



SIG 13 Moral and Democratic Education
SIG19 Religions and Worldviews in Education

Navigating Polarisation & Fostering Civic Engagement through Education



3rd – 5th June 2026
Kristiansand, Norway

Call for Papers

The organising team of SIG 13 'Moral and Democratic Education' and SIG 19 'Religions and Worldviews in Education' warmly welcome you to our joint conference, 3rd - 5th June 2026 at the University of Agder, Kristiansand, Norway!

Both SIGs are engaged in addressing the balance of open discussions with the protection of minorities and diversity, as a significant matter in classrooms and societies, hence the conference theme is:

Navigating Polarisation and Fostering Civic Engagement through Education

In contemporary societies, polarisation significantly influences public discourse and threatens social cohesion (Emanuele & Marino 2024; Pausch 2021). Polarisation refers to the process of increasingly diverging opinions and attitudes. Social groups align along ideological, political, cultural, or religious lines, and individuals retreat into “echo chambers” which reinforce existing beliefs and worldviews and portray differences as threats, normalising extreme positions (Cosentino 2020; Leivska 2024). Although it can empower minority groups, it also risks fostering radicalisation and the acceptance of violence.

Theoretical approaches to polarisation highlight both cognitive and affective dimensions: from in-group/out-group mechanisms and identity politics to competing truth claims and the decline of shared narratives (Leivska, 2024). Consequently, the willingness to engage and the capacity to tolerate and constructively navigate ambiguity diminish. Thus, polarisation poses a threat to democracy, as it undermines dialogue, impedes collective problem-solving processes and makes it difficult to adopt alternative perspectives. Educational institutions face the challenge of countering these effects whilst striving to cultivate meaningful civic engagement and to foster students’ and pupils’ abilities to participate in society in a critical and self-determined manner.

This joint conference aims to explore how education can act as a transformative tool in navigating polarisation and promoting inclusive engagement across ideological, political, cultural and religious lines, with attention to the roles of citizenship and democratic education, and religious and worldviews education.

We seek to foster connection and collaboration between members of both SIGs and aim to develop unique and relevant perspectives with academic and practical implications. We welcome theoretical, empirical, and practice-based contributions from disciplines including - but not limited to - education, theology, political science, philosophy, sociology, and religious studies, which relate to the scope of the two SIGs — Moral and Democratic Education and/or Religions and Worldviews in Education. We encourage submissions relating to the conference theme, but emphasise that all submissions relating to either SIG are welcome at this joint conference!

SUBMISSION AND PRESENTATION FORMATS

Proposals can only be submitted via the conference system at <https://www.earli-eapril.org/login> from 15th October. Submissions via e-mail will not be processed. The conference formats are Symposia, Roundtable, Poster and Paper sessions.

Symposia (90 minutes)

Symposia will consist of three papers and a discussant. Symposia-submitters are encouraged to mind the *three-country* rule which requires that at least *three* different countries are represented among the active participants. Each paper will be allocated 20 minutes for presentation (including discussion) and the same for the discussant. We are open to innovative ideas – please contact us if you wish to organise your symposium in a different way.

Requirements:

- An abstract of 200-350 words (ref. not incl.) words providing information regarding the aims, the scientific and educational relevance of the symposium.
- 3 keywords
- The title of the symposium, the title of the three presentations with the name and affiliation of each author, and how the symposium is to be structured.
- The name of the chair and the name of the discussant.
- In addition, each presenter must meet the criteria of an individual presentation.
- All your active participants (i.e. presenting author, chair and discussant) need an EARLI account. Co-authors do not need an EARLI account, and their names, contact details and affiliations can be entered manually by the submitter.

Criteria:

- 1) Relevance to the EARLI domain of SIG13 and/or SIG19
- 2) Significance for theory, practice and policy
- 3) Relevant background information (theoretical/empirical/other)
- 4) Organisation and coherence of the entire symposium
- 5) Reflection of how this symposium will contribute to the research field
- 6) The overall quality and scientific originality

Each paper in a symposium will also be reviewed as an individual paper using the criteria outlined below.

Roundtable/paper/poster presentations

Each paper and roundtable session will comprise three contributions, which will be thematically grouped by the organising committee. Each paper will be allocated 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion following each paper.

If you are a JURE member and aim to be considered for the JURE Keynote, please tick the appropriate box during the submission process of your paper. If you are awarded the JURE Keynote, the organising committee will contact you in advance. You will, regardless of the JURE Keynote be considered for a regular paper session.

The posters will be thematically grouped by the organising committee. We kindly ask the authors to be present in the poster session slot and to prepare a 2-3-minute presentation of their poster. We recommend preparing A4 handouts and/or a QR code for downloads of posters and other materials.

A poster and a roundtable session can show «work in progress» if no data is available yet. Paper sessions and symposia must include research findings.

Requirements:

- An abstract of 450-600 words (ref. not incl.) outlining the aims, methodology, findings (Roundtable and posters allow for presenting expected outcome, if no data is available yet), and theoretical and educational significance of the research.
- 3 keywords
- Presenting authors need an EARLI account. Co-authors do not. Their names, contact details and affiliations can be entered manually by the submitter.

Criteria for empirical contributions:

- 1) Relevance to the EARLI domains of religious and worldview education and/or of moral and democratic education
- 2) Significance for theory, policy and practice
- 3) Relevant background information (theoretical/empirical/other)
- 4) Aims and research questions
- 5) Research design & methods

- 6) Clarity of results and conclusions (Roundtable and poster only: expected results, if no data available)
- 7) The overall quality and scientific originality

Criteria for theoretical/conceptual contributions

- 1) Relevance to the EARLI domains of religious and worldview and/or of moral and democratic education
- 2) Significance for academic debate
- 3) Relevant background information (theoretical/empirical/other)
- 4) Embeddedness in the relevant literature
- 5) Clarity and robustness of theoretical argument
- 6) The overall quality and scientific originality

Important dates

30th September - **Call for papers**

15th October 2025 - **Submission opens**

12th January 2025 - **Submission deadline**

January / February 2026 - **Review process**

15th February 2026 - **Letter of Acceptance**

15th March 2026 - **Early bird and presenter registration deadline**

Conference details

The conference program will avoid timetable conflicts for presenting authors, chairpersons and discussants but not for co-authors.

Proposals can only be submitted through the EARLI conference system. Submissions via email will not be processed. We require experts for the review process and encourage participants to sign up for this important task in the submission process.

We warmly invite you to submit proposals for Roundtables, Posters, Symposia and Paper sessions and are very much looking forward to your contributions.