

Save the date: 2022 ESREA Spring School for Doctoral Students Preliminary Information

We are delighted to announce an ESREA Klagenfurt Research Retreat which will look at: *Research on Adult Education and Transformation: Mapping Possibilities and Embracing Complexity*. This will take place between 16th of May to 20th of May 2022 at *Universität Klagenfurt*, Austria in collaboration with the Maynooth University, Ireland and *Universität Hagen*, Germany.

The learning space/place

The spring school on *Adult Education and Transformation* is planned as a research retreat. This comprises moments of intensive scholarly exchange, discussion and reflection on one's own research and places of retreat to write and contemplate, and it provides opportunities for networking and conversation. *Universität Klagenfurt* is a green, sustainable campus in leafy surroundings, in close proximity to the lake *Wörthersee*, parks and promenades.

The aim of the Retreat: Supporting doctoral students

The purpose of ESREA Seasonal Schools is to support doctoral and early career researchers by create space and time for dialogue with experienced researchers. The Klagenfurt Research Retreat aims to create a convivial space for, reflection and discussion on the transformative character (in *statu nascendi*, in progress and/or as result) of being, living, working and learning as adults in interaction with society, environment and politics over the lifespan. By doing so we hope to create opportunities for collaboration and networking and to ensure doctoral researcher can build on existing debates and scholarship in the field of adult education.

The topic and focus of the Retreat

We are experiencing unprecedented disruption in our lives at the moment. It is worth bearing in mind in this period of flux that Adult Education was constituted by and as a response to complex and often highly disruptive social modernisation processes. Changes in the life course, shifts in employment and career paths, alterations in family structures and intimate relationships, the democratisation of everyday life, the corrosion of traditional patterns of community interaction and political struggles for equality have been crucial to the formation of a complex and varied field of Adult Education as we know it. As a result, transformation on varying levels and scales has long been a defining theme for both researchers and practitioners with a particularly strong emphasis on empowerment and emancipation. It covers learning and educational processes of adults in the fields of general, political and cultural education, as well

as vocational education and training, work-based learning, and job-related further education, or professional development, and university continuing education. Adult Education and Learning is both organised in institutions and takes place as informal learning (planned educational work and *free* learning related to life-world, workplace and social contexts). Adult Education itself is subject to transformation processes while aiming to initiate or support individual and collective processes of change/transformation.

The Klagenfurt Research Retreat wishes to take this theme to explore how adult education can actively and collectively shape the future towards a more sustainable society and just society. In this way the retreat will seek to create a reflective space which is strongly rooted in the adult education research field and to take time for doctoral students to discuss issues which have been a mainstay of ESREA's various network conferences and Triennial events.

The doctoral forum which is designed for using diverse methodologies and theoretical perspectives interested in critical reflection on the theme of transformation as it relates to adult education and learning. We invite researchers to approach this in an open way and welcome submissions which take up this broad theme to explore transformation and adult education in relation to work, economic change, digitisation, politics, human rights, gender, social inequalities, migration, and of course the relationship between humans and the environment. We have formulated three overarching questions that can help in looking at research projects collectively:

- How can these interrelations and educational, social, demographic, political, environmental etc. transformations be effectively researched?
- Which (learning) theories, epistemological/ontological or sociology of knowledge, and which research methodologies and methods, which forms of knowledge production support the reading/interpreting/analysing and systematising of transformations?
- How does (the) research relate to educational practice and society? How can results be disseminated in both scientifically and socially adequate ways and in new, future-oriented ways?
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However, the scope of the Klagenfurt Research Retreat depends on the submissions and contributions of all participants and will be dealt with collectively during the event. This is also the basis for jointly identifying relevant topics or gaps in coming years.

How we plan to network, reflect and collaborate at the Retreat

Dialogical Forums (collective discourse and exchange and co-creation of knowledge); Plenary Meet-ups (to summarize the previous day collectively); Parallel Workshops (small groups; exchange on topic or research method); peer-mentoring sessions (on data analysis or data collection); A Gallery Walk (to look back and reflect on the outcomes of the participation); A

Writing Lab (an optional offer where writing counselling is offered by trained writing tutors); plus some social events including a boat trip and yoga sessions.

Please let colleagues and students know about the retreat and if you are interested please save the date in your diaries.

Detailed information on the call, registration, scientific committee, bursaries/costs and travel information will be circulated in the coming months. We look forward to sharing this with you.