

40 YEARS of EARLI

Voices and Memories from the Special Interest Groups (SIGs)



The European Association for Research
on Learning and Instruction

1985 - 2025

Preface

This year (2025), we are celebrating the 40th anniversary of EARLI. Founded in 1985 by Erik De Corte, professor at KU Leuven (Belgium), our association has grown into a globally recognized scientific community.

EARLI has earned a strong international reputation, and we take great pride in its impact on advancing research and fostering scholarly networks. A significant part of this success is due to our **Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**, which serve as the backbone of the association and make EARLI a dynamic and vibrant community.

SIGs provide engagement opportunities for EARLI's early-career and senior scholars on the basis of a shared research interest in an area of learning and instruction. The main aim of each SIG is to promote communication and exchange among the members. SIG activities include newsletters, forums, invited symposia at EARLI conferences, seminars, workshops, webinars, online meetings, meetings at the EARLI conferences, SIG conferences in the even years (when the biennial EARLI conference does not take place), and publications.

There are currently 27 SIGs within EARLI. Each of them has two SIG coordinators and one Junior Researcher (JURE) assistant coordinator who are committed to excellence in research in terms of theoretical foundation and rigorous methodology. SIG coordinators strive to offer an arena for the development and dissemination of high-quality research, which can promote research-informed teaching and learning practices in educational contexts.

On the occasion of EARLI's 40th anniversary, we highlight the prestigious contributions of our SIGs by featuring their voices and memories, which capture the legacy and future perspectives of SIGs through their insights. Thanks to the activities of our SIGs, EARLI will continue to develop and make an invaluable contribution to research on learning and instruction globally.

Lucia Mason, President

Leen Catrysse, Portfolio Holder for Communications

Ruben Hendrickx, Community Manager

SIG 1 – Assessment and Evaluation

The 40th anniversary of the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction is a moment of celebration and reflection. Over four decades, EARLI has grown into a strong and diverse community of educational researchers across countries, educational contexts and career stages. A key part of this development has been the establishment and growth of Special Interest Groups, which have provided space for in-depth exchange, collaboration, and the development of specific fields of research. Throughout this time, SIG 1 has become a platform for researchers to explore diverse developments in the field of assessment and evaluation from multiple perspectives, empirical, theoretical as well as practical. As EARLI marks its 40th anniversary, we are honored to contribute to the celebration and look forward to continuing our contribution to this vibrant and evolving field.

EARLI SIG 1 “Assessment and Evaluation” centers on research that investigates and advances assessment and evaluation practices across diverse educational contexts. EARLI’s SIG 1 brings together researchers whose work helps to shape the future of education through rigorous, evidence-informed innovations in assessment and evaluation. SIG 1 is interested in addressing the need for pedagogically driven models of (digital) assessment that inform policy, support teachers in their work and allows pupils and students to become reflective, lifelong learners. Topics of interest include formative and summative assessment, (peer)feedback, self- and peer assessment, (self-) reflection and evaluation of educational programmes. Over time, the field has expanded from large-scale testing and psychometric validation to include formative, self-, and peer assessment, as well as feedback literacy, all emphasizing inclusive, learner-centered approaches. Technological advances, especially digital tools and AI, bring new opportunities and challenges around fairness and validity. SIG 1 addresses these issues through research grounded in pedagogy and evidence, focusing also on evaluation topics like programme assessment, quality assurance, and using data to support informed decisions in education.

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 1

Being part of the SIG 1 coordination team has been a rewarding experience for us. It has felt like standing on the shoulders of those who laid the foundations of this community, researchers who have shaped the field and supported its growth over many years. Of course, that would not have been possible without the help of previous SIG 1 coordinators: Tijds Rotsaert, Olia Tsivitanidou, Ernesto Panadero, Jan Willem Strijbos, and Dominique Sluijsmans. Their leadership, vision, and

commitment have played a vital role in shaping SIG 1 into the vibrant and collaborative network it is today.

Coordinating the SIG has allowed us to engage more deeply with ongoing developments in assessment and evaluation, and to learn from the expertise and perspectives of colleagues across Europe and beyond. It has also helped us to further shape our own academic profiles and thinking as researchers. SIG 1 is a tight-knit, inclusive atmosphere. It is a place where early-career researchers can feel welcome and supported, where experienced scholars generously share their knowledge during, for example, Summer Schools, workshops, and expert feedback sessions. SIG 1 is also a place where new research collaborations are formed, for example, during the collaborative spaces organized during one of our EARLI SIG 1 conferences.

Next to being a tightly knit community, the SIG is also deeply embedded within the broader EARLI network, maintaining strong connections with other SIGs such as SIG 4 (Higher Education). These inter-SIG collaborations strengthen our collective research and amplify the impact of our findings.

We are particularly proud of the role that SIG1 plays in supporting Junior Researchers (JURE). Each SIG 1 conference provides a platform for PhD candidates and early-career researchers to present their work in a constructive, collegial environment and receive feedback from peers and more senior researchers.

SIG 1's Influence on Research

As EARLI celebrates 40 years, we reflect with gratitude on how our community within this broader network took shape and evolved. The field of assessment and evaluation has developed considerably over time. It has expanded from a foundation in large-scale testing and psychometric validation to include formative assessment, self- and peer assessment, feedback processes, and assessment and feedback literacy. These shifts reflect a broader move toward inclusive and learner-centered approaches that recognize the diverse backgrounds, needs, and ways in which learners demonstrate their understanding.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 1's Theme

Evaluation is a key and ongoing focus within the field. Understanding how evaluation data can be used meaningfully supports evidence-informed decision-making and contributes to continuous improvement at multiple levels of education.

Alongside these developments, societal and technological changes continue to influence assessment and evaluation. The need for digital and technology-enhanced assessment tools opened new opportunities for learning and feedback, while raising important questions about fairness,

accessibility, and validity. The growing presence of artificial intelligence in education adds further complexity to the design, interpretation, and use of assessments and evaluations.

SIG 1 actively engages with these challenges through research that is both pedagogically grounded and evidence-informed. The SIG is committed to advancing inclusive, effective, and reflective practices in both assessment and evaluation, supporting learners, educators, and educational systems alike. We are ready to contribute to these conversations with the same curiosity, critical thinking, and collaborative spirit that have marked its past.

We want to congratulate again the EARLI on this important anniversary. Forty years of impact, dialogue, and community building! As SIG 1, we remain committed to the values that EARLI stands for and we look forward to many more years of shared discovery and progress.

SIG Coordinators

Laurie Delnoij is an Assistant Professor on Learning and Assessment in the Department of Educational Research and Development at Maastricht University, School of Business and Economics. Her research focuses on educational and workplace assessment, professional (skill) development, and quality assurance. She also serves as a consultant, supporting teachers and trainers in the design and evaluation of learning trajectories and assessments.

Javier Fernández Ruiz is an Assistant Professor at the Autonomous University of Madrid. His research interests include self- and peer assessment, assessment design, and teacher training. Currently, he contributes to multiple research projects within the ERLA (Education, Regulated Learning & Assessment) Research Group and teaches courses in educational psychology at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Niels van der Baan is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Educational Development and Research and the School of Health Professions Education (SHE) at Maastricht University. His research interests include the implementation and evaluation of reflective practices and lifelong learning programs. In addition, he oversees educational quality assurance for several academic programmes.

SIG 2 – Comprehension of Text and Graphics

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 2

As the name “SIG 2” suggests, the Special Interest Group on Text and Graphics Comprehension has been part of EARLI since its early days. Founded in 1987 by Bernadette van Hout-Wolters and Wolfgang Schnotz, our SIG addresses a foundational topic in education that remains as relevant as ever. For nearly four decades, SIG 2 members and coordinators have grown alongside the association, helping shape the culture and collaborations that continue to define EARLI. This is also reflected by the following contributions of (former) SIG 2 coordinators.

The SIG 2 connects research from several disciplines around a shared passion: Understanding how people learn from text and visuals and how they process complex information and documents in various educational settings.

SIG 2’s Influence on Research

Our field has transformed with technological enhancements, ranging from static textbook illustrations to interactive simulations, complex visualizations and multiple documents in the digital space, as well as AI-generated media. Still, the shared commitment to cognition oriented and often experimental research has remained constant.

Next to a shared research passion, we always enjoy the positive atmosphere that is present in all SIG 2 meetings – as the pictures from recent years clearly show. Many members feel that the SIG 2 community serves as a professional home where you are welcomed whether it is your first conference or the continuous revival across the years – up to time after retirement! Our group is very inclusive and effortlessly spans across countries, career stages, and research traditions. I am so grateful to have made many wonderful friends in SIG 2 across the years and it is always a pleasure to meet everyone at the conferences!!

SIG 2 has continued to grow in numbers and in the diversity of topics and methods represented across time. After a beautiful conference in Freiburg (2018) followed by the challenges of the COVID pandemic with an inspiring online-only conference in “Prague” (2020), the SIG 2 meetings in Kiel (2022) and Valencia (2024) were taking place in-person again, where we could finally reconnect and enjoy time together.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 2’s Theme

We are proud to have contributed to the growth of EARLI’s SIG structure, and happy to see how it is still expanding after so many years. We appreciate that EARLI provides us with such a valuable

platform for exchanging research ideas and finding like-minded thinkers. We always welcome anyone who is interested in text and graphics comprehension to join us, to expand the network and grow into the future.

Happy 40th anniversary, EARLI, and thank you for decades of partnership with SIG 2.

We look forward to the next 40 years and to many more inspiring EARLI (SIG 2) conferences!

SIG Coordinators

Marlit Annalena Lindner, Sandra Berney, Herre van Oostendorp, Lalo Salmerón, Erica de Vries, Mireille Bétrancourt

Read the extended SIG 2 story with additional visuals [here](#).



SIG 3 – Conceptual Change

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 3

Our motivation for engaging with SIG 3 stems from a deep interest in how individuals learn when confronted with new ideas that challenge their existing understandings. Conceptual change research invites us to explore some of the most profound questions in both cognitive development and education: How does learning unfold when it requires more than just adding new facts? What does it take to restructure one's own knowledge, question prior beliefs, or adopt a fundamentally new way of seeing the world?

SIG 3 has served as an intellectually stimulating common place for all of us, a place where our shared interest in the mechanisms of deep learning intersects with a commitment to transforming educational practice. As coordinators, we are continuously inspired by the way SIG 3 creates space for enlightening conversations that reach beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. The SIG's legacy of theoretical diversity continues to challenge and broaden our thinking. It is precisely this openness, combined with the community's intellectual generosity, that keeps us deeply engaged and committed.

