



EDUNITA

2025



*EDUCATIONAL NOVELTY
AS AN INTERNATIONAL T&L APPROACH*



Universitatea de Vest
din Timișoara



17-18th
october

*West University
of Timișoara*

FACULTATEA DE
ARTE ȘI DESIGN

Invitation Letter

We are excited to invite you to the International Conference on Innovative Teaching & learning Practices, edUNITA – edUcational Novelty as an International T&L Approach.

This conference offers a unique opportunity to:

- Expand your professional knowledge. Engage in an inspiring technical program featuring cutting-edge research, innovative practices, and expert insights in innovative teaching and learning practices, inspired by the UNITA Alliance of twelve European universities.
- Network with a global community of educators. Connect with educators from around the world, fostering international collaboration, exchanging ideas, and building valuable professional relationships. These connections can extend beyond the conference, offering ongoing support and inspiration.
- Contribute to the field. Share your research and expertise with the broader educational community by submitting your work for consideration. It is an excellent opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge in an international environment and gain recognition for your contributions.

CONFERENCE AIM and OBJECTIVES

The conference is mainly oriented towards developing the UNITA communities of practice while promoting and sharing with other alliances and universities the best practices and innovative knowledge provided to advance the teacher training domain.

The key objectives of the conference:

- advance internationalisation by discussing policies, strategies, and best practices for internationalisation of higher education institutions;
- foster innovation in teaching and learning by showcasing cutting-edge pedagogical approaches, digital transformation, and the integration of new learning technologies;
- identify challenges and share practical solutions to help institutions reflect on their strategy and build capacity for flexible learning within an international context.

CONFERENCE AUDIENCE

Whether you're an educator, researcher, or simply passionate about learning, this conference offers valuable insights. Our diverse program welcomes all who are dedicated to the advancement of education in an international environment, based on innovative solutions.

VENUE

West University of Timișoara is one of the largest universities in Romania and the most important academic centre in the western part of the country. It has been classified as one of the top five universities in Romania among the top 2000 universities globally. From its spectacular architecture to its fascinating history, Timisoara is one of the most important cities in Romania, characterised by its diversity and vibrant atmosphere.

CONFERENCE SECTIONS

1.Competency-based approach with an international scope

Chair: Paul JONES [paul.jones@univ-smb.fr]

Students today need more than just knowledge to navigate the internationalised VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) world waiting for them. The Competency-based approach contributes to better preparing students for a career (and life in general) by recognising that appropriate attitudes, values, skills, and behaviours are equally necessary to adapt to a wide variety of contexts: multicultural, interdisciplinary and virtual, for example. Such a perspective has consequences for teaching programmes and assessment, where students are encouraged to be as active and engaged as possible, developing skills and dispositions such as their emotional intelligence, creativity and teamwork. But how do we bring this more holistic, engaging approach to learning into our programmes? Contributors are invited to share not only what you do and what you have achieved, but also how you build competency-based practices and strategies in your context by combining the vital knowledge, skills and dispositions. A special focus is encouraged on how the 'whole student' is developed in an intercultural context through the implementation of pedagogical activities enhancing dimensions such as teamwork, empathy and creativity.

2.Student-centred pedagogy in an international environment

Chairs: Ana Isabel Rodrigues Gouveia [anagouveia@fcsaude.ubi.pt] and **Mafalda Fonseca** [mfonseca@fcsaude.ubi.pt]

Fostering Active Learning Across Cultures

Join us for this engaging conference! In this section, we will explore innovative teaching strategies that place students at the heart of the learning process, fostering a dynamic and inclusive educational experience across diverse cultural contexts. There are plenty of reasons to attend: learn from experts who have successfully implemented student-centered approaches in international settings, connect with colleagues from other institutions to share insights, challenges, and solutions, and gain practical tools and techniques to create a more engaging and effective learning environment for your multicultural students.

Don't miss this opportunity to enrich your teaching practice and contribute to the global conversation on higher education pedagogy. We look forward to your participation and collaboration!

3.European citizenship impact on education

Chair: Theofild Lazăr [theofild.lazar@e-uvt.ro]

European citizenship has become an increasingly relevant and strategic topic in the European Higher Education environment, as universities are tasked with preparing students to participate actively and responsibly in a shared European space grounded in democratic values, human rights, cultural diversity, and social solidarity. Embedding this topic into curricula goes beyond transferring factual knowledge – it promotes critical reflection, intercultural competence, and the capacity to navigate complex social, political, and economic realities. Such an approach also fosters a sense of belonging to both national and European communities, empowering graduates to engage constructively in democratic life and contribute to building a more inclusive, cohesive, and sustainable Europe.

