



Proposal to host the 11th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning (RWL11) in 2019

Justus-Liebig-University Giessen (Germany) Configuring Enterprises as Spaces for Learning: Possibilities, Risks and Limits

A) Proposed Organisers

With its approximately 78,500 inhabitants and 40,000 students from two universities, Giessen boasts the highest student density of all German cities. It is located Northern to Frankfurt/Main. The journey by public train takes only 45 minutes time to Frankfurt/Main International Airport.

Justus-Liebig-University (JLU) Giessen is a modern institution which can take pride in about four centuries of achievement. It combines a broad and interdisciplinary spectrum of research and teaching in the areas of law, economics and business studies, the natural sciences, and the humanities with a range of sub-disciplines that is unique for Germany. With around 28,000 students, the university is prepared to meet challenges that the future may bring. The clearly rising number of students since decades and the success of JLU in the competitive German excellence initiative conducted on both state and federal levels are only two examples that the University is ready to face the future. Tradition and innovation are here uniquely combined.



Prof. Dr. Joybrato Mukherjee,
JLU-President since 2009



The department for continuing education at Justus-Liebig-University Giessen is researching the learning of adults in its heterogeneous forms with an openness towards different theories, methods and perspectives. This ranges from the analysis of large-scale surveys like AES or CVTS to in-depth case studies within enterprises. Program planning is of special interest and researched with an explicit comparative perspective in an intensive research collaboration with Tom Sork at UBC Vancouver.

For years the chair Prof. Dr. Bernd Käßlinger is internationally very active. Currently he is a member of the steering committees as well of ESREA as RWL. He was in charge for organizing and hosting the

triennial research conference of ESREA with more than 230 participants while he was junior professor at Humboldt-University in Berlin in 2013. Partly he started his academic career with organizing the national consultation on the EU memorandum on Lifelong Learning in 2000 to 2001. He studied abroad in Cork (Ireland) and Nijmegen (Netherlands). Various international study trips, guest lectures or summer schools were made or supported by him in Vancouver (Canada), Roskilde (Denmark), Torún (Poland), Vienna and Linz (Austria), Zurich (Switzerland) or Bozen (Italy). He carried out many projects for CEDEFOP and the European Commission in the field of enterprise-provided continuing training and education. Data collected with his advice was collected and published by Eurostat. Supervised master or PhD students of him came from Argentina, China, Columbia, Greece, Italy, South Korea, Mozambique, Pakistan, Poland, Russia or Ukraine.

B) Conference Summary

The proposed dates for the 2015 conference could be scheduled in mid July 2019. The anticipated conference venue can accommodate up to 300 delegates in one location, with the flexibility to switch to an even bigger lecture hall for 500 people. Multiple rooms are available for work sessions and symposia on a campus with little walking distances.

Proposed Theme

The theme for the conference is proposed as

Configuring Enterprises as Spaces for Learning: Possibilities, Risks and Limits

Enterprises are crucial places and spaces for learning at work. They offer certain chances and possibilities to learn. On the one hand, progressive enterprises make different resources (money, time, mentors, learning circles, staff, etc.) available for their employees and configure themselves as learning organizations. On the other hand, rather ignorant CEOs and firms are not very interested in the learning of their employees and do little to support learning at the workplace. Overall, the workplace can be a space for learning a lot, but also a place for losing skills and becoming frustrated and no more interested in learning anything beyond daily routines and experiences. The risks are high that mainly higher levels of the hierarchies in enterprise have access to enriched learning environments, whereas employees on the normal shop floor level have to cope with neo-tayloristic HRM strategies. Digitalization offers new chances for blended and hybrid forms of learning in virtual spaces. Less optimistic prognosis envisage a loss of jobs or dramatic changes with certain risks of a de-skilling. Data glasses make new forms of inducing likely. New forms of work organization and freelancer employment models make the connection to and identification with work more loose than before, but also offer the chance to be more in charge for the own working and learning. Nowadays educational wishes for a self-directed learning seem to merge with the needs in new economies. Big enterprises produce globally and ask employees to cooperate in teams beyond national borders. Expatriates have to work and live abroad and also have to cope with the challenges connected to migration.

Overall, the conference wants to encourage an open-minded but also critical discussion on the wide range of possibilities to learn or not to learn within enterprises. Approaches and research results which support a progressive, sustainable and humanistic configuring of enterprises as spaces for learning will be especially welcomed.