SIG 3's Influence on Research

SIG 3 has played a significant role in shaping the course of our research. Our collaboration as coordinators has not only brought us closer as colleagues but also provided a space for reflection on current directions and future of the field. The SIG's openness to different paradigms—from theory change to knowledge-in-pieces, from ontological shifts to sociocultural perspectives—has encouraged us to adopt more integrative approaches in our own work and taught us to appreciate the need for multiple perspectives on the complexity of learning.

Through our participation in SIG 3 events, including conferences, symposia and online talks, we have engaged with a wide array of theoretical frameworks and empirical methodologies, expanding our own thinking about the mechanisms and challenges of conceptual change. Regular biennial meetings and invited symposia at EARLI and JURE conferences provide invaluable platforms for sharing new findings, engaging in meaningful theoretical dialogue, meeting inspiring colleagues, and fostering collaborations across disciplines.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 3's Theme

As the field of conceptual change moves into its fifth decade, we see both enduring challenges and exciting new directions. The theoretical diversity that characterizes our field remains a strength, but also calls for greater dialogue and synthesis. As reflected in SIG's invited symposium in EARLI Conference 2025, titled "Reconsidering Conceptual Change: How the Past Shapes the Future", our community is increasingly aware that although our field has generated a wealth of theoretical insights, it yet still struggles with fragmentation and limited transfer to classroom practice.

The core question that initiated this field—how do learners restructure their knowledge when it conflicts with deeply held prior beliefs—underlines the need to re-clarify the boundaries of conceptual change itself: when it is needed, why it is difficult, and how instruction can support it? A call to re-ground our debates in shared contributions rather than divisions signals a path forward: to build cumulative knowledge rather than further fragmentation.

One proposal is the redefinition of conceptual change as a metatheoretical framework. We are encouraged to shift our focus from seeking a single, overarching theory toward considering conceptual change as a broad framework that encompasses various learning challenges—each potentially demanding a different theoretical lens. From this perspective, competing models such as ontological shifts, knowledge-in-pieces, framework theory or sociocultural perspectives are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary, each offering unique explanatory power for different types of conceptual phenomena. This pluralistic view opens exciting opportunities for SIG 3 to lead integrative research that acknowledges this complexity.

Another interesting direction is the proposal of a Unified Theory of Conceptual Change. This approach seeks to synthesize theoretical insights by organizing them across functional, representational, and implementational levels. Such a framework offers a coherent way to embrace diversity while ensuring internal consistency. It also prompts us to study conceptual change across multiple dimensions—such as timescales, modalities, and levels of analysis—ranging from neural mechanisms to classroom discourse.

Looking ahead, we see a growing emphasis on interdisciplinary integration. Conceptual change research can no longer be considered solely within the domains of science and mathematics education. Social sciences present rich, underexplored contexts where factors such as identity, epistemic beliefs, and emotional engagement deeply shape learning. Further theoretical developments must respond to these complex realities by incorporating insights from political science, environmental education, and economics.

A key future challenge is to bridge theory and practice more effectively. Despite decades of research, the impact on everyday teaching remains modest. We must work toward design-based research that translates conceptual change principles into tools teachers can use, while also embracing longitudinal and comparative studies that capture the gradual, situated nature of conceptual development.

In all of this, we hope SIG 3 remains not only a forum for rigorous debate but also a collaborative space for building shared understanding—about learning, about learners, and about what it means to change the way we think.

SIG Coordinators

Natassa Kyriakopoulou is Laboratory Teaching Staff at the Department of Early Childhood Education, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Her research focuses on conceptual change, children's scientific reasoning, and the role of epistemic and social cognition in learning. She has designed educational interventions to support knowledge restructuring and currently studies pre-service teachers' epistemic beliefs and self-regulation.

Jake McMullen is Professor of Learning Analytics at the Turku Research Institute for Learning Analytics and Department of Teacher Education, University of Turku. His research focuses on mathematics learning and instruction, with a special emphasis on inter-individual differences in learning and designing (digital) learning environments to support learning.

Christian Thurn is Senior Scientist at the Lab on Research on Learning and Instruction at ETHZürich. His research deals with conceptual understanding, cognitive models, and (digital) methods to assess students' knowledge. He has conducted classroom-studies to investigate the interplay of intelligence and prior knowledge and currently studies the effect of a statistic podcast on students' understanding of statistics.



SIG 4 – Higher Education

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 4

Across generations, our shared motivation to contribute to SIG 4 stems from a deep commitment to better understanding and improving higher education.

For Jan Vermunt, the motivation began early in his academic journey. From the moment he attended his first SIG 4 event, he was struck by the energy and openness of researchers passionate about similar topics. He valued the opportunity to connect with people from across Europe and beyond—exchanging ideas during the day and enjoying each other’s company in the evenings. Kirsti Lonka, one of the founding members of SIG 4, was driven by a vision: to create a space where higher education research had its own voice within EARLI. That vision has shaped the SIG ever since.

For Stefan T. Siegel, SIG 4 offers a rare mix of “rigorous, critical, and interdisciplinary discourse” alongside a truly collegial community. Taiga Brahm recalls being drawn to SIG 4 because it directly connected to her research on students' transitions into higher education. As a coordinator, she now works to ensure younger scholars experience the same supportive spirit.

Others, like Helga Dörner, emphasize SIG 4 as their “international scholarly home”. The network offered Anne Nevgi a collaborative space to reflect on pedagogical development. For Despoina Georgiou, SIG 4 is a natural place to unite research and practice in higher education. And importantly, Robert notes the diversity of backgrounds and perspectives in SIG 4 as uniquely stimulating.

SIG 4’s Influence on Research

The SIG’s intellectual generosity and feedback culture have deeply impacted our research journeys. Robert reflects on how SIG 4’s thematic and methodological breadth has continually challenged and refined his work. Similarly, Stefan has used SIG 4 feedback to strengthen his work on educational myths and sustainability within the broader European discourse.

Taiga credits her continued engagement with higher education research—despite branching into economic education—to the grounding influence of SIG 4. Despoina highlights how SIG 4 helped her build international collaborations, while Anne recalls how SIG meetings offered much-needed support for developing pedagogical practices in her university.

Jan appreciated SIG events as early previews of emerging research—valuable opportunities to test and evolve ideas before publication. Helga shares that SIG 4 helped her stretch the boundaries of

her own thinking, offering a supportive space to grow as a researcher and leader in higher education.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 4's Theme

Our SIG community sees a future shaped by complexity, collaboration, and critical engagement. Across all contributions, several shared themes emerge: a push for interdisciplinarity, openness to innovation, and attention to real-world challenges.

Helga and Despoina both anticipate more transdisciplinary and tech-supported approaches, where teaching innovations respond to dynamic learning environments. Anne calls attention to the growing importance of AI in reshaping assessment and open educational resources. Jan argues for research on new pedagogies in higher education and how they impact both students and teachers. Stefan advocates for research that links micro-level learning processes with meso-level and macro-level transformations, especially regarding sustainability.

Robert and Taiga call for increased cross-SIG collaboration, whether around sustainability, teacher education, or research methodology. SIG 4's joint conferences and interdisciplinary outreach are already moving in this direction.

Personal Memories

SIG 4 isn't just an academic community—it's a source of joy, connection, and lifelong memories.

For Stefan, one unforgettable moment came after the SIG1/SIG4 Joint Conference in Cádiz: a shared meal with colleagues at a beachside restaurant, fresh fish, sunset, saxophone—"a perfect reminder of the joy and community that can accompany academic collaboration."

Jan's most special SIG memory goes back to 1994—a boat conference between Helsinki and Stockholm, organized by future SIG leaders Kirsti and Sari. With 24-hour daylight, researchers sat outside at sea late into the night, building strong bonds in an environment of trust and curiosity.

Helga confesses to missing the SIG coordinator meetings—"friends forever." Despoina recalls the excitement of organizing the joint SIG 4 & 17 conference in Utrecht, which sparked rich conversations on innovation in higher education. Anne reflects on how deeply empowering the community felt during the 2011 Exeter EARLI conference—a reminder that belonging strengthens resilience.

Robert fondly remembers the 2018 Giessen conference as a highlight of his time in SIG 4. Taiga still smiles when thinking back to her meeting with Sari and Liesje in Cyprus as they worked on a special journal issue—"still happy that Sari agreed to be co-editor 😊."

And Kirsti? She has only ever missed one EARLI conference—because she gave birth to her daughter in July 1995. Her commitment and legacy continue to shape SIG 4 to this day.

A Shared Commitment

As we reflect on SIG 4's past, present, and future, one thing is clear: this is a community built not only on academic excellence but on mutual care, inspiration, and trust.

From boat conferences to beach dinners, from fresh ideas to lifelong friendships—SIG 4 has offered generations of researchers a place to belong, to grow, and to transform the future of higher education research together.

To recognize the achievements of influential representatives of EARLI and the field of higher education, Stefan T. Siegel interviewed leading researchers about their career, their research and their involvement with EARLI. Feel free to listen to the podcast here: <https://www.earli.org/podcast> Season 1 (2022 - 2023)

SIG Coordinators

Kirsti Lonka, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Helsinki. Co-founder of SIG 4. Has attended every EARLI conference since 1991 (except 1995, due to maternity leave).

Jan Vermunt, Emeritus Professor at Eindhoven University of Technology. Held professorial roles in the Netherlands and UK. SIG 4 Coordinator from 1999 to 2003; former EARLI EC member and Editor-in-Chief of *Learning and Instruction*.

Anne Nevgi, University lecturer and senior researcher in higher education since 1999. Developed a 60 ECTS university pedagogy program. SIG 4 Coordinator from 2009 to 2013.

Robert Kordts, Professor of University Pedagogics at the University of Bergen. Formerly held positions in Germany and Switzerland. SIG 4 Coordinator from 2015 to 2019.

Helga Dorner, Associate Professor and Institute Director at ELTE, Hungary. Her research explores organizational and academic learning. SIG 4 Coordinator from 2017 to 2023.

Stefan T. Siegel, Postdoctoral researcher at the University of St. Gallen. Focus areas include sustainability education and science communication. SIG 4 Coordinator since 2021.

