

Call for proposals for The International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) Congress 2027

Welcome

We are pleased to extend this invitation for proposals for the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) 2027 congress, which will take place in Banff, Canada, from January 4-8.

Please see here for more on ICSEI 2027: <https://icsei.org/congress/icsei-2027>

Due date for proposals: June 1, 2026

The ICSEI 2027 Theme – Be Well, Learn Well: Strengthening Belonging, Wellbeing, and Academic Growth

A growing body of educational research highlights the central role that belonging and wellbeing play in learning. Students who experience a sense of belonging in their school communities are more likely to demonstrate stronger motivation and engagement, along with improved academic success over time. At the same time, the wellbeing of educators and the broader health of school communities influence the relational and organizational conditions that support effective teaching, sustained collaboration, and meaningful learning experiences. Together, these insights point to the importance of attending to academic outcomes alongside the social and emotional environments in which learning unfolds.

Across education systems internationally, schools and policymakers are grappling with how to strengthen these conditions. In many contexts, educators are responding to heightened student needs, increasing complexity in their work, and ongoing questions about equity and inclusion. Addressing these challenges calls for a deeper understanding of how belonging, wellbeing, and learning interact within classrooms, schools, and systems, and how these elements can be intentionally supported through practice, leadership, policy, and community partnerships.

ICSEI 2027 provides a space for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers from around the world to share research, evidence-informed practices, and emerging ideas related to these issues. Contributions may explore how schools and systems cultivate belonging, support the wellbeing of students and educators, and strengthen meaningful academic learning across contexts. This Congress will advance dialogue and knowledge that supports more inclusive and academically vibrant education systems for learners and educators alike.

ICSEI Congress Sub-themes

In addition to the main theme, *Be Well, Learn Well: Strengthening Belonging, Wellbeing, and Academic Growth*, the organising committee has identified several sub-themes, linked in several cases to the ICSEI networks that help members explore critical issues in education. Congress sub-themes include:

- *From Evidence to Action: Translating Research into Practice*: Educational research continues to generate valuable insights into belonging, wellbeing, and learning, yet translating these insights into everyday educational practice remains an ongoing challenge. This sub-theme invites contributions that explore how research, theory, and data can inform decision-making in classrooms, schools, and systems, including strategies for knowledge mobilization and implementation.
- *Leadership and System Conditions for Belonging and Wellbeing*: Educational leaders and policymakers shape the structures and cultures that influence both wellbeing and learning. This sub-theme focuses on leadership practices, governance arrangements, policy environments, and system coordination that enable schools to promote belonging while supporting improvement in teaching and learning.
- *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Perspectives*: Belonging in education is deeply connected to identity, culture, and justice. This sub-theme welcomes research and practice that examine how schools and systems can foster inclusive, culturally responsive, and historically and structurally equitable environments. Work that centers Indigenous perspectives and partnerships with community is especially encouraged.
- *Whole-Child Development and Integrated Approaches to Learning*: Schools are increasingly called upon to support the holistic development of young people, recognizing that social, emotional, cultural, and academic growth are interconnected. This sub-theme invites work that examines integrated approaches to learning and development, including interdisciplinary initiatives and classroom practices that connect wellbeing with academic learning.
- *Brain, Body, and Learning*: Insights from neuroscience, psychology, health research, and developmental science continue to expand understanding of how learning is shaped. This sub-theme encourages contributions that explore how emotional wellbeing, physical health, relationships, and learning environments interact to influence how students learn and participate in school.
- *Student Voice, Agency, and Participation*: Students are central participants in shaping school culture and learning environments. This sub-theme explores how student voice and agency contribute to school improvement, more responsive educational design, and stronger experiences of belonging among learners.
- *Learning Beyond the Classroom: Community, Activities, and School Life*: Belonging and wellbeing are shaped both through classroom instruction and through the wider experiences students have within schools and their communities. This sub-theme invites work that examines extracurricular activities, community partnerships, service learning, outdoor and place-based education, and other experiences that support engagement and flourishing.

Key Dates for Submissions

The proposal submission system will be open from **1 May to 1 June, 2026**. All people submitting proposals will be informed as to their acceptance by 1 August, **2026**. Proposals are only accepted through the ICSEI Conference Proposal Submission System which can be accessed here: <https://www.conftool.com/icsei2027>

Proposal Selection and Topics

ICSEI Networks

All proposals must be submitted to one of the ICSEI networks. This information will also be used in the program to allow participants to more easily identify papers and sessions by network. ICSEI consists of seven networks:

- Crisis Response in Education Network
- Culture, Race, and Intersectionality Network
- Early Childhood Education and Care Network
- Evidence-Informed Change (*formerly Data Use*) Network
- Educational Leadership Network
- Policymakers, Politicians, and Practitioners (3P) Network
- Professional Learning Networks Network

Further information about the ICSEI networks can be found at: <https://icsei.org/networks/>

Submission Requirements

All proposals must be submitted through ConfTool by **1 June 2026 (11:59pm AEST)**

When submitting, you will be asked whether your proposed session is to present academic research or is primarily practice- and/or policy-based, and proposals will be reviewed accordingly. All submissions will be blind refereed; the evaluators will review all submissions without the names of the authors and presenters (which will be submitted separately). Thus, the names of the organizers and presenters must not appear in the text of the proposals. Please note that the submitted abstract will be made available to all participants should the proposal be accepted.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All presenting authors and co-authors for accepted proposals will be required to be ICSEI members to present at the Banff 2027 Congress. But good news! The congress registration discount for members is greater than the cost of annual membership. And you will continue to receive discounts on events throughout the year. You can become an ICSEI member at <https://icsei.org/membership/#join>

Proposal types

Submission Requirements

Individual Paper

Individual paper proposals can be submitted by an individual or small group of co-authors. Authors present abbreviated versions of their papers followed by comments/critique and participant interaction.

