CALL FOR ABSTRACTS/PAPERS

The **2nd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE of the JOURNAL SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA "*REINVENTING EDUCATION*"** will be hosted online **June 3 through 5 2021**, by **Scuola Democratica, Centro Interuniversitario per la Ricerca Didattica** (University of Cagliari and University of Sassari), **Il Mulino**. The challenges posed by the contemporary world have long required a rethinking of educational concepts, policies, and practices. The question about education 'for what' as well as 'how' and 'for whom' has become unavoidable and yet it largely remained elusive due to a tenacious attachment to the ideas and routines of the past which are now far off the radical transformations required of educational systems. Scenarios, reflections, and practices fostering the possibility of change towards the reinvention of the educational field as a driver of more general and global changes are centerstage topics at the Conference and will have a multidisciplinary approach from experts from different disciplinary communities, including sociology, pedagogy, psychology, economics, architecture, political science, etc. We hope with this opportunity to confirm the participation obtained at the first edition of the conference. Organizers, promoters and partners of the Conference wish to invite educators, teachers, researchers, scholars, academics, scientists, professionals, experts and policy makers to join the conversation and bring the disciplines towards a more integrated set of alliances by:
- promoting a trans and inter disciplinary discussion on urgent topics;
- fostering debates among experts and professionals;
- diffusing research findings all over international scientific networks and practitioners' mainstreams;
- launching further strategies and networking alliances on local, national and international scale;
- providing a new space for debate and evidence to educational policies.

We invite you to submit ABSTRACT/PAPER for your presentation at the **Panel session**:

C.3 NETWORKS OF PRACTICE: INFORMAL LEARNING AND THE 'EMPLOYABILITY' POLICY/CURRICULUM DISCOURSE IN STEM

<u>Convenors</u>
Simon Leonard (University of South Australia); Manuela Repetto (Università degli Studi di Torino)

<u>Keywords</u>
Skills; Employability; STEM; Practice theory; Crisis

This century has seen many parts of the curriculum recast through an employability framework. What was once 'the sciences' for example has increasingly become 'STEM' in many parts of the world. Notionally an acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, the STEM agenda is not simply an alignment of subjects. Rather, it is an agenda that explicitly, and perhaps primarily, seeks to ensure a supply of people trained in the technical and technological skills required in certain parts of the economy — for the so-called 'industry 4.0'. STEM has driven significant organisational and pedagogical transformation at all levels of education including a greater emphasis on interdisciplinary problem-based learning and, notably, an increased use of informal or semi-formal networks for 'real-world' learning in the context of industry. STEM makes intuitive sense to educators. The silos of 'science', 'mathematics' and so on are problematic and calls for better connections between them are long standing. Equally, calls to make the real-world use of scientific/technical knowledge are not new. STEM has also clearly offered a context for pedagogical and curriculum innovation that is deeply informed by ongoing research into the science of human learning.

On the other hand, the critique of approaching the largely uncontroversial curriculum design outcomes through the employability discourse that accompanies STEM is now growing with respect to both discursive and organisation change. Zheng (2019), for example, has argued that the STEM agenda has served to govern ways of thinking and feeling about techno-scientific change and has anchored a communal sense of 'crisis' on a shortage of skills needed by particular industries — typically those dominated by large corporations — in a competitive global market. This 'skills crisis' discourse has displaced previous discourses highlighting social-environmental crises such a shortage of resources on a finite earth and anthropogenic climate change, which saw efforts in scientific curriculum development tend to cluster around ideas of sustainability rather than employment. Extending this critique, scholars such as Morales-Doyle and Gutstein (2019), working in the context of the United States, have shown how STEM has served the interests of racialised capital by providing cover for false claims of fairness in educational provision and by racially stratifying the workforce. STEM, they argue, prioritises corporate interests over and above students' capacity to shape their community and their world.

New theory is needed to support curriculum design that is able to navigate the tensions created by the employability framework. This panel will bring together papers discussing how theories of practice

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(Kemmis, 2019) may support curriculum that seeks to both take full advantage of the value of informal links and networks that the STEM agenda has opened up between formal education and the 'real-world', while acknowledging the dangers to democratic education that the emphasis on employability implicit within agendas such as STEM create. We particularly seek papers reporting on research into the implementation of networked, informal or semi-formal STEM curriculum that effectively balances the development of skills with the development of the capacity of students to shape their world within and beyond the workplace.

References

Kemmis, S. (2019). A practice sensibility : An invitation to the theory of practice architectures. Singapore: Springer Singapore : Imprint: Springer.

Morales-Doyle, D., & Gutstein, E. R. (2019). Racial capitalism and stem education in chicago public schools. Race Ethnicity and Education, 22(4), 525-544. doi:10.1080/13613324.2019.1592840.

Zheng, L. (2019). A performative history of stem crisis discourse: The co-constitution of crisis sensibility and systems analysis around 1970. Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 1-16. doi:10.1080/01596306.2019.1637332

ABSTRACTS/PAPERS SUBMISSION

HOW TO SUBMIT

ABSTRACTS/PAPERS should be submitted by **April 4, 2021** (**check Conference Dates and Deadlines**). ABSTRACTS/PAPERS should be submitted via the **pre-conference tool**.

Please do not submit your ABSTRACT/PAPER by e-mailing it to the Convenor(s) of the Panel session you chose. Convenor(s) will receive submitted ABSTRACTS/PAPERS automatically from the **pre-conference tool** and they are going to reject ABSTRACT/PAPER submitted to their e-mail addresses.

Language for ABSTRACTS/PAPERS is English.
You can submit an ABSTRACT or in case you prefer a PAPER. Be careful: **DO NOT SUBMIT BOTH ABSTRACT AND PAPER**. EITHER YOU SUBMIT THE FORMER OR THE LATTER.

ABSTRACT/PAPER should include:
1. Title (limited to 20 words in UPPER CASE)
2. Author's name and surname, institution, and email address
3. Five keywords
4. ABSTRACT's text (limited to 500 words). In case you decide for the PAPER, text will be 3.500 words min. 5.000 words max. In the submission text, please write: ABSTRACT or PAPER after the title. Example: FAMILY BACKGROUNDS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS. A CASE STUDY (PAPER).

The Conference formula is: **1 SUBMISSION = 1 FEE** (**check FEES** webpage)
It is possible to submit a maximum of 2 ABSTRACTS/PAPERS per person (double submission must concern 2 different Panel Sessions). Each ABSTRACT/PAPER is eligible if it is backed by an **APP FEE**.
Co-authors who do not submit ABSTRACT/PAPER as first author may access to the Conference via the discounted P FEE (**check FEES** webpage).
The submitting and presenting author must be listed as the first author in the **pre-conference tool**. Please note that the submitting author will receive all correspondence about the ABSTRACT/PAPER. Therefore, we recommend that the submitting author details that are entered are the same details as those of the presenting author.

ABSTRACTS/PAPERS may not be edited/uploaded after final submission.

Before you submit, please make sure the following requirements are met:
- ABSTRACT/PAPER must be allocated to a specific Panel session. Therefore, you must select the proper Panel when submitting. For a complete listing of Panel sessions please **click here**.
- If possible, write your ABSTRACT/PAPER highlighting methods, outcomes, references. Word count is affected by inclusion of references.
- Convenors and the Scientific Committee will review all submitted ABSTRACTS/PAPERS. Notification regarding acceptance and scheduling will be sent to the submitting author via the **pre-conference tool**.

Please note, if your ABSTRACT/PAPER is accepted, you will be permitted a maximum of 20 minutes for oral presentation.

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