

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Advancing Human Rights Education in Higher Education: Research, Practice, Impact

Workshop at the Global Campus of Human Rights, Lido di Venezia, 3-4 July 2024

Organised by *Global Campus Europe*

Coordinated by Prof. Dr. Gerd Oberleitner (Graz University) and Dr. Inge Zwart (EMA Fellow)

At higher education and post-graduate levels, human rights education (HRE) plays a crucial role in educating future professionals, leaders and advocates equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to address contemporary human rights challenges. With the European master's in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA) embarking on an in-depth review of its curriculum after more than 20 years of providing post-graduate human rights education, EMA seeks to use this opportunity to build a network of potential partners from within the network to create a research agenda for human rights higher education and human rights education as an academic discipline.

This workshop aims to critically explore the state of human rights education in European higher education, to understand contemporary challenges, to share best practices and lessons learned, and to suggest ways forward in curriculum development, teaching, and learning. The workshop seeks to delineate a research agenda for human rights education to address challenges, opportunities and gaps, to investigate pedagogical approaches and curricular frameworks, and to understand the goal and impact of human rights education. It offers an opportunity for interested EMA universities to engage in and foster human rights education research within the EMA network. The event seeks to bring together educators, experts, practitioners, learners and alumni for discussion and reflection, sharing the output in published form, identifying research funding opportunities for human rights education research within and beyond EMA, and feeding into the EMA curriculum review.

The workshop will be structured around the following four topics:

- **Substance: What do we and should we teach?**  
Human rights education in higher education institutions worldwide shows significant variations in terms of content, approach, methodology and curricula. This panel will consider curricula, curriculum development and adaptations, and questions of delineating human rights education within and against other topics. Topics could include:
  - Mapping the landscape: HRE programmes at post-graduate / master level globally: survey of the field, best practices, gaps, trends, incl. harnessing the Global Campus of Human Rights experience.
  - Curriculum development for HRE in post-graduate HRE between general and specialized knowledge; balancing knowledge, skills and critical thinking, inputs and outputs.
  - Drawing the boundaries: HRE and democracy education, education for social justice, sustainable development, climate justice, peace, equality/inclusion/diversity, global citizenship education and wider questions of the interdisciplinarity of human rights as a academic subject.

- **Methods: How do we teach?**

Human rights education encompasses a range of approaches, with higher education and post-graduate settings requiring specific types of learning, with an increasing emphasis on skills-building activities. This panel will assess different approaches of teaching and learning as ask question as to human rights education as a discipline. Topics could include:

- Beyond lecturing: Teaching methods and approaches in HRE - interaction, creativity, activism, experiment, simulations, role-play, skills-building, service-learning, field trips; arts and human rights.
- Crossing disciplinary borders: HRE as cross/trans/inter-disciplinary approach, responding to intersectionality: continuing challenges, possible innovations, how to protect the legal core of the international human rights framework in the context of interdisciplinary expertise.
- Partnering with reality: HRE beyond the classroom and connecting to IOs, civil society, and human rights cities; working with/teaching community engagement; balancing professional training and building academic expertise amongst students; practitioner-scholars as teachers; building curriculum with and for practice; training scholar-activists.

- **Context: For what do we teach/in which world do we teach?**

Human rights education needs to be up-to-date and respond to today's world characterized by democratic backlash, economic inequality, the Anthropocene, triple planetary crisis/climate change, populism, disinformation and social media, rise of artificial intelligence. This panel will discuss human rights education in context, the purpose of human rights education, and adjusting human rights education to contemporary challenges, and will hear what practitioners demand from HRE. Topics could include:

- International legal and policy frameworks for HRE 2024 and beyond: UN HRE World Programme; UNESCO 2024 Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development.
- Cultural context in HRE: Decolonizing HRE, cultural sensitivity, North-South perspectives in times of global turmoil.
- HRE in times of AI: responding to emerging trends and challenges and leveraging technology for HRE.

- **Learners: (For) whom do we teach?**

What do learners wish to gain from HRE, what are their experiences, expectations and frustrations? This panel will specifically respond to learners' and alumni perspectives. Topics could include:

- Students, activists, next-generation experts: Learners' expectations and frustrations on HRE and human rights careers; leadership development, student-led initiatives, activism, awareness campaigns as part of HRE.
- Human rights of learners: students' mental health and well-being while learning human rights; academic freedom, freedom of expression and cancel culture in HRE.
- Human rights learners as human rights defenders: learners at risk, refugee and displacement situations.

## FORMAT

We will discuss each of the above-outlined topics in panels of 3 to 4 participants with a discussant. To encourage engaged discussions, we ask all participants to submit draft papers in advance and give a short (10-15 minutes) impulse statement during the in-person workshop. Participants are strongly encouraged to read papers of participating colleagues to make the workshop as productive as possible.

We are currently seeking out the possibility of publishing the papers, once finalised, as a special issue of a relevant academic journal. Furthermore, we intend to use the workshop to identify a research agenda and potential funding opportunities to stimulate future research on this topic within the network.

Travel and accommodation costs for participants will be covered by the Global Campus of Human Rights. Full details will be provided to participants at the point of invitation.

## SUBMISSION INFORMATION

We invite submissions from researchers and educators from EMA partner universities. The submission deadline is **3 May 2024**. Send your application to [inge.zwart@gchumanrights.org](mailto:inge.zwart@gchumanrights.org), consisting of one Microsoft Word file outlining:

- a 500-word abstract
- a 100-200 word biography
- Identified topic from the call

Abstracts will be reviewed by Prof. Dr. Gerd Oberleitner, UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security at Graz University, Dr. Orla Ni Cheallachain, EMA Programme Director, and Dr. Inge Zwart, EMA Fellow. The abstracts will be reviewed based on the alignment with the aims of the workshop and the topics outlined, ensuring diverse participation from across the EMA network.

## TIMELINE

5 May 2024	Abstract submission
9 May 2024	Communication to participants
21 June 2024	Submission of work-in-progress papers of around 5000 words (excluding references)
3 and 4 July 2024	Workshop at Global Campus of Human Rights headquarters in Lido, Venice.
September 2024	Workshop Report presented to EMA Council
Fall 2024	( <i>Tentative</i> ) Publication of special issue