Despoina Georgiou, Assistant Professor at Utrecht University; researches university teacher development and technology integration. JURE Coordinator since 2023.

Taiga Brahm, Professor for Economic Education at the University of Tübingen since 2016. Previously Assistant Professor at the University of St. Gallen. SIG 4 Coordinator since 2023.



From left to right: Stefan Siegel, Helga Dorner, Taiga Brahm & Despoina Georgiou at the dinner in Utrecht in 2024.

SIG 6 – Instructional Design

EARLI SIG 6 centers on the systematic design, development, and evaluation of learning environments and instructional processes. Its overarching aim is to understand how instruction can be designed to enhance learning effectiveness, efficiency, and engagement. The SIG bridges theory and practice, drawing heavily on cognitive and educational psychology while embracing technological innovation.

As seen in the 2021 and 2023 EARLI conference proceedings, SIG 6 hosts a diverse and methodologically rich body of work. It often collaborates with SIG 7 (Technology-Enhanced Learning and Instruction), particularly in areas such as collaborative learning, digital scaffolding, and technology-enhanced self-regulated learning (SRL).

Key Research Themes

1. Instructional Design Principles and Cognitive Load Management

SIG 6 work is deeply rooted in the study of evidence-based design principles, such as:

- The Segmenting Principle, which posits that learners benefit from information presented in manageable, user-controlled chunks.
- Signaling and other forms of attention-guiding help direct learners' attention to relevant content, especially in multimedia or collaborative contexts.
- Examination of seductive details and their effects on distraction and cognitive overload.

These principles are frequently operationalized within broader theoretical frameworks, such as Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) and the ICAP model (Interactive–Constructive–Active–Passive), which offer explanatory power for design decisions across various instructional contexts.

2. Collaborative Learning and Its Support

Collaborative learning remains a major area of inquiry, especially in joint research with SIG 7. Two key challenges are repeatedly addressed:

- Designing *effective support structures* for collaboration (e.g., collaboration scripts, prompts, adaptive feedback).
- Analyzing learning processes in collaborative settings, where learner interactions are interdependent and dynamic.

Process-oriented methods (e.g., discourse analysis, eye tracking, and physiological synchrony) are often used to better understand the socio-cognitive mechanisms underlying effective collaboration.

3. Comprehensive Instructional Design Models

Beyond micro-level principles, SIG 6 is also engaged in research guided by more comprehensive instructional design frameworks, such as van Merriënboer's Four-Component Instructional Design Model (4C/ID), which provides a holistic framework for complex skill development by integrating. These models guide both experimental research and large-scale instructional development, ensuring alignment between instructional strategies, learning objectives, and learner characteristics.

4. Scaffolding and Learner Support

SIG 6 places significant emphasis on the design and evaluation of scaffolding techniques, including:

- Adaptive support systems in hypermedia environments.
- Whole-class scaffolding strategies in inquiry-based science education.
- The integration of physiological feedback (e.g., EEG neurofeedback) to enhance learners' metacognitive awareness.

5. Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and Metacognition

SRL is a recurring theme, especially in the design of interventions that foster goal setting, monitoring, and strategy use. Research covers:

- Training learners in strategic learning approaches (e.g., the 3R method: Read–Recite–Review).
- Implementing process feedback in task-based learning scenarios.
- Developing tools to measure and support SRL dynamically using learning analytics dashboards, eye-tracking, and physiological data.

6. Evidence-Based Instructional Interventions

Many SIG 6 studies evaluate the effectiveness of specific interventions and learning strategies, including:

- Writing-to-learn: Exploring how written elaboration supports conceptual understanding and disciplinary thinking.
- Retrieval practice: Comparing testing with restudying to enhance retention and transfer.
- Graphicacy and representational fluency: Supporting learners in interpreting and integrating visual and verbal information.
- Inquiry-based learning: Designing instructional sequences that support exploration, hypothesis testing, and reflection.

7. Curriculum and Meta-Curriculum Design

Curriculum-level design is another prominent domain. Research has addressed:

- Academic work-life skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork) in higher education.
- Financial literacy curricula, focusing on economically relevant skills and decision-making.
- Meta-curricular approaches in mathematics, aimed at promoting reasoning beyond standard content.
- Language learning and metalinguistic awareness within curricula that foster cross-linguistic transfer.

8. Teacher Professional Development and Instructional Expertise

SIG 6 contributes to the design of programs that support teacher growth in areas such as:

- Diagnostic competence: Enhancing teachers' abilities to assess and respond to student understanding.
- Professional vision: Helping teachers perceive, interpret, and act on relevant classroom cues.
- Communication and classroom management skills: Training that targets interpersonal and instructional dimensions of teaching.

Design-based research is commonly employed in this area to iteratively refine teacher education programs and tools.

9. Instructional Material and Technology Design

A practical strand of SIG 6 work involves developing:

- Multimedia learning materials
- Hypertext systems
- AI-enhanced instructional tools
- Augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) learning scenarios

Designs are typically evaluated using mixed-methods approaches, including performance assessments, usability testing, and eye-tracking.

10. Theoretical Foundations and Research Methodologies

SIG 6 supports theoretical innovation and methodological advancement. Topics include:

- Refining models of cognitive load, interest development, and emotion regulation in instructional contexts.

- Adopting process-oriented methodologies like learning analytics, multimodal data analysis, and real-time SRL tracking.
- Promoting design-based research (DBR) to combine theoretical contributions with practical instructional solutions.

Conclusion

SIG 6 “Instructional Design” represents a vibrant and integrative research community dedicated to understanding how instructional environments can be intentionally structured to foster meaningful, efficient, and engaging learning. The SIG spans levels from micro-interventions (e.g., signaling, segmenting) to macro-level curriculum design and teacher education, with a unifying emphasis on evidence-based, theoretically grounded design.

Its contributions not only enhance instructional effectiveness in classrooms and digital spaces but also advance instructional design theory itself—positioning SIG 6 as a central force in shaping the future of learning and instruction across educational contexts.

SIG 7 – Technology-Enhanced Learning and Instruction

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 7

Salome: At my first SIG conference, I was asked to help organize it since my supervisor was the local host of the conference. Unfortunately, due to the corona pandemic, it took place online. Nevertheless, I had a lot of fun and despite the virtual setting, I noticed how great the SIG 7 community is. The researchers are very committed and appreciative, interested in the presentations, there are lively discussions, constructive feedback and always a positive atmosphere. I also had this impression of a familiar, open, appreciative and beneficial research community at the EARLI conference. That's why I gladly agreed to become a junior SIG coordinator and get actively involved. As a SIG coordinator, I think it's great to have a team of other coordinators to exchange ideas and distribute tasks. There's not too much work during the year and even when there's a big task, such as organizing a conference, it's also given me a lot. As SIG coordinator, I was able to build up a huge network with other researchers and great people and now have many international contacts. I also really appreciate the fact that I can act as a facilitator between SIG and EARLI and also get involved at EARLI level and represent our perspective there.

SIG 7's Influence on Research

Vincent: The influence of being a SIG 7 member and coordinator on my research has been profound. I have built a strong international network of motivated researchers, many of whom I now collaborate with on joint projects and publications. Being involved in SIG 7 also helped me develop professional skills through organizing conferences, symposia, weblectures, and a special issue. This active engagement has also significantly increased the visibility of my work.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 7's Theme

Juliette: The EARLI SIG 7 brings together researchers who include any technological support to learning or instruction. In the past years we have seen a growing interest for learning with virtual reality tools (*i.e.*, headset iVR, Augmented Reality) and more recently came AI. These digital tools are still in their infancy and will likely be one of the main focus of our members. However, we expect that one of the main challenges our researchers will have to tackle is to contextualize the use of these technologies. Indeed it is important to not only conduct empirically strong research, but to ensure that we can provide recommendations to practitioners as well.

Personal Memories

Vincent: I love the SIG 7 community. The scientific work is outstanding, but what makes it truly special is the sense of connection. We are not just colleagues, but a real community. Before each conference, I genuinely look forward to seeing everyone again, many of whom have become close friends. After the conference, I return home full of fresh ideas, renewed energy, and great stories – ranging from lighthearted moments like table tennis competitions, football debates, and memorable dinners, to deeply meaningful events like the joint memorial we held for a beloved SIG 7 member who passed away. SIG7 is where academic and personal life come together in the best possible way.

Salome: I can only agree with Vincent. I was welcomed into the SIG 7 community with open arms and quickly made many new friends, but also met my scientific role models and got to know new wonderful people. In my opinion, the SIG 7 community impresses with a very high quality of research and the members are always interested and open to collaborations, joint symposia or take the time to give appreciative and constructive feedback. The special thing is also the familiar and informal atmosphere. The SIG dinners and SIG conferences are always a big highlight of my year – not only do I meet a lot of amazing people there, but we also collect wonderful memories, such as swimming together in the Aare through Bern or partying and dancing together after the conference dinner. I consider myself lucky to have been part of this community and am very grateful for the great moments I have been able to experience.

Juliette: I joined SIG 7 in 2022, right after the pandemic, and it immediately felt like stepping into a family-like community. Although I had attended SIG 7 talks at EARLI before, being part of the joint SIG 6 & 7 conference was something else entirely. What really stood out to me was how approachable everyone was—especially the more senior members. Whether over coffee or something stronger, there was always space to bounce around ideas and dive into theoretical discussions. The poster sessions at the 2024 conference were particularly memorable. I felt we truly created an environment for deep, meaningful exchanges—far beyond the often rushed or formal presentations we're used to. It's probably when the small cowbells to indicate the end of the sessions were most needed! I'm really glad I could join SIG 7, and I'm happy to see how many new members we continue to attract each year.

SIG Coordinators

Vincent Hoogerheide is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Education, Utrecht University (the Netherlands). My research focuses on video learning, self-regulated learning, and learning-by-teaching. I have served as junior SIG 7 coordinator (2013–2017) and now serve as senior coordinator since 2021.

Salome Wagner is a postdoctoral researcher in educational science and did my PhD on computer-based feedback at the University of Tübingen, Germany. I also started acting as SIG 7 JURE coordinator in 2021. Currently, I am researching and working at the DIPF | Leibniz-Institute for Research and Information in Education at Frankfurt am Main (Germany), where I coordinate the German Network of Educational Research Data and advise researchers on research data management and open science. Meanwhile, I have been serving as junior SIG7 coordinator for 4 years.