In this section, we invite contributions that explore innovative ways of integrating European citizenship into Higher Education teaching and learning. We welcome presentations that address curriculum design, experiential and service-learning projects, cross-border and intercultural exchanges, digital tools and resources, or pedagogical models that connect classroom learning to real-world European issues. Case studies, comparative research, and examples of best practice from different national or institutional contexts are particularly encouraged, as well as contributions that critically examine challenges, student engagement strategies, and the impact of such initiatives on learners' skills, attitudes, and civic participation.

4.Inclusive education in an international environment

Chair: Krassimira Lacoustete [krassimira.lacoustete@univ-pau.fr]

In today's internationalised and increasingly diverse higher education landscape, inclusion goes beyond accessibility—it is about creating equitable learning environments where every student, regardless of background, identity, or ability, can thrive. Inclusive education supports not only academic success but also social integration and personal development in multicultural, multilingual, and multidisciplinary contexts.

This approach challenges institutions and educators to rethink pedagogical design, curriculum content, and learning support systems to foster environments where differences are not only acknowledged but valued as essential to collective learning. It also includes thoughtful design of physical and virtual learning spaces to ensure they are welcoming, adaptable, and supportive of diverse student needs. Furthermore, it requires the development of critical transversal skills such as empathy, intercultural competence, and collaboration skills vital for navigating the complexities of a globalised world.

Contributors are invited to share their inclusive teaching strategies and practices, as well as the challenges and outcomes they have encountered. Particular focus should be given to how inclusive pedagogical models promote engagement, emotional safety, and a sense of belonging, particularly in international or intercultural learning contexts.

5. International collaboration approach focused on COILs, BIPs et al.

Chair: Melinda Dincă [melinda.dinca@e-uvt.ro]

Curriculum Internationalisation through Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

Online learning has gained significant importance in higher education institutions, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaborative Online International Learning offers an innovative approach to internationalising curricula and enhancing students' cultural exchange, academic performance, transversal and employability skills. It encourages student engagement and promotes intercultural and diversity awareness, equipping students for the challenges of an increasingly interconnected global market. As a cost-effective alternative to traditional study abroad programs, COIL provides an excellent solution for internationalising higher education and enhancing students' 21st-century skills. Successful implementation of collaborative online international learning requires suitable teaching methods for facilitating collaboration and reflective learning, promoting cultural exchange, and fostering soft skills development across distances and cultures. COIL-type learning interventions have been effectively implemented in various disciplines, such as STEM, business, engineering, social sciences, humanities, arts, education, and nursing, as well as in cross-disciplinary international learning settings.

Scholars are invited to share various strategies for institutionalising the internationalisation of higher education curricula, discuss the benefits and challenges of COIL, the necessary conditions for effective international learning interventions, and innovative teaching and learning methods suitable for COIL.

6. Innovative digital pedagogy

Chair: Anca Vasilescu [avasilescu@unitbv.ro]

Digital T&L, Emerging technologies in education, AI and educational approach

Description: Under "Emerging technologies in education", we invite contributors to explore how new digital technologies transform pedagogy into digital pedagogy, particularly in teaching and learning. A special focus on the impact of Generative AI in education, virtual / augmented reality, and adaptive learning systems is expected. Such innovative digital tools encompass integrating technology into all the instructional stages, such as design, delivery, and (self)assessment, involving virtual learning environments, eLearning platforms, or learning management systems. Digital perspectives on accessibility in education, inclusiveness, ethics, diversity, and the continuing development of digital literacy skills are shaping contemporary teaching methodologies, curriculum design, and the future of learning to enhance student engagement and outcomes.

Contributions like case studies highlighting successful digital teaching methods, challenges faced, or lessons learned, focusing on emerging topics such as learning analytics, adaptive learning, or blended/hybrid learning models, for equipping educators with practical skills to demonstrate effective technology integration in teaching, are greatly encouraged.

