

ITD27 Call for Contributions

Join leading trainers, researchers, practitioners, and students from around the world to share knowledge, insights, and expertise on critical issues in inter- and transdisciplinarity. ITD27 provides a global forum to strengthen capacities in and through research, education, policymaking, activism, and artistic engagement.

For ITD27, we invite contributions from all fields and research cultures, ranging from local interdisciplinary and interprofessional initiatives to large-scale collaborations spanning the Global North and the Global South. The conference addresses both the theory and practice of inter- and transdisciplinary research, with a particular focus on collaborative processes and on educational pathways that make such approaches sustainable, inclusive, and widely accessible.

We are especially interested in contributions that explore the role of inter- and transdisciplinarity in transformative change. In addition, ITD27 aims to actively foster networking and dialogue that can catalyse new collaborations and collective action towards transformative change.

ITD27 – practical information

When: 31 May – 4 June 2027

Where: Colégio Espírito Santo, Évora University, Évora, Portugal

Website: <https://itd-alliance.org/itd-conference/itd27/>

Email: itd27@uevora.pt

Bridging Knowledge and Networks: Inter- and Transdisciplinarity for Transformative Change

Climate disasters, public health crises, digital inequality, the unequal distribution of wealth, and armed conflict are placing unprecedented demands on higher education institutions, research organisations, and societal and industry partners. Addressing these interconnected challenges increasingly requires collaboration across disciplines, sectors, and forms of knowledge. In an era marked by overlapping and persistent polycrises, researchers and practitioners are confronted with complex local and global problems that cannot be addressed through disciplinary approaches alone.

Inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration has therefore become not only desirable but essential. However, building bridges across disciplines, institutions, and societal domains is itself a demanding and skilled practice. It requires appropriate conceptual frameworks, reflexive methods, supportive institutional conditions, and dedicated training pathways. ITD27 addresses both the theory and practice of inter- and transdisciplinary research collaboration, with particular attention to the educational pathways needed to make such approaches sustainable, inclusive, and widely accessible.

Within this context, transformative change emerges as a key lens through which to understand and respond to contemporary societal challenges. Transformative change calls for a systems perspective that goes beyond incremental improvement, addressing transitions not only within academia but also across funding institutions, policymaking, and other societal sectors. The central aim of ITD27 is therefore to critically reflect on the role that inter- and transdisciplinarity

plays in enabling transformative change, while creating a shared space that deepens dialogue and strengthens connections across individuals, institutions, and global networks. Through this collective engagement, the conference seeks to advance transformative change through collaboration.

'What' and 'How'

Inter- and transdisciplinary mindsets among individuals and bridge-building activities in mixed groups do not simply 'emerge' when a complex issue is raised. Systematic explorations in research and education have noted the importance of the specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to make inter- and transdisciplinary research collaboration successful. While shared vocabularies, models, and toolkits for successful collaboration have been developed, they have yet to reach all those who might wish to use them in their own or their organization's efforts to address complex issues with inter- or transdisciplinary approaches. Likewise, there is great scope for shared learning from the practical experience of higher education establishments, research institutes, and societal and industry partners working across disciplinary, professional, and institutional divides. It is essential to build capacity in these areas if we want to make collaborative research across different disciplines, professions, and institutions last and ensure more integration experts are trained. Open discussion, collective reevaluation, and redefinition of the engagement between sciences, humanities, and the arts; and society represents pressing yet exhilarating challenges.

For Whom

For ITD27, we invite contributions from all fields and research cultures, ranging from local interdisciplinary and interprofessional projects to projects spanning the Global North and the Global South. We particularly welcome submissions from trainers and educational developers, researchers of inter- and transdisciplinary higher education, leaders of inter- and transdisciplinary programs, research funders, and those from other boundary-crossing professions. This conference provides the opportunity for trainers, researchers, practitioners, and students from around the world to share their knowledge, insights, expertise, and questions on the critical issues in inter- and transdisciplinarity needed to build capacity in and through research, education, policy making, activism, and artistic engagement. For experts in the field, this conference provides an excellent opportunity to advance the capacity for inter- and transdisciplinarity by sharing knowledge and insights. For relative newcomers to inter- and transdisciplinary initiatives, this conference provides the opportunity to immerse themselves fully and to develop new collaborations and innovative approaches to the complex challenges facing our local and global communities.

ITD Conference Mission

The ITD Conference aims to empower and equip individuals and groups—including researchers, educators, trainers, facilitators, and coaches—to respond effectively to today's polycrises and to actively contribute to transformative change. Addressing these challenges requires more than collaboration across disciplines; it calls for inter- and transdisciplinary approaches that bridge knowledge systems, sectors, and societal actors, and that enable systemic transitions.

