

Forging a New Social Contract for Education Perspectives on Governance

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

This call for contributions invites thinkers, researchers, educators, and practitioners to contribute 1000-2000 word think-pieces that explore, from different perspectives, the governance imperatives of a new social contract for education. Submissions will be peer-reviewed, and a selection will be published in a volume to appear in English and French, in advance of the UN's Summit of the Future.

All submissions must be received by 31 January 2023.



Description

In late 2021, the International Commission on the Futures of Education released its report [Reimagining Our Futures Together](#) calling for a new social contract for education. The report argues that only a new social contract for education can both rectify the persistent educational exclusion of the most vulnerable, while at the same time ensure that knowledge and learning help shape more just and sustainable futures. A new social contract for education implies new governance arrangements based on three foundational principles. First, quality education throughout life is a human right. Second, that education is, first and foremost, a collective public endeavour. Third, that knowledge and education are common goods that must reflect humanity's wide diversity of ways of knowing, living, and being to address the interconnected challenges of humanity and the planet.

These principles for a new social contract for education contrast with dominant trends in governance of public affairs including in the field of education. Increasingly, neoliberalism and market principles inform governance models and arrangements that promote competition, deregulation, privatization, standardization, and narrow monitoring based on quantitative indicators that limit diversity in education and promote isomorphism. Moreover, and perhaps even more concerning, conventional education systems perpetuate prevailing development models dependent on limitless production and consumption and the exploitation of human beings and the planet.

Thus, there is a need to explore the relationship between governance trends and the process of forging a new social contract for education if humanity is to change course towards just, inclusive, and sustainable futures. This volume will explore the question of how forging a new social contract for education will require governance models, approaches, and foundations that align with its key principles. Characterized by cooperation and solidarity, concerned with widespread participation and the establishment of trust, and committed to justice in all of its aspects, education will require new forms of leadership, prioritization, participation, and policy reform across its systems, processes, and objectives.

Authors are encouraged to build on the Report from the International Commission on the Futures of Education: [Reimagining our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education](#) and may also find it useful to refer to the UN Secretary General's report [Our Common Agenda](#), which calls for a

renewed social contract anchored in human rights. The published collection will contribute vital analysis to the Summit of the Future, to be convened by the United Nations in September 2024.

Themes and Lines of Enquiry

Authors are invited to submit think pieces towards one the following five lines of enquiry, related to the governance implications of a new social contract for education:

1. Building norms of solidarity, cooperation, and trust
2. Cultivating and safeguarding knowledge and education as common goods
3. Revisioning modes, models, and mechanisms of governance
4. Strengthening capacity, leadership, and learning
5. Charting new priorities, policies, and pathways to change

A wide range of themes related to the governance dimensions of a new social contract for education are welcome, including (but not limited to): futures thinking for education, systems thinking and complexity theory, education throughout life, higher education, early childhood education, primary and secondary education, technical and vocational education and training, teachers and the teaching profession, curricula and pedagogy, research and innovation, education for sustainable development, citizenship education in a globalized world, steering the digital transformation of education, governance of the knowledge commons, the role of community and social movements, school leadership, indigenous and alternative approaches to governance, and more.

Enquiry 1: Building norms of solidarity, cooperation, and trust

What shared visions, principles, and purposes should guide relationships among the growing range of actors involved in education provision, participation, and governance? How can governance foster trust, inclusion, social cohesion, and peacebuilding in and through education?



Enquiry 2: Cultivating and safeguarding knowledge and education as common goods

How do just, inclusive, and sustainable futures depend on protecting knowledge and education as common goods? What roles do national and local authorities play in ensuring appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks to channel resources and effort while preventing the enclosures of commercialization? How does education relate to the information and knowledge commons, including the digital commons?