AGENDA

Day 1

Friday, 17th of October

9:00 - 9:45 Registration of participants

9:45 - 10:00 Official opening - Welcoming words of the WUT Rector

10:00 - 11:00 1st Keynote speech (Q&A session included)

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 - 12:30 2nd Keynote speech (Q&A session included)

12:30 - 13:30 3rd Keynote speech (Q&A session included)

13:30 - 15:30 Lunch

15:30 - 17:00 1st Parallel session

19:00 - Dinner

Day 2

Saturday, 18th of October

09:00 - 10:00 4th Keynote speech (Q&A session included)

10:00 - 11:30 Workshop

11:30 - 12:30 Presenting the T&L Centres of UNITA universities

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 - 15:30 2nd Parallel session

15:30 - 15:45 Closing

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

NOEL LOPES

**Informatics Department of Polytechnic
University of Guarda, Portugal**

Noel Lopes is a Professor at the Informatics department of Polytechnic University of Guarda, Portugal, with over 25 years of experience in higher education. He received both an MSc degree and a PhD in Computer Science from the University of Coimbra. His primary areas of interest are machine learning algorithms, graphics processing unit (GPU) computing, and education.



Artificial Intelligence in the Classroom: Challenges and Opportunities

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming mainstream, with recent advances rapidly reshaping many aspects of human activity. As businesses increasingly expect graduates to be proficient in AI-driven tools and environments, there is a pressing need to adapt higher education practices to prepare students for an AI-augmented workforce. In this context, the curricula, teaching, and assessment methods need to include practical applications of AI tools, emphasising problem-solving in real-world scenarios.

In this talk, we explore the opportunities and challenges of integrating AI into the classroom, sharing insights from the computer science field. We highlight what has proven effective, what hasn't, and how these lessons can inform broader efforts to align education with the demands of an AI-augmented workforce.

ALAZNE CIARRA

Department of Human Sciences and
Education, Public University of Navarra, Spain



Alazne Ciarra-Tejada is a Professor at the Department of Human Sciences and Education, Public University of Navarra, Spain. Her research focuses primarily on Discourse Markers, (Linguistic) Mediation, AI, Translanguaging, UDL, and Teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL-ELE) and Specific Purposes (SP-EFE). She received a PhD "CUM LAUDE" and an International Mention in "Spanish Language, Research and Teaching" from the University of Salamanca (USAL) and the University of Lumière Lyon2-France in 2015. She has been part of teaching teams, conferences, and projects at UNIR; UPNA; MINERVE-Lyon2; UNAV; UPSA-FIDESCO; USAL; IC; UCO, UM, and International Courses (DELE); AJL, ENS, ASELE, EOI, CIEI, CIELE, INNDOC, ADDIJES, PANDORA et al.

Linguistic mediation as a key to pedagogical and educational innovation for T&L in international academic and professional contexts

Mediation is a relatively new concept in the language T&L curriculum, thanks to the recent update of the *Common European Framework* in its *Complementary Volume* (Council of Europe, 2020). Mediation is understood as one of the four linguistic activities (comprehension, expression, interaction, and mediation) that language learners must achieve at each of the six language levels from A1 to C2. This language organisation model goes beyond the classic, previous model that categorised languages, generally, into four skills (oral and written comprehension and production). In this way, mediation represents an innovative concept, as it proposes a new structuring that presents a new challenge for language T&L, both in methodologies and in assessment and certification. Likewise, the concept of mediation, while primarily focused on linguistic mediation, undoubtedly encompasses other areas such as cultural, professional, and social aspects. Therefore, it broadens the concept beyond the act of linguistic communication. It is important to understand that mediation enables the development of key competencies in learners, both holistically and specifically. It also enables their development as social agents, not just as language learners. This indicates that mediation can be considered an innovative key to pedagogy and education for language T&L, knowledge transfer, and competency development in international academic and professional contexts, leading to a successful student exit profile.

JANNEKE FRAMBACH

School of Health Professions Education (SHE),
Maastricht University, the Netherlands



The internationalisation cookbook: combining ingredients to serve healthy & tasty education

Dr Janneke M. Frambach is an Associate Professor at the School of Health Professions Education (SHE), Maastricht University, the Netherlands. She has an interdisciplinary background in social sciences and humanities and a PhD in educational sciences. Her research programme investigates manifestations and implications of globalisation, internationalisation and cultural diversity in health professions education. She is the founder and lead of the SHE Special Interest Group "Globalization & Diversity", and she directs the international PhD programme at SHE. Dr Frambach has served for many years as international partnership manager in the SHE Master of Health Professions Education, and contributed to the design of this competency-based, personalised, international Master programme. Additionally, she teaches courses on qualitative research skills and health professions education, focused on student-centered education, problem-based learning, and curriculum design and implementation.