Within this context, peer-to-peer learning, training, and education play a central role—not only within higher education institutions and research organisations, but also across societal, policy, and industrial domains. By strengthening capacities for reflexive practice, co-production of knowledge, and collaborative action, the ITD Conference seeks to support participants in shaping research and innovation processes that can influence structural conditions and decision-making beyond academia.

Once empowered and equipped, researchers, practitioners, and organisations are better positioned to initiate, sustain, and scale inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations that are resilient, inclusive, and future-oriented. These collaborations are essential for enabling

transformative change across research systems, funding structures, policymaking, and societal practices.

In light of this mission, and building on the Call for Contributions, the conference is structured around three interlinked streams that maximise opportunities for collective learning and exchange:

1. **Foundations** – theories, concepts, and processes that underpin inter- and transdisciplinary work and transformative change;
2. **Practice and Capacity Building** – methods, tools, and experiences that strengthen individual and collective capacities for collaboration and transformation;
3. **Education and Learning Pathways** – educational approaches that form the backbone of long-term capacity building and the sustainability of transformative inter- and transdisciplinary practices.

Conference Streams and Topics/Questions

Please indicate how your submission aligns with the following streams, questions, and formats. Choose one primary stream, then indicate one or more key topics/questions relevant to your contribution. Please feel free to also add additional questions that contribute to the selected stream.

1. ENHANCING THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF INTER- AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

You are not limited to, but encouraged to address the following:

Advancing inter- and transdisciplinary concepts, models, and processes

- Genealogy and current necessity of inter- and transdisciplinarity
- Meta-research: inter- and transdisciplinary research as research object
- The nature, implementation, and evaluation of integration
- Entanglement of knowledge and technology
- Actionability of inter- and transdisciplinary theory
- Pathways to scientific and societal impact of collaborative research
- Diversity of concepts and perceptions of ITD in different scientific cultures and the arts
- [The conceptual and theoretical linkages between transition theory, transformative change and ITD.](#)

Collaborative modes of research and their cross-fertilizations

- Action research, convergence science, community-engaged research
- Collaboration between different knowledge systems, including activism and art
- The relationship of inter- and transdisciplinary research with interprofessional collaboration
- Power structures and conflict

Harnessing experience and knowledge gained from inter- and transdisciplinary projects and programs

- Innovative cases
- Multi-case studies
- Mission-oriented programs
- Practices /methods / tools
- Evaluation and assessment
- [Transformative changes where ITD played a role](#)

2. GROWING THE CAPACITY FOR INTER- AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

You are not limited to, but encouraged to address the following:

Mapping the field: Why capacity building for inter- and transdisciplinarity?

- Benefits for trainers, students, and life-long learners
- Benefits for institutions and society
- Career perspectives in and beyond the academic system
- The roles of peers and 'integration experts'
- Enlarging the community of practice, or: Growing collaborative networks
- Importance of inter- and transdisciplinarity in the context of future skills (OECD)

Internal and external motivation for inter- and transdisciplinarity

- How to motivate researchers and educators to work and teach across boundaries
- What if seats at the table remain empty? Or: Mitigating collaborative deficiencies
- Is inter- and transdisciplinarity for everyone?
- Research grants for inter- and transdisciplinarity

Intersectional approaches to inter- and transdisciplinary capacity building

- Interrelations and differences between the Global North and the Global South
- Regional differences within the Global North and the Global South
- Inter- and transdisciplinarity in different contexts
- Pathways to epistemic justice
- Practices of epistemic humility

Transformation of universities for enabling inter- and transdisciplinary education

- Forms of institutionalization and their promises
- The roles of funders and funding schemes for research and capacity building
- Publishing, peer review, and evaluation of inter- and transdisciplinary research
- The role of tenure, reward, and supervision in capacity building
- Models for the governance of inter- and transdisciplinarity
- Roles of the multifarious agents involved in organizational change
- Staff and students challenging the academic status quo

3. BROADENING AND DEEPENING EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN INTER- AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

You are not limited to, but encouraged to address the following:

Inter- and transdisciplinary higher education muscles: What do we train?

- Linking and fostering individual, social, and societal learning processes
- Pedagogical and didactic elements of strong and resilient inter- and transdisciplinary education
- Transformative learning for societal transformation
- The 'expert' in inter- and transdisciplinary education—teacher or student, or both
- Collective thinking and action leading to mutual learning and transformation

Teaching and learning with vocabularies, toolkits, and other 'immutable mobiles': How do we train?