Juliette Désiron is a senior researcher and lecturer in Educational Psychology at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. In my research, I focus on the design of instructional materials and digital learning environments to support learning and instruction in context. I joined EARLI in 2015 and was elected junior SIG 2 coordinator, and became an active SIG 7 member as well in 2022.

SIG 8 – Motivation and Emotion

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 8

Both of us have been engaged with the SIG community from early on in our academic career and have experienced firsthand how motivating, welcoming, and intellectually stimulating this community is. From our first conferences and summer schools onward, we felt immediately welcome in this SIG - not just like a professional network but a true academic “family”, where motivational research is not only discussed but also actively embodied in the way people interact, collaborate, and support each other.

Given the strong overlap of our research interests with the core themes of SIG 8, we have naturally felt drawn to the SIG’s mission and activities and have been involved early on in multiple ways: as junior coordinator, mentors, organizers of networking events, and most recently as Summer School instructors.

Throughout these roles, we have been deeply inspired by the vibrant exchange with international colleagues and the opportunity to engage with researchers at different stages of their careers.

The **International Conference on Motivation (ICM)**, which is the biannual SIG conference, has always been one of our favorite academic gatherings. It combines high-quality research with a thematic focus that resonates deeply with our interests alongside being able to connect with international scholars from all over the world. Although the SIG is large, it has maintained a strong sense of community and collaboration, especially for early-career researchers.

An especially valuable tradition is the **Summer School** for doctoral researchers, which precedes each ICM. Both of us have attended this Summer School in earlier stages of our careers and remember it as an incredibly formative and encouraging experience. We still have vivid and fond memories of our first ICM Summer Schools. Last year, both of us had the privilege to return as instructors, which was a highly rewarding experience. Meeting such motivated and thoughtful young scholars was both inspiring and energizing for our own work. These Summer Schools often spark meaningful connections and can form the basis for long-term collaboration. For instance, one of the participants from last year’s Summer School, is currently spending a research stay at the University of Konstanz to work on a joint research project with Hanna Gaspard, something they first talked about at the Summer School.

Our main reason for working as SIG coordinators is to give back to the community that has shaped and supported us in so many ways. Being able to contribute to its continued development, facilitate connections, and help strengthen the visibility and impact of motivation and emotion research across educational contexts is both an honor we are passionate about, and which we follow in the

footsteps of an outstanding line of researchers who have helped build and sustain the SIG's impact and community, including:

1987–1989 – *Monique Boekaerts and Ralf Schwarzer*

1989–1991 – *Monique Boekaerts and Christine Schwarzer*

1991–1993 – *Marja Vauras and Nitha Saysers*

1993–1995 – *Marja Vauras and Willy Lens*

1995–1997 – *Thea Peetsma and Peter Nenniger*

1997–1999 – *Peter Nenniger and Sanna Järvelä*

1999–2001 – *Sanna Järvelä and Anastasia Efklides*

2001–2003 – *Anastasia Efklides and Simone Volet*

2003–2005 – *Simone Volet and Marold Wosnitza*

2005–2007 – *Marold Wosnitza and Stuart Karabenick*

SIG 8's Influence on Research

As already mentioned, the ICM has a strong history as an international conference on motivation that is always well-attended by researchers from all over the world. Its origins lie in the *Workshop on Achievement and Task Motivation (WATM)*, first held in 1985 in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. This was followed by WATMs in Schloss Ringberg, Germany (1987), Bochum, Germany (1989), and Oslo, Norway (1993).

Around 1995, our SIG decided to organize a regular conference in the year in between the EARLI conferences. As one of the SIG coordinators at that time had taken the responsibility to organize the next WATM, the idea was born to merge both traditions. Thus, the first combined ICM took place in 1996 in Landau, Germany organized by Peter Nenniger.

From then on, the ICM evolved into a biennial event organized under the leadership of SIG 8 coordinators, with support from EARLI. The scope of the conference expanded to broader motivational constructs such as autonomy, self-regulation, time perspective, and digital environments. At the 8th conference in 2002 (Moscow), the name WATM was officially dropped. Since, the conference series continued solely under the name ICM and been hosted in various European cities by dedicated local organizers:

1985: Nijmegen, The Netherlands – *Eric De Bruyn, Jan van den Bercken, Theodorus Bergen*

1987: Ringberg, Germany – *Heinz Heckhausen, Franz Halisch*

1989: Bochum, Germany – *Klaus Schneider, Christine Trudewind, Lutz Unzer*

1993: Oslo, Norway – *Tormod Gjesme, Rolf Nygård, Pål Rand*

1996: Landau, Germany – *Peter Nenniger*

- 1998:** Thessaloniki, Greece – *Anastasia Efklides, Peter Nenniger, Thea Peetsma, I. Pychova*
- 2000:** Leuven, Belgium – *Willy Lens*
- 2002:** Moscow, Russia – *Dmitry Leontiev*
- 2004:** Lisbon, Portugal – *Francisco Peixoto*
- 2006:** Landau, Germany – *Marold Wosnitza, Peter Nenniger*
- 2008:** Turku, Finland – *Marja Vauras*
- 2010:** Porto, Portugal – *Marina Lemos*
- 2012:** Frankfurt am Main, Germany – *Thomas Martens*
- 2014:** Helsinki, Finland – *Kirsti Lonka*
- 2016:** Thessaloniki, Greece – *Eleftheria Gonida*
- 2018:** Aarhus, Denmark – *Niels Bonderup Dohn*
- 2020:** Cancelled due to COVID-19
- 2022:** Dresden, Germany – *Susanne Narciss*
- 2024:** Bern, Switzerland – *Tina Hascher*

This longstanding tradition highlights SIG 8's commitment to fostering excellent research, international exchange, and a strong scholarly community. In addition to organizing the ICM, our SIG recognizes outstanding contributions through two key awards.

The **Lifetime Achievement Recognition** honors a distinguished member who has significantly shaped the field of motivation and/or emotion and actively contributed to the SIG community. In 2024, the award was presented to *Reinhard Pekrun* at the ICM in Bern. To commemorate the occasion, our junior coordinators conducted an in-depth interview with him titled "*Emotion has always been a personal topic for me*", offering unique insights into his academic journey and contributions to the field. Likewise, we have also conducted interviews with several past recipients of the award, creating a living archive of reflective conversations that highlight the history, development, and human side of motivation research. Past recipients include *Thea Peetsma, Ruth Butler, Simone Volet, Stuart Karabenick, Anastasia Efklides, Monique Boekaerts, Peter Nenniger,* and *Willy Lens*.

The **Student Research Excellence Recognition** is awarded at the EARLI conference to a student whose paper related to motivation and/or emotion has been accepted at the EARLI conference. The three last awardees were *Valentin Emslander* (2023, University of Luxembourg), *Daria Benden* (2021, TU Dortmund University), and *Monika H. Donker* (2019, Utrecht University).

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 8's Theme

Looking ahead, we see exciting developments and important challenges in motivation and emotion research that warrant increased attention. As a SIG, we believe that we are well-positioned following our rich history to advance these fields by fostering collaboration across contexts, disciplines, and generations. From our perspective, there are at least two key research directions that warrant more attention in the future:

1. Context- and situation-specificity of motivation and emotion:

A central challenge for theory and application remains the dynamic nature of motivation and emotion. While classical models offer valuable general frameworks, recent discussions within our SIG have emphasized the need for more nuanced and context-sensitive approaches. This was the topic of the SIG 8 Invited Symposium at EARLI 2023 which brought together leading scholars such as *Matt Bernacki*, *Tina Hascher*, *Avi Kaplan*, and *Kirsti Lonka*. Extending this discussion, the EARLI Handbook, titled “Motivation and Emotion in Learning and Teaching across Educational Contexts”, edited by *Gerda Hagenauer*, *Rebecca Lazarides*, and *Hanna Järvenoja*, brings together contemporary theoretical reflections and methodological innovations on situated motivational and emotional processes in varied educational settings that make clear how this will remain a core topic for research over the next years.

2. Multimodal and real-time approaches to studying motivation and emotion

Research on learning and instruction has traditionally relied on self-report measures to assess motivation and emotions. Recently, other methods have emerged that can complement self-report data, including digital trace data as an indicator of students' motivated behavior or physiological data as an indicator of individuals' emotional response to an achievement situation. These approaches help to illuminate underlying mechanisms, personalize interventions, and refine theoretical models. Our SIG 8 Invited Symposium at EARLI 2025 (featuring *Miriam Wünsch*, *Robert D. Plumley*, *Hanna Järvenoja*, and *Roger Azevedo*) explores these methodological frontiers. We believe that multimodal data integration holds great promise for connecting research with practice in authentic educational contexts.

As we look to the future, we are excited to see these and other research directions unfold within our SIG. With its strong foundation, inclusive spirit, and continued commitment to excellence, we believe that our EARLI SIG remains an inspiring and timely place to advance motivation and emotion research.

SIG Coordinators

Hanna Gaspard is a Full Professor for Research on Learning and Instruction at the University of Konstanz, Germany. She has been SIG Coordinator from 2021 to 2025. Her research focuses on (a) the development of students' motivation and consequences on educational and career trajectories, (b) interventions to promote motivation and educational success, and (c) teaching quality and its associations with teachers' and students' motivation.

Martin Daumiller is a Full Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Freiburg, Germany. He has been serving as SIG Coordinator since 2023, having previously contributed to the SIG's development as Junior Coordinator. His research focuses on motivation and its promotion, self-regulated learning, instructional quality, professional learning and development, alongside the role of digital media in education.

SIG 10 – Social Interaction in Learning and Instruction

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 10

As coordinators of SIG 10, we are united by a common commitment to advancing the study of teaching and learning as a socially shared and culturally embedded phenomenon. Social interaction is central to the work within SIG 10: it is through dialogue, collaboration, and participation in social practices that teaching and learning processes unfold.

Our motivation to engage with SIG 10 arises from its distinctive focus on viewing learning and instruction as dynamic processes rather than static outcomes. This perspective highlights not only cognitive processes but also the intricate interactions between people, situated within specific tasks and contexts.

SIG 10 brings together a vibrant international community of researchers who share this vision and engage with a wide range of disciplinary fields, theoretical traditions, and methodological approaches.

SIG 10's influence on Research

Being part of SIG 10 has significantly shaped our research trajectory. It has provided us with access to innovative theoretical frameworks and methodological expertise for investigating diverse teaching and learning processes in both formal and informal settings. These perspectives have deepened our understanding of students and their development, encompassing topics such as peer collaboration, student-teacher interactions, teacher professional growth and collaboration, as well as the influence of social and cultural factors in education.