Each 90-minute paper session will consist of 3-4 individual papers, grouped by the program committee according to a cross-cutting research problem, theme or issue.

Paper proposals should be a maximum of 500 words (excluding references).

Paper proposals should address the following:

- Objectives, purpose, problem of practice, or policy focus
- Research question(s) or focus of inquiry
- Perspective(s) or theoretical framework, or context
- Methods, techniques, modes or approach to inquiry
- Data Sources/evidence
- Results, findings, learning
- Educational importance of this research or inquiry for theory, practice, and/or policy
- Connection to the conference theme

Symposium

A *symposium* provides an opportunity to examine specific research issues, problems, or topics from a variety of perspectives. They may present alternative solutions, interpretations, or contrasting points of view on a specific subject, or in relation to a common theme. Frequently interactive, a large portion of the session may be devoted to dialogue among presenters and a discussant, questions and discussion among all those present, or small-group interaction.

Symposia are 90 minutes in length. They typically include 3-4 coordinated presentations.

Symposium proposals should be submitted as a single document that includes:

An introductory abstract of a maximum of 200 words (excluding references) that provides an overview of:

- The overarching theme, objectives and purposes of the symposium
- The issue(s) or question(s) to be addressed
- How the above will be addressed through the papers included
- The importance for educational theory, policy, research, and/or practice
- How the session will be organized and the approach to interaction

Proposals of 3-4 papers, (500 words maximum each, excluding references) that address the following:

- Objectives, purpose, problem of practice, or policy focus
- Research question(s) or focus of inquiry
- Perspective(s) or theoretical framework, or context
- Methods, techniques, modes or approach to inquiry

- Data Sources/evidence
- Results, findings, learning
- Educational importance of this research or inquiry for theory, practice, and/or policy
- Connection to the conference theme

Roundtable Discussion

Roundtable sessions offer the opportunity for individual presenters to discuss early outcomes as well as the design of research projects or research in progress. Each 75-minute roundtable session will consist of up to 3 projects, grouped by the program committee according to a cross-cutting research problem or issue or where early career researchers, policy makers and practitioners with similar interests would benefit from exchange, discussion and collaboration.

Each presenter will have ten minutes to introduce his/her project and to raise two or three open questions. Twenty minutes is intended for discussion of each project.

Proposals for roundtable presentations should be a maximum of 500 words (excluding references).

Roundtable proposals should address the following:

- Objectives of research, practice, or policy inquiry
- Research question(s) or focus of inquiry
- Perspective(s) or theoretical framework, or context
- Methods, techniques, modes or approach to inquiry
- Expected or preliminary results
- Educational importance of this research or inquiry for theory, practice, and/or policy
- Connection to the conference theme

Innovate Presentation

Innovate presentations provide an opportunity to examine innovative and creative evidence-informed policy and/or practice initiatives. Innovate sessions are intended to be interactive and actively engage participants in the exploration of the area of policy or practice.

Each 75-minute Innovate session will include three separate 25-minute presentation submissions, grouped by the program committee according to a cross-cutting research problem, theme or issue.

Innovate proposals should be a maximum of 500 words (excluding references).

Innovate proposals should address the following:

- Objectives or purposes of the session
- Educational importance for theory, policy, research, and/or practice
- The format and approach(es) that will be used in the session to engage participants in the exploration of the area of practice
- Connection to the conference theme

If you intend to use an indigenous knowledge sharing approach, please also describe the approach in your proposal.

Poster

Poster sessions combine the graphic display of materials with the opportunity for individualized, informal discussion of a project in research, policy and/or practice. Individual presenters set up displays in a large area with other presenters.

Posters should be set up to be visible for the duration of the conference. Presenters will be expected to be present at designated times.

Poster proposals should be a maximum of 500 words (excluding references).

Poster proposals should address the following:

- Objectives, purpose, problem of practice, or policy focus
- Research question(s) or focus of inquiry
- Perspective(s) or theoretical framework, or context
- Methods, techniques, modes or approach to inquiry
- Data Sources/evidence
- Results, findings, learning
- Educational importance of this research or inquiry for theory, practice, and/or policy
- Connection to the conference theme

The following guidelines should be considered for preparing the posters:

- Size: The poster surface will be approximately 1 meter x 1.5 meters; recommended dimensions of poster are 0.60 m width x 0.85 m height
- Poster orientation: Portrait
- The title of the presentation and the author's name and affiliation should appear at the top of the poster.
- All the text and illustrations should be large enough to be viewed from a distance of more than one meter.
- Figures and tables should be kept as simple as possible to easily communicate the main messages to viewers.
- A large font-size heading of no more than two lines should be provided with each illustration. It is helpful to highlight key points or conclusions in large font type in a distinct area of the proposal.