses on engagement in dialogic pedagogy and professional learning dialogues, including challenges at the micro-classroom level, within peer communities of learning, and at scale.

Please choose **one or two of these prompts** to address:

1. In your work supporting dialogic teaching, what specific tools, protocols, coding schemes, or other analytic or theoretical frameworks have you used, developed, or adapted? Please describe one that you'd be willing to share and discuss with colleagues at the workshop.
2. Drawing on your experience, what do you see as the key challenges and opportunities in supporting teachers to develop dialogic practices in their classrooms? Please provide a brief but specific example that illustrates these tensions.
3. What aspects of teacher development through dialogue do you find most puzzling or intriguing? What questions do you hope to explore with colleagues at this conference?

### Strand 2: Dialogic communities, participation and equity

This strand seeks to further understanding of teaching, learning and teacher-learner/learner-learner relationships that foster equitable participation in dialogic classroom communities.

Please respond to **either prompt 1 OR 2, AND prompt 3**:

1. What key concepts, ideas or practices relating to *teaching that fosters equitable participation in educational dialogue* are you identifying, highlighting or developing in your research?
2. What key concepts, ideas or practices relating to *learner voice, learner agency and/or the nature of learner participation in dialogic learning communities* are you identifying, highlighting or developing in your research?
3. Considering the rapid changes in society relating to politics, climate crisis and technology, what do you view as a central issue impacting teachers' ability to support equitable participation in educational dialogue, and how does this link to your research?

### Strand 3: Dialogue alongside Artificial Intelligence

This strand explores the intersection of educational dialogue with AI technologies, examining both their potential to enhance and disrupt dialogue-based learning and teaching practices and the need for further theoretical and conceptual development.

Please choose **one or two of these prompts** to address:

1. Drawing on your knowledge from research or experiences of teaching, what implications have you experienced that AI tools and infrastructures have on educational dialogues within research or practice?
2. What potential opportunities or challenges do AI tools and infrastructures present for learning through and about dialogue?
3. Do we need to rework the theoretical and conceptual frameworks we use to understand educational dialogues in the age of AI? Please discuss this and suggest ideas you are exploring in your research or pedagogy.

Applications should be submitted via the form [here](#) no later than **March 14, 2025** (midnight GMT)

#### *Timeline:*

- Notification of results of selection process: April 30
- Deadline for registration and payment: June 6
- Time window for commenting on statements and further prompts online: 4-17 August

Please note that application signifies a willingness to engage with other participants' perspectives both before and after the workshop, including asynchronously online during August; do ensure you can make this commitment before submitting your application! We hope this will be an ongoing dialogue and productive working group rather than a one-off event.

Enquiries can be addressed to our doctoral student assistant, Yllen Charles at [nyc96@student.byu.edu](mailto:nyc96@student.byu.edu).

#### *Organising Committee:*

Sara Hennessy, Rupert Higham, Bryant Jensen, Adam Lefstein and Alison Twiner