Equally important, SIG 10 offers a warm and intellectually stimulating community. Our activities serve not only as platforms for academic exchange but also as spaces for building meaningful professional relationships. The sense of collegiality and shared purpose within SIG 10 fosters an atmosphere of trust and openness, where rich and inspiring conversations flourish.

One of the hallmarks of SIG 10 is its focus on collaborative exchange across disciplinary and thematic boundaries. Our biennial SIG 10 conferences, organised jointly with related SIGs, have been especially valuable in this regard. These events encourage interdisciplinary dialogue and have led to long-term collaborations, joint publications, and externally funded research projects.

Additionally, the SIG 10 newsletter plays a vital role in scholarly exchange between conferences. It provides a regular platform for sharing updates, celebrating achievements, and stimulating dialogue.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 10's Theme

Looking to the future, we anticipate that SIG 10 will continue to be a prominent platform for research on social interaction in learning and instruction.

Key areas of development may include:

- Advancing theoretical models to reflect the diversity and complexity of social interactions in learning and instruction across different contexts and cultures.
- Developing and sharing innovative methodological approaches for analysing the complexity of social interactions in education.
- Sustaining and expanding dialogues with other SIGs to explore common themes and deepen our collective understanding of social interactions in education.

We are confident that SIG 10 will continue to thrive as a space for nurturing innovative ideas, encouraging meaningful collaborations, and further developing our collective understanding of social interaction in learning and instruction.

Personal Notes

For us as coordinators, SIG 10 has evolved beyond just an academic network. It now serves as a source of intellectual inspiration and collegial support. Serving in this role has been a privilege, enabling us to contribute to the development of this vibrant and inclusive community and to its ongoing legacy within EARLI. Simultaneously, it has been a space where we have grown as members of academia. SIG 10 represents a web we are intricately entangled with, and rather than seeking ways to untangle ourselves, we aim to deepen our immersion.

SIG Coordinators

Jelena Radišić (SIG senior coordinator) is a researcher at the Department of Teacher Education and School Research at the University of Oslo. In her work, she employs a variety of methods to observe processes related to learning and teaching, focusing on the interaction between various actors involved, namely students, teachers, and parents. She examines topics such as motivation for learning, academic emotions, subject identity, and how specific instructional practices can support their development and overall learning.

Mayra Mascareño Lara (SIG senior coordinator) is an assistant professor in Educational Sciences at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Her research uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to understand educational processes as they unfold in human interaction. She has focused on processes such as classroom learning opportunities, home-literacy environments, student

engagement, and collaborative learning, with a particular emphasis on multilingual or socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Charlotte Báez (SIG JURE Coordinator) is a researcher and lecturer at the St. Gallen University of Teacher Education, Switzerland. Her research focuses on educational processes in social relationship networks, with particular attention to collaboration, motivation, engagement and learning in digital and AI-influenced educational contexts. She uses quantitative and mixed-methods approaches to examine how social relationships and affiliations relate to these dynamics among students and teachers.

SIG 11 – Teaching and Teacher Education

EARLI SIG 11 is a central pillar of the EARLI community: it is currently the largest SIG in EARLI with 130 JURE members and 335 full members. SIG 11 brings together researchers committed to advancing the science and practice of teaching and teacher education. It was established in 2010 to provide a dedicated forum for scholarship on the preparation, development, and practice of teachers. Since the beginning, the SIG has evolved into one of EARLI's most active and interdisciplinary special interest groups.

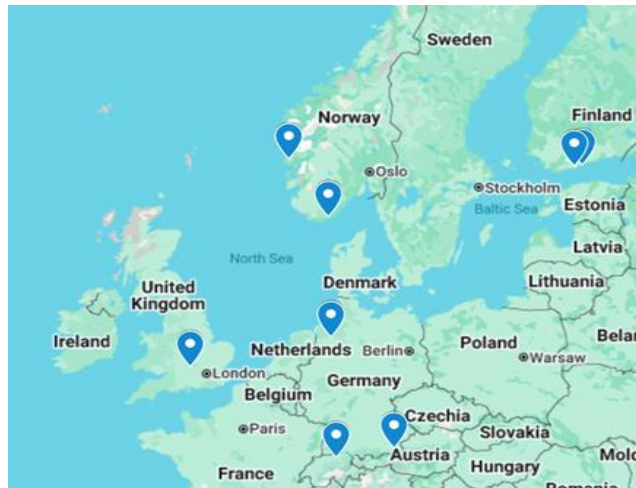
Motivation for Engaging with SIG 11

From its inception, SIG 11 has reflected the growing complexity and urgency of understanding teaching as a profession shaped by social, psychological, political, and pedagogical forces. The group has consistently addressed questions of teacher identity, professional learning, and policy contexts while embracing a broad range of methodologies—from experimental to ethnographic, and from large-scale data analyses to fine-grained video studies. We're methodologically diverse, and are welcoming to all flavours of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. We're international, and our membership comes from 46 countries across 6 continents (no members from Antarctica... yet).

SIG 11 was among the first EARLI groups to systematically integrate early career researchers through its Junior Researchers (JURE) initiatives, hosting pre-conference sessions that have become vibrant entry points for the next generation of scholars. The inclusion of JURE coordinators in SIG leadership helped institutionalise this developmental ethos. For example, in Oxford 2024, we had a welcoming introduction session (with pizza!) and the opportunity for junior researchers to network, eat pizza, drink beer, and discuss their research.

SIG 11's Influence on Research

Through biennial conferences and joint meetings with related SIGs (recently SIG 13 on Moral and Democratic Education and SIG 4 on Higher Education), SIG 11 has presented conferences built on timely themes. Our conference locations and themes are listed below. We'd love to involve more countries – so if you're not represented on this map, please contact us as potential conference hosts!



2024 - Oxford, United Kingdom: *Diversity within Classrooms and Societies: Perspectives on Teacher, Moral, and Democracy Education* (Joint Conference with SIG 13)

2022 - Oldenburg, Germany: *Digital Transformation in Teacher Education*

2018 - Kristiansand, Norway: *Teaching and Teacher Education in a Changing Society*

2016 - Zurich, Switzerland: *Diversity and Inclusion as a Challenge for Teacher Education*

2014 - Frauenchiemsee, Germany: *Practice-Oriented Teacher Learning and Professional Development*

2012 - Bergen, Norway: *Accountability Under Ambiguity: Reforming School and Teacher education in Norway*

2010 - Kirkkonummi, Finland: *Future Visions of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (Joint Conference with SIG 4, Higher Education)

SIG 11's leadership mirrors its research focus in its international flavour. Coordinators have spanned institutions across Europe and beyond, with current leadership involving scholars from the UK, Israel, Austria, Switzerland, Germany and Finland. The collaborative leadership model has fostered continuity while encouraging innovation in conference formats, networking, and dissemination strategies.

Crucially, SIG 11 has maintained a commitment to inclusive and dialogic exchange. Whether through roundtable debates on teacher shortages, methodological innovation workshops, or informal "SIG socials," the group has created space for both rigorous debate and community building. The approach seems to be working as we continue growing every year.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 11's Theme

Now, as EARLI marks its 40th anniversary, SIG 11 is growing in confidence and influence and continues to offer vital insights into one of the most urgent global challenges: preparing, supporting, and retaining effective and motivated teachers.

Our history is not only one of academic accomplishment but also of community—one grounded in shared questions, methodological diversity, and a deep investment in the social good of education. We're a welcoming and friendly SIG and will strive to do our best to understand and make an impact on education worldwide.

Our last conference in Oxford welcomed SIG members from 26 countries: the international participation and diverse perspectives enriched our shared understanding of teaching and teacher education, paving the way for future research and innovations.

- We met many like-minded scholars and friends and had a wonderful three days together. I hope there will be more cooperation and learning opportunities in the future. (Liqing Zhou, China)
- I enjoyed the conference very much... I had a lot of great conversations, learned a lot, and met some really nice people that I someday hope to meet again... I came home with a lot of inspiration to read and write... We want to be involved, make connections and learn from others, but also share what we know and what we do. (Ilinca Sas, Romania)
- I very much liked the combination of senior and junior scholars among the session presenters. I loved the sense of ease, inclusivity, and informality that allowed in-depth discussions of the research as well as social interaction. (Avi Kaplan, United States).

SIG Coordinators

Tova Michalsky is a co-coordinator of EARLI SIG 11 (Teaching and Teacher Education) and a Professor of Education at Bar-Ilan University. Her research focuses on teacher professional development, especially in fostering teachers' ability to promote self-regulated learning (SRL) in diverse contexts. As SIG 11 Coordinator, she leads a global network of scholars dedicated to understanding how teachers learn and grow professionally. Her work has highlighted the importance of evidence-informed, inclusive, and future-ready teacher education. She has supported early career researchers, led international collaborations, and co-organized events that connect research, practice, and policy. She sees SIG 11 as a vibrant community that encourages innovative thinking and dialogue across career stages.

Robert (Rob) Klassen is a co-coordinator of EARLI SIG 11. EARLI has been a welcoming academic home since 2012. He is Professor of Education at the University of Oxford with research focusing on teacher motivation, recruitment, selection, and retention, with a strong emphasis on developing theory-informed interventions that support teachers across career stages. As SIG 11 Coordinator, he has seen firsthand how EARLI fosters intellectual exchange and cross-national collaboration. As a co-convenor for the EARLI Centre for Excellence in Research (E-CER) called 'InSearch', he worked on international research collaborations with education researchers from around the globe.

JURE Coordinators

Clara Kuhn joined EARLI shortly after starting her PhD on mentor teachers' motivation, she completed in 2023. EARLI's wonderful, open-minded community connected her with JURE members and renowned researchers she'd previously only known from papers. She treasures the enriching discussions across Europe that shaped her researcher identity, with highlights like a magical beach dinner in Greece and the inspiring JURE conference in Portugal.

Rebecca Snell is a SIG 11 JURE joint coordinator. She is a Research Officer and Education Consultant at the University of Oxford's Department of Education. Her work focuses on teacher recruitment and retention, including through innovative technology usages. She recently co-organized the EARLI SIG 11 & 13 Conference 2024 and is very much looking forward to exploring her role as joint coordinator of SIG 11's

Judit Martínez Moreno is a SIG 11 JURE joint coordinator. She recently finished her PhD in Education Sciences and is working as a junior researcher at the Zurich University of Teacher Education. Her research interests focus on how AI is shaping the teaching profession, with implications for teacher education. In her role as JURE coordinator, she aims to facilitate connections that foster critical and supportive.