Enquiry 3: Revisioning modes, models, and mechanisms of governance

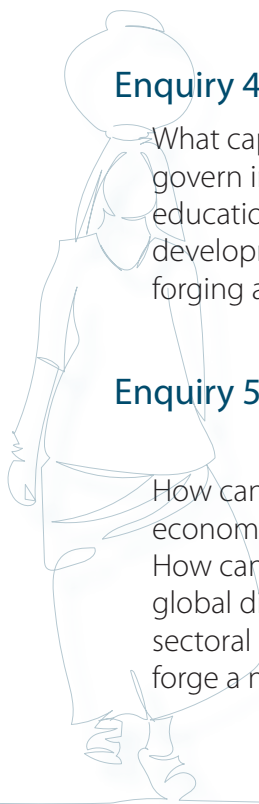
What modes, models, and mechanisms can help translate the principles of a new social contract into governing systems and processes that are democratic, participatory, and collaborative? How can enabling environments be fostered in ways that are context-dependent, restorative of past exclusions, and responsive to change while embracing diverse ways of knowing, being, and living?

Enquiry 4: Strengthening capacity, leadership, and learning

What capacities do States and other stakeholders need to effectively govern increasingly complex landscapes, players, purposes, and spaces, of education? What processes for capacity building, training, and leadership development are needed? How can research, and innovation contribute to forging a new social contract for education?

Enquiry 5: Charting new priorities, policies, and pathways to change

How can shared priorities in education be recentred on concerns for social, economic, and environmental justice, rather than on market preferences? How can society-wide commitment help to safeguard education against global disruptions, financial austerity, and budgetary constraints? What cross-sectoral and intersectoral commitments and arrangements are needed to forge a new social contract for education?



Submission Requirements

Authors are invited to submit 1,000–2,000 word think pieces in English or French on one of the themes outlined above. All submissions should include a clear argument or position statement that is well supported in the piece. If pieces are written in a language other than one of UNESCO's two official working languages, they must include a full translation of their piece into English or French for consideration. The submission deadline is **31 January 2023**.

We conceive of think pieces as original and unpublished texts with a narrow focus. They may combine theoretical and empirical insights, propose to innovate concepts and/or generate reflection. Think pieces may examine global or regional concerns and may refer to national experiences; kindly note, however, that we are not seeking regional or cross-national comparative analyses. Nor are we soliciting case studies, though the presentation of a specific country or regional experience may be used to exemplify a concept or priority. In like manner, the think piece is neither intended to be a policy guide nor a technical guide.

Proposed submissions will be selected based on relevance to the call, clarity of the argument, strength of analysis, and writing quality. Not all submissions can be accepted, and it is at the discretion of the editors to accept or reject any piece according to these criteria and the overall direction of the publication. Submissions must be authored by one or more individuals, and pieces from organizations, companies, or other entities will not be considered without indicating authorship attribution. Selected pieces will be published as part of the volume to be released at the UNESCO General Conference in November 2023.

Think pieces should be submitted via the webform at the following link: <https://forms.office.com/r/F49fx01vuX>. Submissions should include the following elements:

- 1. Title.** Choose an appropriate title. The title should summarize the main idea or ideas of your contribution. A good title contains the fewest possible words needed to adequately describe the content and/or purpose.
- 2. Author name(s) and affiliation.** The author name(s) and affiliation will be featured in the table of contents and/or alongside the think piece.



Add the authors in the order you would like them to appear in the final version, along with their brief biographical statements.

- 3. Headers and sub-header titles.** Titles should not exceed 90 characters (including spaces). Titles should not include numbers, acronyms, abbreviations or punctuation. They should include sufficient detail for indexing purposes but be general enough for readers outside the field to appreciate what the paper is about. Headers and sub-headers are not mandatory, although they do help guide the reader.
- 4. Text length.** The contribution should be between 1000-2000 words (font Arial 11, double-spaced).
- 5. Citation style.** The citation style should follow rules of the [UNESCO Style Manual](#) (pp. 39-44).

Authors of accepted submissions will be required to sign a grant of rights prior to publication. UNESCO does not offer any remuneration for the submission of think pieces related to this call for contributions.

