



## A CONCEPT NOTE WITH CALL FOR PAPERS

### **Learning from Learners: E-QUALising Diverse Higher Education Landscapes Project E-QUAL\*: Second Student Conference 19 and 20 February 2016 @ Ambedkar University Delhi, India**

Recent reforms and innovations in higher education in several countries rest on assumptions by educators, government administrators, employers and—increasingly—technology providers about matching needs of education providers, beneficiaries and end-users. These assumptions do not always reflect sound understanding of students' locations in knowledge economies or due appreciation of their expectations and goals. A primary objective of this student conference--'Learning from Learners'-- is therefore to take stock of, and indeed 'map', student learning experiences, revealing how students inhabit or relate to diverse learning environments and how they handle challenges relating not only to education but to employment/livelihoods, lifestyles, social choices and demands of citizenship. Our attention in the conference will be given not only to learning technologies and pedagogies but to learning experiences. Paper abstracts and proposals are solicited.

*This conference activity shall highlight autobiographical accounts of students, through which educators might more effectively analyze diverse learning experiences as well as adapt to real learning environments. Rather than creating abstract teaching systems and learning technologies for idealised end-users, we want to better understand challenges in teaching-learning transactions and identify mismatches between student expectations, aspirations and habits and what higher education systems purport to deliver to them. While some student participants may present papers, others will communicate aspects of their learning experiences through audio-visual media ('Photovoice', etc.) and exhibits. Conference sessions will feature moderated panel ('roundtable') discussions of students and teachers. Since students from outside as well as within India will participate, and since participants will come from public, state-aided and private learning institutions, we expect the conference sessions to be widely comparative.*

In **preparing proposals/abstracts**, conference applicants are requested to foreground the following questions:

- What can we learn from India's diverse student population, including those who do not inhabit the imagined Indian HE 'mainstream' of urban centres or model institutional campuses?
- Is there a 'digital divide', or are there digital fragments, across Indian (and European) higher education and social environments?

- What ‘connectivity’ challenges exist for learners on the margins (variously defined) and how can technology-enabled learning systems address these concerns?
- Which learning technologies and pedagogies can most effectively address learners’ concerns about their present and futures?
- What challenges arise in applying technological fixes (e.g., through ‘blended learning’) to specific learning conditions or environments?

*The above is not an exhaustive list of focus topics, but proposals should address in some way at least one of the suggested questions.*

**Proposals of two basic kinds will be considered by the review panel:**

- (1) written ‘papers’ to be read aloud at the conference;
- (2) presentation ‘posters’, photo or video installations, artwork, slideshows.

For type (1) proposals, applicants should submit an abstract not longer than 500 words (*in English*). Individual paper presentations should be restricted to twenty minutes of speaking time. For type (2) proposals, applicants may submit *either* a 500-word (maximum) written description or concept note of their presentation *or* a Power Point featuring sample text, images or embedded audio/visual files. The Power Point prototype (of not more than 15 slides) would not be the final form of the presentation but would instead *show the logical or narrative framework of the final product*. The Power Point must include at least one slide indicating questions, issues or conclusions highlighted by the proposed presentation. *Final papers must be read in English, while other presentations/installations could be in English as well as other languages*. A proposal should include the name, academic affiliation and email address of the author.

Conference panels and sessions will be moderated by resource persons who are teachers/practitioners well versed in a featured theme, and moderators are expected to channel student voices to help assemble theoretically-informed statements addressing the theme of the session. Each day’s proceedings will conclude with a roundtable discussion in which participants deliberate about implications of the conference sessions.

*Details of events of the conference will be announced later on the conference webpage:*  
[www.lfl2016.wordpress.com](http://www.lfl2016.wordpress.com).

**Contact for further information and submission of proposals: [equalproject@aud.ac.in](mailto:equalproject@aud.ac.in).**

**Proposal deadline: 15 December 2015**

**Decisions communicated to applicants: by 25 December 2015**

**Final submission of paper or delivery of ‘mock-up’ of installation: 31 January 2016**

**\*Project E-QUAL (2013-2017: ‘Enhancing Quality, Access and Governance for Undergraduate Education in India’)** is funded by the European Commission and the British Council. Its academic partners are Ambedkar University Delhi, the University of Hyderabad, Jadavpur University (Kolkata), King’s College London, Shiv Nadar University (Noida) and the University of Bologna (Italy). A major Project E-QUAL objective is to adapt learning technologies and pilot sample courses in four interdisciplinary learning fields: Critical Thinking and Knowledge Systems; Cultural Studies; Human Ecology; Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Development. Outcomes of the Project are to be communicated widely across higher education in India and the EU.