Past SIG 11 Coordinators

Barbara Moschner, University of Oldenburg

Inger Marie Dalehefte, University of Agder

Hanne Tack (JURE), Ghent University

Annelies Kreis, University of Teacher Education Lucerne

Tina Seidel, Technical University of Munich

Els Consuegra (JURE), VUB Brussels University

Kari Smith – Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), emerita

Kirsti Lonka, University of Helsinki

Maaïke Endedijk (JURE), University of Twente

Fritz Staub, University of Zurich

Paul Conway, University College Cork

Elaine Munthe, University of Stavanger

Michal Zeller Mayer, Levinsky College of Education

Theo Bergen, Radboud University Nijmegen

Pictures from the Oxford conference



SIG 15 – Special Educational Needs

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 15

Being part of SIG 15 has been both professionally and personally enriching. As SIG 15 coordinators, we want to share what draws us to this community and why we are committed to contributing to its continued growth.

We are particularly motivated by SIG 15's commitment to advancing and sharing research that promotes equitable and inclusive education for individuals with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). We are inspired by its interdisciplinary ethos, which fosters collaboration across diverse fields and encourages connections with other SIGs. We also value the collaborative culture nurtured by EARLI, which provides a constructive and open environment for discussion. In a field where building partnerships from scratch can be difficult and time-consuming, EARLI offers opportunities to connect with researchers who share similar interests.

Through this community, we have had the opportunity to form meaningful collaborations with colleagues we may not have otherwise encountered, and to engage in thoughtful, critical dialogue with both junior and senior academics. Above all, we appreciate the ongoing effort of SIG 15 and the wider EARLI network to foster a safe and respectful environment where researchers feel supported and free to exchange ideas openly.

SIG 15's Influence on Research

Being part of SIG 15 has significantly broadened our understanding of inclusive education. Engaging with an international community of academics has challenged us to reconsider assumptions, explore new perspectives, and formulate research questions we might not have otherwise considered - particularly for those of us at the early stages of our careers. This broader view directly contributed to the development of collaborative projects such as [Comparative Analysis of Special Education School systems](#) (CASES), which emerged from shared discussions within the SIG 15.

We have been exposed to a wide range of research methodologies and designs, including qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods, and participatory approaches. This diversity has encouraged us to be more innovative and reflective in our own work, enabling us to select approaches best suited to the complex realities of inclusive and special education and to build partnerships with researchers whose methods align with our interests. Importantly, the international nature of SIG 15 and EARLI has created fertile ground for comparative research, making it possible to explore how inclusive education is understood and implemented across different educational

systems. This cross-country perspective has enriched our thinking and led to collaborative projects such as CASES, which emerged from shared discussions within the SIG community.

Finally, SIG 15 has played a central role in establishing international collaborations by providing a structured yet open environment where long-term partnerships could form organically. Many of us have developed connections across countries and institutions, leading to co-authored publications, research visits, and joint grant applications. In addition, SIG 15 has offered valuable peer support and fostered regular discussions among like-minded researchers.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 15's Theme

As SIG 15 coordinators, we see exciting opportunities for the group to continue evolving as a space for impactful, inclusive, and collaborative research. In the spirit of interdisciplinarity, we see great potential in fostering new research questions and collaborations across SIG 15's diverse membership - including senior and junior academics as well as educators, psychologists, and speech and language therapists. By bringing together different disciplinary perspectives, we hope to encourage more participatory approaches and co-produced research that reflect the complexity of inclusive and special education. Creating space for ongoing dialogue can help spark innovative ideas, strengthen partnerships, and support research that is both rigorous and grounded in real-world contexts. Another priority is to address underexplored areas, such as the long-term educational experiences and support needs of individuals with SEND beyond compulsory schooling - particularly transitions to adulthood, higher education, employment, and lifelong learning.

We also believe it is essential to continue supporting early-career researchers and JURE members by providing platforms to showcase their work, networking with peers, and by facilitating professional development within the EARLI community. Having benefited from support ourselves, we are keen to ensure that early-career researchers continue to feel welcomed, valued, and encouraged within the SIG 15 community. As part of this, we see potential in organising workshops for both junior and senior members, creating space for shared learning, discussion of innovative research approaches, and reflection on key topics in inclusive and special education.

Strengthening international collaboration remains a priority. We aim to deepen connections across countries and foster the inclusion of underrepresented voices, while also continuing to leverage the cultural and disciplinary diversity already present within our SIG.

Finally, we see a powerful opportunity for SIG 15 to take a leading role in advancing Open Science in inclusive and special education research. Supporting members in adopting transparent and reproducible practices—through workshops, shared resources, and collaborative initiatives—can help foster a more accessible and open research culture. By encouraging the use of open methods,

materials, and data, and by facilitating practices such as preregistration, replication, and ethical data sharing, SIG 15 can contribute meaningfully to shaping a more open and transparent research community.

Personal Notes

“The EARLI SIG 15 community has been a cornerstone of my academic development. It hosted the very first conference I ever attended. Over the years, this community has supported my growth as a scholar, leading to connecting with international mentors who later welcomed me for research visits and culminating in my current role as a JURE Coordinator. But most importantly, I have met like-minded friends that I wish to connect with in and out of work.” (Terhi Vessonen)

“One of the most memorable moments from my time as SIG 15 JURE coordinator was finally meeting Dr Nadina Gómez-Merino (JURE coordinator) in person at the SIG 15 conference in Valencia in September 2024. After collaborating online for three years, it was a real joy to connect face-to-face and a reminder of the value of the community we build through this SIG, both professionally and personally.” (Erica Ranzato)

“Being part of this community has allowed me to gain first-hand knowledge of the variety of approaches to the scientific study of neurodiversity in education in Europe and beyond, which I hope has been reflected in my work as coordinator. On a personal level, I have felt the trust of the members to continue with traditions while also having the freedom to introduce new ideas. Finally, the close collaboration with my fellow coordinators has been one of the most enriching experiences I have had professionally.” (Inma Fajardo)

SIG Coordinators

Inmaculada Fajardo (coordinator) is a university lecturer of Developmental and Educational Psychology at the University of Valencia (Spain). Her work focuses on the study of oral and written language and related cognitive processes in individuals with developmental disorders and disabilities. She leads a national AEI-funded project on early reading in preschoolers with Special Educational Needs, in particular ASD and Hearing Disability, and collaborates to EU projects.

Terhi Vessonen (JURE coordinator) is a Doctoral Researcher in Special Education at the University of Helsinki, specializing in mathematical skills learning and development among children. Her work combines different quantitative methods (e.g., meta-analysis, structural equation modelling) to examine individual (e.g., language skills, motivation) and contextual characteristics

(e.g., interventions) related to children's mathematical learning. Her research aims to develop evidence-based educational practices, especially for learning mathematics.

Kati Sormunen (outgoing coordinator) is a university lecturer at the University of Helsinki. Her professional interests cover a wide range of themes related to inclusive learning and teaching, which she examines through collaborative research partnerships with relevant stakeholders. She has extensive experience in coordinating and executing both national and international research and development projects.

Erica Ranzato (outgoing JURE coordinator) is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Surrey (UK). Her doctoral research focused on the development of mathematical abilities in neurodivergent populations. She is currently involved in a project evaluating a specialised link worker role to support adults with cerebral palsy in ageing well. Erica also collaborates with a London-based charity supporting children with Down syndrome and is passionate about accessibility and inclusion in education and society.

Appointed Coordinators from 1st August 2025

Timo Lüke is a Professor of Inclusion-Oriented Diagnostics at the University of Kassel, specializing in data-driven decision-making, learning assessment, and meta-analysis. His research focuses on single-case experimental designs, support planning, and professional development. He is committed to Open Science and works closely with schools and educational authorities. Timo actively contributes to academic networks and international collaborations in the field of inclusive education.

Theresa Maria Steiner (JURE coordinator) is a Doctoral Researcher at the University of Münster, specializing in data-based decision making and teacher training. Early in her PhD, she focuses on bridging research and school practice, drawing on her background in primary education and educational science. Her interests include open science, video-based professional development, and science communication. She teaches inclusive and special education at the master's level and has several years of editorial experience in a peer-reviewed journal.

SIG 17 – Methods in Learning Research

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 17

Being part of SIG 17 means being part of an inspiring, open-minded community of researchers who are passionate about the learning, use and development of *quantitative and qualitative methods in synergy*. Engaging with this group has not only challenged and sharpened our thinking but also provided a supportive environment for discussing complex methodological questions that often arise in mixed methods research, allowing to ‘other methodologies’ be part of the newest discussions.

SIG 17’s Influence on Research

For Sylvia: the exchange within the SIG 17 community has been instrumental in shaping my research agenda. The discussions and collaborations encouraged me to take a more reflective stance on methodological decision-making and to develop a clearer rationale for integrating different types of data in my own studies. SIG 17 inspired my work on combining eye tracking with implicit association tests and retrospective interviews to better understand professional vision in teacher education.

For Carla: being part of the SIG 17 community has helped me realize that I’m not alone in striving to enhance how we apply and develop our skills in learning research methods. It’s reassuring to feel that, as a community, we share a collective responsibility to continue promoting sound practices in research methods for learning and instruction -especially in a time when academic publishing often takes center stage and rapid research processes are becoming increasingly common.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 17’s Theme

In the future, Sylvia sees great potential in exploring new forms of data integration, including multimodal and digital data, and in fostering interdisciplinary collaborations that bridge methodological and substantive expertise. Supporting early-career researchers in navigating the complexities of mixed and multi methods will also remain an important focus.

Looking ahead, Carla’s view of the future of research in SIG 17 lies in fostering a community that values depth, reflection, and shared responsibility in methodological practice. In a fast-paced academic environment, it’s crucial to create spaces for critical engagement with research methods. At its heart, SIG 17 can help keep people -learners, educators, and researchers- at the center of our work.