PAUL JONES

Université Savoie Mont Blanc, France



What's all the fuss about internationalisation and developing student competencies?

A lens on why faculty can be hesitant and how to get them on board.

Paul Jones is a mature PhD student at Polytech Annecy-Chambéry Engineering school in Annecy, France. His thesis deals with the creation of a framework to detect the gaps future engineers have in their soft skills set and imagine teaching scenarios to develop the "whole engineer".

He also teaches quality management, continuous improvement and English language to both future French quality and supply chain technicians and on an international program at the Annecy Institute of Technology, France. Paul is currently Head of language projects at University Savoie Mont Blanc and is its' representative for the "Innovative Teaching and Learning" group with UNITA. In the past, he has been responsible for internships at the program level and in both languages and international programs at the faculty level.

Indeed, Paul has a particular passion for all things international. This is reflected in his over 20 years of experience in developing internationalisation in the curriculum through different modules, outgoing and incoming student mobility and the creation of an all-in-English international semester at his faculty. His recent research project investigated what obstacles some faculty members perceive when developing international competencies in students.

SUBMISSION

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Each submission requires the title of up to 100 characters (including spaces), the list of authors (including affiliations and e-mail address of the corresponding author), and an extended abstract of 600 - 1000 words (including references).

The extended abstract must explicitly address the following essential points:

- **Purpose**
 - Explain the rationale behind your study. What motivated you to explore this topic or problem? If your work presents new or novel research, describe the issue or gap it addresses. If it builds upon prior studies, briefly justify the importance of continuing this line of inquiry. Highlight the relevance of your research and clearly state your key argument or main finding.
- **Study design/methodology/approach**
 - Describe how you conducted your research. Be specific: Did you use qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups? Did you perform experiments, use surveys, or analyse datasets? Include relevant tools, protocols, or methodological frameworks that support your findings.
- **Findings**
 - Present your main results in a clear, concise, and factual manner. Indicate whether your findings address the initial research problem and if your hypothesis was confirmed. Use precise data or figures when available. Avoid generalisations, speculation, or overstating the impact of your results.
- **Added value**
 - Describe the significance and originality of your study. What does your work add to the field? How does it differ from existing research? Reflect on the implications of your results and suggest potential directions for future research. Be objective and avoid overstatement.
- **Final review checklist**

Before submitting, ensure your abstract:

- reports the essential facts contained within the document;
- avoids exaggeration or inclusion of material not featured in the main text;
- avoids abbreviations that are only explained in the main text – your abstract should be able to stand alone;
- does not place excessive emphasis on previous literature – this is a summary of your work;
- is clearly written, well-structured, and easy to understand;
- is relevant to the conference themes and objectives;
- stays within the required word count (600–1000 words, including references);
- uses consistent and proper referencing style for any cited sources;
- contains no grammatical or typographical errors;
- includes accurate and complete author information (names, affiliations, contact details if required);

IMPORTANT DATES

14th September 2025

Extended abstract submission

21st September 2025

Notification of acceptance – extended abstract

17th-18th October 2025

CONFERENCE

15th January 2026

Camera-ready paper/chapter

July - December 2026

PUBLICATION

PUBLICATION

NAME: Journal of Educational Sciences (Erich+ journal, Open Access)

LINK: <https://rse.uvt.ro>

PUBLICATION: research papers with peer review following the journal procedure

Papers will be published in one of the 2026 volumes of the journal, as follows:

(1) regular issue – July 2026

(2) special/thematic issue – December 2026

NAME: Publishing House Editura Universității Transilvania din Brașov (eng. Transilvania University of Brașov Publishing House)

LINK: <https://www.unitbv.ro/editura-universitatii>

PUBLICATION: chapters in eBook volume [<https://ebooks.unitbv.ro/>]

Note. Only papers presented at the conference will be considered for inclusion as camera-ready papers or chapters. Selection for publication in the journal or edited volume will be subject to a specific peer-review process, and only submissions of satisfactory quality will be accepted.