We see the following sub-themes as relevant, although this is a draft version:

1. Systems, policies and stakeholders as wider contexts
2. Occupations, jobs and careers
3. Sectors and labor markets
4. Enterprises as organizations and diverse configurations
5. Work identity, biographies, learning trajectories and subjectivity

6. Professions and organizations supporting learning
7. Interactions between teaching/instructing/coaching and learning
8. Knowledge, competences, qualifications and needs
9. Learning in virtual spaces or hybrid arrangements
10. Methodology development and theory building for researching work and learning

Participants will be encouraged to develop comparative papers, proposals and workshops.

Conference Format

The format for the conference will be as follows:

- A program that offers a combination of themed sessions across its duration and plenary events is anticipated, comprising:
 - Plenary/Keynote: Main sessions where all participants are invited to attend. They draw on themes and topics intended to stimulate discussions and responses during the conference on research and practice in the area of work and learning
 - Parallel Sessions which include paper, panel sessions and workshops that will be scheduled across the conference program
 - Poster Sessions: Sharing by practitioners and researchers on their areas of interest
 - Closing session with a panel of established and emerging scholars reflecting on the conference
- Publisher showcase to share the latest research and studies

Conference Awards

A committee comprising key stakeholders (local and international) from academia and practitioner will be formed to select the 'Best Student Conference Paper' awards. The criteria will be made public. The prizes will be made public during the main conference dinner.

Proposed Conference Publications

An editorial team will be formed to produce and publish all print materials relating to the conference, including:

1. A book of abstracts to inform and support the choices of delegates before and during the conference.
2. Official conference proceedings and
3. Special issue of the Journal of Workplace Learning; post-conference

The editorial team will comprise senior academic members from local and international partners and members of the RWL steering committee.

C) Proposed Planning / Draft Schedule

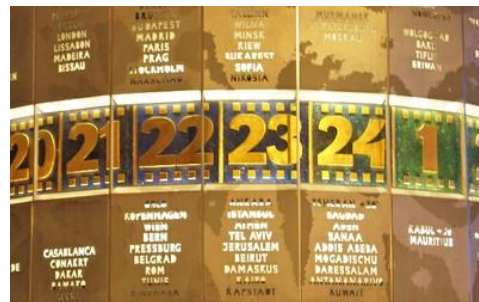
The following is the outline of projected time lines for planning and major conference deadlines (i.e. for submission, review, notification of acceptance, submission of final paper, conference date):

Period	Activity
July 2018	Set up of the conference website announcing conference details and other key information, first proposal of keynote speakers to RWL steering committee. First call for papers
September 2018 to November 2018	Submission of Abstracts/Proposals for papers

December 2018	Working Committee convened to review and select papers for the conference
January to April 2019	Finalise programme, themes and keynote speakers
January 2019	Announcement of papers accepted for the conference
January to March 2019	Early Bird Registration
March to May 2019	Submission of papers
April to June 2019	Normal Registration
May 2019	Final submission of papers accepted for the conference
June 2019	Working Committee selects 'Best Student Conference Paper'
July 2019	RWL Conference Announcement of 'Best Student Conference Paper' at conference dinner
End 2019/early 2020	Special issue of Journal on Workplace Learning

D) Prior Event Management Experience

The chair Prof. Dr. Bernd K pplinger is internationally very active. He is member of the steering committees of ESREA and RWL. He was in charge for organizing and hosting the triennial research conference of ESREA with more than 230 participants while he was junior professor at Humboldt-University in Berlin in 2013. He was also in charge for many different workshops on a national or international bases. The JLU Giessen supports conferences with its international office and its support facilities. Modern ICT technologies are available on campus.



ESREA triennial research conference organized by Bernd K pplinger in 2013

https://www.erziehungswissenschaften.hu-berlin.de/de/ebwb/forschung_neu/projekte/esrea

E) Location Advantage

Giessen is easy to reach from Frankfurt/Main International in approx. 45 minutes by public train. It is located in central Germany, which is also relatively centrally located within Europe. Thus, RWL 11 will be an attractive location for many Europeans in terms of easily to reach. Non-Europeans will have very good chances to find direct flights to Frankfurt/Main. Accommodation is available in sufficient numbers and to relatively reasonable prices (e.g. starting from 53 € per night).

Justus-Liebig-University Gießen - Institute for Educational Science

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