Personal Notes

One of Sylvia's most memorable SIG 17 experiences was during the JURE Conference 2024 in Seville, where Andreas Gegenfurtner led a workshop on mixed methods research. The room was very crowded and people were sitting on the floor – a vivid sign of how much interest there is in methodological questions among early career researchers. That moment highlighted for Sylvia how essential a strong methodological focus is on educational research and how much enthusiasm there is for engaging with mixed methods approaches.

Carla's personal note reflects on how SIG 17 always receives demands of providing JURE workshops to help develop new methodological skills. This is the moment in which SIG 17 members offer their free time to help junior research to experience other ways of doing research, giving them a space to learn, share and discuss.

SIG Coordinators

Sylvia Gabel is a doctoral researcher at the University of Augsburg, Germany, and actively involved as a JURE Coordinator in SIG 17 since 2023. Her research focuses on teacher professional vision and the use of eye tracking within mixed methods approaches. With a background in teaching and a master's degree in interdisciplinary research on teaching and learning, she is dedicated to advancing innovative methodologies in educational research.

Carla Quesada-Pallarès is a Serra Hunter Associate Professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain, and SIG 17 Coordinator since 2023. Her research focuses on how to foster research competence in education at different educational levels (high school, undergraduate and postgraduate); as well as to what extent lifelong learning is transferred to the workplace, exploring transfer in other non-traditional contexts, as well.

SIG 18 – Educational Effectiveness and Improvement

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 18

SIG 18 offers a strong international network in the field of educational effectiveness and improvement. Several collaborative initiatives have already emerged from the connections made within this community. Due to the practical relevance of SIG 18's research topics, this network is of great value to both educational practice and research. We follow in the footsteps of renowned scholars. Standing on the shoulders of giants, we have the opportunity to continue great and thoughtful research.

SIG 18's influence on Research

SIG 18 introduced us to leading scholars in educational effectiveness and improvement, fostering a network and collaborations beyond our own universities. It has shaped and enriched both our research and thinking about education, while always acknowledging the complexity of education and the fact that effectiveness is not always easy to measure.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 18's Theme

As we look to the future, the mission of SIG 18 - to link educational effectiveness and improvement through rigorous and meaningful research - remains highly relevant. Future research will increasingly need to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to address challenges such as equity, sustainability, and digitalization in education. Building on our strengths in developing and testing models of teaching effectiveness, evaluating schools and systems, and designing interventions, SIG 18 will continue to foster high-quality research that bridges theory and practice. A core task will be to further develop multi-perspective measurement approaches that can capture the complexity of educational processes. We envision SIG 18 as a space where collaboration, innovation, and reflection come together to shape the next generation of educational research and improvement.

Personal Notes

Hannah: I still clearly remember attending my first SIG 18 meeting in Groningen (the Netherlands). There, I met some of the leading scholars in educational effectiveness research. I was quite afraid of them in the first place, but I experienced they were not only names on articles, but real people that we very kind and friendly. It was also where the idea for a volume on student perceptions of teaching quality was born: a book that has now been published for several years. Truly a valuable and inspiring experience!

SIG Coordinators

Jerich Faddar is an assistant professor at the department of Educational Sciences of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. His research interests are situated at the crossroads of educational effectiveness, international large-scale assessments, impact of) educational innovations and educational measurement. In particular, he is interested in the use of information and technology to inform and facilitate educational practices and quality assurance in education.

Hannah Bijlsma is a primary school teacher, postdoctoral researcher at Radboud University, and content expert at the Netherlands Initiative for Education Research (NRO). She previously worked as an inspector and researcher at the Dutch Inspectorate of Education. In 2022, she obtained her PhD with research on measuring and improving teaching quality. Hannah is the author of several books, including *Zicht op de les*, *Erken de ongelijkheid*, and *Student Feedback on Teaching in Schools*. She also publishes articles and gives lectures. Her work focuses on effective teaching, lesson quality, teacher education, and diversity in educational teams.

Tosca Daltoè is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Tübingen and the Institute for Educational Analysis Baden-Württemberg (IBBW). She recently completed her PhD, which focused on the video-based assessment of teaching quality through classroom observation. Her current research explores the use of classroom video as a tool for analyzing teaching practices and promoting professional learning in teacher education and development.



SIG 19 – Religions and Worldviews in Education

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 19

EARLI SIG 19 has been an important academic community to all current coordinators since the very early stages of our research careers. It has provided an encouraging and inspiring environment to present research and connect with colleagues who share similar interests.

We have really embraced working together with colleagues from different countries and contexts on what interests me the most: How can we develop religious and worldviews education further within the next decade?

Interests of JURE researchers have also been important in SIG 19, and the work of JURE coordinator in creating a platform where JURE researchers can engage in an honest exchange of experiences and expand their international networks has been invaluable. For example, in the context of the last conference, there was a separate JURE meeting on the topic “Networking and Performance on international Conference Stages”, which the participants described as encouraging, appreciative and inspiring.

We hope SIG 19 can evolve as a network that attracts researchers who are diverse in terms of their scientific disciplines, methodological approaches, as well as cultural and worldview backgrounds. We also would like to include more people from countries that are not very well represented in our SIG at the moment.

SIG 19’s Influence on Research

The group has functioned as a network that has fostered fruitful research collaboration, including book projects, funding applications, and joint research projects. For example, the series “Research on Spiritual and Religious Education” published by Waxmann Verlag offers an international platform for publishing one's own research, as the current coordinator Inkeri Rissanen and the current JURE Coordinator Sarah Delling have done with their PhD dissertations.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 19’s Theme

We see the research themes of our SIG gaining more and more relevance in today's world, which is characterized by various political and societal challenges wherein religions and worldviews also play a role. The weaponization of religious differences for political purposes is once again on the rise, and educational approaches to support coexistence and social cohesion, tailored to contemporary contexts, are needed. Simultaneously, there is a growing awareness of the urgent need for significant and swift lifestyle changes due to the existential challenges humanity faces,

such as climate change. The critical potential of worldview diversity in widening imaginations and fostering necessary cultural transformations for developing socially, culturally and ecologically sustainable societies must be acknowledged and nurtured.

However, these challenges also invite interdisciplinary approaches. As researchers of religious and worldview education we know the power of inter-worldview dialogue in opening new horizons and fostering ways of “thinking otherwise”. The same can apply to inter-disciplinary dialogue, which is why we are eager also to develop collaboration with other EARLI SIGs. At the moment, we are looking forward to a joint conference with SIG 13 in June 2026.

Memorable Moments

The legendary karaoke events, which have been an integral part of our SIG conferences for many years, are unforgettable for all participants. In addition to the exuberance and fun to be had there, talents that go far beyond research excellence are always revealed.

A remarkable moment in recent years was when, after a lengthy and sometimes controversial debate, we changed the name of our SIG from ‘Religious and Spiritual Education’ to ‘Religions and Worldviews in Education.’ The inclusiveness expressed in the new name also stands for the renewability and innovative strength of our SIG in the face of an educational field that is changing at an increasingly rapid pace.

SIG Coordinators

Inkeri Rissanen is University lecturer in multicultural education at Tampere University and holds a title of docent in school pedagogy at the University of Helsinki. Her research focuses on the nexus of intercultural, religious/worldview, and teacher education, with particular attention to their implications for equity and inclusion.

Sarah Delling works as a research assistant at the Chair of Catholic Religious Education at the University of Siegen, Germany. In the context of empirical research she focuses on body language in religious education and the professionalism of teachers.

Alexander Unser is a professor for religious education at TU Dortmund University, Germany. His research interests include interreligious learning, unequal learning opportunities in religious education, and the intersection of religious and citizenship education.

SIG 20 – Inquiry Learning

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 20

Inquiry Learning was founded in 2005 by Professors Ton de Jong and Zacharias Zacharia as an initiative from the EU Kaleidoscope Network of Excellence, including academic teams in European universities concentrating on technology-enhanced learning. Although SIG 20 was initiated as computer-supported inquiry learning to facilitate the work and sustainability of this network, it was decided in a 2015 SIG members meeting that it should become more inclusive and, therefore, the name of the SIG changed to SIG 20 - Inquiry Learning.

SIG 20's Influence on Research

Professor Wouter Van Joolingen acted as SIG Coordinator from 2013 to 2017 and also led the Organizing Committee of the Joint Conference of SIG 20 and SIG 26 - Argumentation, Dialogue and Reasoning in Utrecht, the Netherlands. This was the time when SIG members tried to reconnect again after the COVID-19 pandemic. Wouter would like to underline that at Utrecht, one crucial loop for the SIG was closed, when Professor Ton de Jong presented his keynote speech, where the major developments in the field of inquiry learning were presented and commented upon and the way forward was paved.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG's 20 Theme

We are grateful to all SIG 20 Coordinators, JURE Coordinators, and SIG members, whose multifarious contribution has been decisive to elaborate on opportunities and challenges for inquiry learning during the last 15 years. We are working on this legacy to shed light on recent developments, preparing our symposium for the EARLI 2025 Conference at the University of Graz, Austria, organizing our “Inquiry-Based Learning Behind the Scenes” series of webinars with keynotes focusing on forefront research in inquiry learning, and planning a new joint conference with SIG 03 - Conceptual Change for August 2026.

SIG Coordinators

Christiana Varda, Tomi Jaakola, and Tasos Hovardas

Former SIG 20 Coordinators:

Ton de Jong (founder, 2005 – 2009)

Zacharias Zacharia (founder, 2005 – 2011)

Margus Pedaste (2009 - 2013)

Astrid Wichmann (2011 - 2015)

Wouter van Joolingen (2013 - 2017)

Bram de Wever (2015 - 2019)

Ingo Kollar (2017 - 2021)

Koen Veermans (2019-2023)

Former JURE Coordinators:

Marios Papaevripidou (2009 - 2011)

Mario Mäeots (2011 - 2013)

Annelies Raes (2013 - 2017)

Juliane Kant (2017 - 2019)

Yiannis Georgiou (2019 – 2021)

Anna Keune (2021)

Valentina Nachtigall (2021-2023)

SIG 22 – Neuroscience and Education

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 22

As scientists seeking to understand how the brain develops and is shaped by experience, how it builds a knowledge base, and how it acquires academic skills such as reading and mathematics, we believe it is essential to collaborate with, and learn from, educators and educational researchers. Being part of EARLI has been of tremendous value for us, as it provided the opportunity to engage with experts in the field of education, learn about best practice in teaching and learning, and gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of educational practice. These interdisciplinary exchanges have not only enriched our research but have also challenged us to think more critically about the practical implications of our work. At the same time, we hope that our work will contribute insights that help inform theories of learning and instruction. While we believe neuroscience is only a very small part of the broader picture, we believe that it offers valuable context for understanding learning and development by providing insight into the underlying mechanisms, showing how learning occurs within the context of the developing brain.