- The key role of integrative research methodologies in inter- and transdisciplinary education
- Teaching research collaboration vs. teaching integrative thinking

- Educational (digital) tools to work inter- and transdisciplinarily and teach inter- and transdisciplinarity
- Guiding principles for, and best practices of, teacher professionalization for inter- and transdisciplinarity
- Fluid identities: Teaching the teacher and peer-to-peer training
- Students as future integration experts

Research of inter- and transdisciplinary education

- What works? Design principles for inter- and transdisciplinary higher education
- Towards value-driven educational research, implementation, and evaluation
- The potential of inter- and transdisciplinary to critique the status quo in education
- Oscillation between research-informed education and practice-informed educational research
- Oscillation between discipline-based educational research and scholarship of integration
- The science of team-science applied to educational contexts

4. BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE AND NETWORKS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

You are not limited to, but encouraged to address the following:

Inter- and transdisciplinarity as a driver of transformative change

- What distinguishes transformative change from incremental change?
- The role of inter- and transdisciplinarity in enabling systemic transitions
- Tensions, trade-offs, and limits of inter- and transdisciplinary approaches in transformative processes
- Power, politics, and values in transformation-oriented collaborations

Bridging knowledge systems, actors, and networks

- Designing and sustaining networks across academia, policy, civil society, and practice
- Boundary organizations, brokers, intermediaries, and integration experts
- Connecting local knowledge, Indigenous knowledge, professional practice, and scientific knowledge
- Networks as infrastructures for learning, action, and transformation

From collaboration to impact and action

- Translating inter- and transdisciplinary knowledge into policy, governance, and societal change
- Scaling, institutionalizing, or sustaining transformative initiatives beyond projects
- Mission-oriented research and networked approaches to societal challenges
- Evaluating transformative impact across sectors and scales

Formats for Contributions

Session (in person)

Sessions will run for 60 minutes. To propose a session, provide a title and a brief description of the content and session design (up to 1000 words). Sessions can take various formats, such as presentations, panel discussions, impulse talks, or discussion formats. We encourage integration of contributors from diverse backgrounds and exploration of innovative formats. To propose a session, please contact the conference office to check the feasibility.

Presentation (in person)

Presentations will be limited to 10 minutes. The organizers will group presentations into

sessions lasting 60 or 90 minutes. Each session will feature multiple presentations with 5–10 minutes allocated for discussion. Please submit a title and a 500-word maximum abstract.

Poster or installation (hybrid)

- Classical posters (on paper and as PDF)
- Installations (tangible objects with explanations or questions)
- Artistic contributions related to inter- and transdisciplinary processes
- Key questions or challenges for discussion presented in an aesthetically appealing form
- Stand-up science and philosophy
- Other forms of exhibits

Posters, key questions, and installations will be on display throughout ITD27 and, if suitable for online presentation, online. Please provide a title and a 500-word maximum abstract, including format description. For installations, contact the conference office to confirm feasibility.

Workshop (in person)

Activities of joint thinking and action can form the basis of workshops of 60 or 90 minutes. The format is flexible but should not exceed 20-30 minutes of presentation, and participants should have an active role. Propose a workshop with a title and an outline of content and design (up to 1200 words). Feel free to reach out for collaborative workshop development.

Training (in person)

Propose a 90-minute interactive training session on a specific method, tool, approach, or topic. Submit a title, learning goals, and an outline of the content and the training design (up to 1200 words). Do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to collaborate with us in developing a training.

Open Format

Throughout the conference, we welcome interventions, performances, presentations, and exhibitions that transcend verbal communication and don't fit into the above categories. Special exhibition and performance locations may be needed; contact the ITD 2024 office for opportunities and requirements.

Short videos (online)

Submit videos ranging from 1 to 7 minutes, highlighting specific concepts, methods, research or teaching projects, key questions for reflection, or other content related to collaborative research and education. The videos will be made available online during the conference. Provide a title and a 500-word maximum abstract.

Networking event

For establishing and consolidating existing and new networks on inter- and transdisciplinarity during ITD24, please contact the ITD 2024 office directly.

ITD Conference 2027 submission process

Submissions will be processed through INDICO. We are currently finalizing the tool, and the link will be available on our website at <https://itd-alliance.org/itd-conference/itd27/>

by the end of June. Please upload your abstract using our ITD27 template, which can also be found on our website.

Important dates

- Deadline for abstract submission: October 30, 2026
- Notice of acceptance: early May 2024.
- On-site conference with hybrid components: 31 May – 4 June 2027
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For any questions regarding the submission process or the Call for Contributions in general, please email itd27@uevora.pt.