Yet, over the past years, we have found that interdisciplinary collaboration is not without its challenges. Researchers from different fields often seem to speak different languages, and we frequently find ourselves “lost in translation.” For example, although basic neuroscientists, cognitive neuroscientists, psychologists, and educational scientists are all interested in studying the concept of ‘feedback,’ the meaning and operationalization of this concept vary considerably across disciplines, resulting in misunderstandings, mismatched expectations, and difficulties in integrating findings across fields. A related challenge is that neuroscience and education often operate at different levels of analysis, ranging from detailed studies of individual neurons, to investigations of brain networks and their links with cognitive and socio-emotional functioning, to children’s behaviour in naturalistic classroom settings. Because of differences in focus and methodology, it can be difficult to draw direct conclusions across these levels. Understanding neuronal plasticity, for instance, will not directly provide insights into teacher practices or learning strategies. Nevertheless, it can offer clues about the conditions under which the brain is most receptive to change, such as the importance of repetition and developmental timing.

Still, the challenges described above should not discourage interdisciplinary work. Contextual theories, such as Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological systems theory, emphasize that child development is shaped by the multiple interconnected social environments in which children participate.

Likewise, psychobiological research has shown that bidirectional influences exist across all levels of analysis, going all the way back to the level of the brain and even the genome. These examples highlight the importance of interdisciplinary research exchange in the science of learning and instruction.

SIG 22's Influence on Research

The founding of SIG 22 in 2009 marked a pivotal step in facilitating interdisciplinary exchange between neuroscience and education. As one of the first international academic communities dedicated to educational neuroscience, SIG 22 has played a pioneering role in the development of the field. Through its network, SIG 22 has brought together researchers from across Europe and beyond, offering a unique platform within the EARLI community to advance the integration of neuroscience with educational research.

Over the years, SIG 22 has hosted conferences in Zürich (2010), London (2012), Göttingen (2014), Amsterdam (2016), and London (2018), exploring a wide range of topics including the cognitive and neural foundations of literacy and numeracy, learning difficulties and developmental disorders, adolescent brain development, educational interventions, motivation and self-regulation, and understanding different learning strategies such as spaced learning. SIG 22 has also partnered with the International Mind, Brain, and Education Society (IMBES) for conferences in Montreal (2022) and Leuven (2024) to strengthen connections with the international educational neuroscience community.

SIG 22 has also contributed to science communication. Notably, our SIG 22 predecessors initiated a special issue and e-book titled *“Everything You and Your Teacher Need to Know About the Developing Brain”*, published in *Frontiers for Young Minds* (2020). With funding from the Jacobs Foundation, the e-book was translated into five European languages, making these articles more accessible to children from non-English-speaking countries.

Together, SIG 22 has had a significant and lasting influence on research by cultivating a vibrant community. Through its network, researchers have connected with others who are interested in understanding the relationships between mind, brain, and education, and it has enabled the cross-pollination of ideas and approaches. We believe these interactions have started to bridge methodological and conceptual divides, and have inspired research that is more rigorous and educationally relevant.

Perspectives on Future Research within SIG 22's Theme

The field of educational neuroscience has been met with both (unreasonably) high expectations and strong criticisms. Both are likely driven by misconceptions about the objectives of the field. Educational neuroscience is not simply about applying brain science to education; it cannot (and should not) prescribe what teachers should do in the classroom. Rather, it aims to deepen our understanding of how the brain functions during learning, offering a broader context that may help researchers and educators understand how children learn and develop. At its core, educational neuroscience is a fundamental science, investigating how education shapes the developing brain, how different neurocognitive systems support academic skill acquisition, and which neurocognitive factors contribute to learning disabilities.

While the field has developed into a relatively cohesive research community, with many scientists trained at the intersection of neuroscience, psychology, and education, we see opportunities for the field to grow. First, it will be important to find opportunities for educators to be active participants (and not merely recipients) in the research process, where they can help shape research questions, test ideas in classrooms, and act as collaborators. Participatory research models, commonly used in neurodiversity research, may offer a valuable framework for fostering such partnerships and for grounding neuroscience more firmly in real-world educational contexts.

Second, there is a growing need to take educational neuroscience out of the lab and into the classroom where learning unfolds in complex, dynamic ways. This does not diminish the value of basic research, but rather highlights the importance of complementing it with applied approaches that better connect neuroscience with educational practice. Studying brain and behaviour in these real-world contexts can help validate and refine laboratory-based insights, and deepen our understanding of how learning unfolds in more ecologically valid environments. At the same time, this research can strengthen translational pathways, increasing the likelihood that information reaches practitioners and that findings from basic research translate into practical applications. As part of an effort to advance neuroscience research in classroom settings, SIG 22 organised a pre-conference workshop at IMBES 2024 on real-world educational neuroscience. The session featured a demonstration and discussion of mobile EEG, neurofeedback, and hyperscanning in classroom contexts.

Finally, we believe that the field should do more to embrace diversity and context in how we study learning. Research is often conducted in highly controlled settings with narrow samples and rigid categories that do not capture the variability seen in real-world learners. Educational neuroscience should intentionally incorporate individual, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity into

study designs to generate findings that are more generalisable and relevant to the realities of educational settings. This includes expanding how we conceptualize and investigate learning difficulties. For example, rather than focusing solely on traditional diagnostic labels, transdiagnostic approaches that highlight patterns of strengths and weaknesses may offer a more flexible and inclusive way to understand neurodevelopmental variation. Shifting the focus towards individual profiles, and the cognitive and neural processes that underlie them, may help develop models of learning that better reflect diverse learner needs.

Across the field, we have seen exciting progress on many of these fronts, and we look forward to seeing the field grow in new directions. We hope SIG 22 will continue to serve as a catalyst for interdisciplinary work by bringing researchers and educators into closer partnership, and by inspiring integrative approaches that capture the complexity of learning and development.

SIG Coordinators

Dietsje Jolles is an Associate Professor of Education and Child Studies at Leiden University and has served as SIG 22 coordinator since 2021. In her research, Dietsje takes an interdisciplinary approach to study the complex interplay between learning and (neuro)cognitive development, drawing on insights from cognitive neuroscience, psychology, and educational science. Dr. Jolles is also passionate about science communication, particularly for youth.

Anna Matejko is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Durham University, and joined the SIG 22 coordinator team in 2023. Her research explores how educational skills like math and reading are learned, and how they shape the developing brain. Anna uses behavioural studies, interventions, and neuroimaging (including structural and functional MRI) to examine the neurocognitive processes that support children's learning.

SIG 28 – Play, Learning, and Development

We are the latest SIG of EARLI. We were formally established at the end of 2021. Since then, we have organised several webinars attended by people from different continents, and our first SIG meeting in July 2024, together with SIG 5. It was an excellent opportunity to meet people with the same research interest.

Inspired by the work of David Whitebread, in the year 2021, a group of past Cambridge University PhD students came together to honour his life. Dr. David Whitebread was a very playful researcher who, during his career, supervised a bunch of PhD and master's students from all over the world. Their lives had been profoundly influenced by their relationship with David. He was a great mentor, inspiring them and fostering their careers during their postgraduate studies and beyond. He was awarded the prize for Best Supervisor at Cambridge University. He passionately advocated for children's rights to play. And he inspired many of their students, now academics, to do the same. After knowing of his passing, many met and talked about ways to keep his legacy alive. So they decided to create a new SIG at EARLI about Play,

As SIG 28 we plan to become a platform for sharing scientific evidence on the importance of play in its many forms, informing the design of interventions to be implemented in local contexts. We are looking to foster international collaborations and connect play researchers and professionals. Finally, we would like to inspire public policy development related to play within families, communities, education, and beyond.

We also have a special interest in supporting early-career researchers, as David Whitebread always did with his students, including postdocs, visiting fellows, and academics at early stages in their careers.

Motivation for Engaging with SIG 28

Interest in play and playfulness has rekindled. Evidence has emerged on the importance of play in various areas essential to human learning and thriving, such as language, creativity, social skills, self-regulation, and well-being. Equally, recent research on play-based pedagogies has yielded promising findings of better concentration, greater enjoyment of challenging activities, and more progress in children's linguistic, social, and motor skills than peers taught solely through direct instruction.

Despite these benefits, formal education settings across the globe offer few opportunities for children (and indeed adults) to learn in engaging ways that draw on how we naturally learn from the outset of life: through play and playful encounters with others and the world around us. Even in early education, where play is more widely accepted, international studies show decreased time allocated to play due to premature academic and performance pressures. A similar tendency is observed in family and community settings: for those affected by urban poverty, this usually implies a lack of access to parks and natural environments with play affordances, along with increased stress in parents, who in turn have less playful interactions with their children. In more affluent families, children are often overly-scheduled and supervised, restricting their play opportunities.

Perspectives of Future Research within SIG 28's Theme

Despite these many advances in the field, much work is needed to understand and promote the role of play across home, school, and in public spaces. Also, a better international representation in research is called for, since most studies are conducted in the US and Europe, leaving Latin American, African, and Middle Eastern countries vastly underrepresented, with the risk of overlooking culturally specific aspects critical to understanding and implementing play in local communities. Finally, play and playful approaches are rarely investigated within education settings serving primary school learners, youth, and adults, including future care and education professionals. This is problematic regarding play and playful learning being valued and supported by parents and educators.

SIG Coordinators

Valeska Grau is an Associate Professor at the School of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC). The University of Cambridge, UK, awarded her a PhD in Education. Her research focuses on the relationship between play and young children's creativity, self-regulation, and well-being. Also, she is interested in implementing playful pedagogies in early years education.

Antonia Zachariou is Assistant Professor of Psychology (Educational and Developmental) at the University of Limassol, Cyprus. She was awarded an MPhil and a PhD in Education (Psychology and Education) by the University of Cambridge, UK. Antonia researches the link between play and children's development (specifically self-regulation and executive functions).

Pablo Torres is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Education, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC). Psychologist (PUC) and PhD in Education (University of Cambridge, UK). His research focuses on studying how pedagogical and social play interactions promote children's

learning and development. His specific developmental areas of interest are self-regulation, EF, collaboration, social development, and motivation.