

International Society for Teacher Education (ISfTE)
2023 Annual Seminar



Co-Hosted By

Paro College of Education
Royal University of Bhutan
Academy of Himalayan Art and Child Development

11–16 June 2023, Paro, Bhutan
February–May 2023, online webinars



ISfTE 2023 Vision

Transformative education post-Covid-19 pandemic— From self-healing to social transformation

Conveners

Kezang Sherab and Ugyen Choden

Website

www.pce.edu.bt/isfte2023

Invitation

The organising committee invites you to the Paro College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan to participate in the 2023 Annual Seminar of the International Society for Teacher Education

Overview

Education forms the foundation for our humanity and civil society. Effective education creates the right environment for learners based on their true developmental needs. This noble purpose is not only related to the well being of present and future generations, but also the well being of the environment, communities, families, and every human being.

Educators worldwide remember early 2020 as a time of severe disruption, when almost all the world's educational institutions shut their doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By the end of March 2020, 185 countries had closed their schools, affecting 90 percent of the world's students. The COVID-19 pandemic challenged the way our governments, institutions, organizations, and people think and function, bringing the world to an education crisis.

According to UNICEF estimates, nearly two-thirds of 10-year-olds across low, middle, and high-income countries are unable to read and understand a simple story, a condition known as learning poverty. Millions of students worldwide from pre-primary to university level are at risk of never returning to school. With repeated surges in COVID-19 cases, schools have faced severe staff shortages, high rates of absenteeism, and increasing school closures. Furthermore, students and educators continue to struggle with mental health challenges, higher rates of violence and misbehavior, and concerns about youth disconnecting from their education. Failing to provide the right environment for learners, this education crisis could lead to generational catastrophe. This shock to educational process highlights the fragility of the modern lifestyles to disruptions, but also

presents urgent reminders to reassess and strengthen the education systems for transformative learning.

According to a United Nations 2022 Report, cascading and interlinked crises are putting the international 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in grave danger, along with humanity's very own survival. The Report highlights the severity and magnitude of the challenges before us.

The confluence of crises, dominated by COVID-19, climate change, and conflicts, are creating spin-off impacts on food and nutrition, health, education, the environment, and peace and security, and affecting all the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Accordingly, target 4.7 of SDG 4 (Quality Education) refers to the need to "ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development." The report details the reversal of years of progress in improving education and health, eradicating poverty and hunger, providing basic human services, and much more. **The SDG will not be achieved without fundamental transformations in citizen's actions and behaviors, which are heavily dependent on the role of education.**

The COVID-19 pandemic alarmingly demonstrated numerous weaknesses of our educational systems. In the face of environmental, social, and economic challenges that go way beyond the recent pandemic, how can we build our collective capacities for transformation to bring about a just, inclusive, and regenerative society for all? Educators have a unique opportunity to look into all the root causes of human suffering and collaborate globally to create new forms of deep learning which will heal ourselves, our children, our communities, and earth.

The purpose of ISfTE is the improvement of teacher education in all settings. This is achieved through the dissemination and critical analysis of research findings, fostering discussions and promotion of innovative practices in teacher education globally. ISfTE Bhutan 2023 will provide a 6-day deep experiential and learning journey in the sacred Kingdom of Bhutan and support the participants' breakthrough patterns of seeing and listening by stepping into a transformative perspective and experience that supports participants connecting on a deeper level of self-knowing, understanding of communities, and nature.

Kezang Sherab and Ugyen Choden are authorised by the ISfTE Executive Board to convene the 2023 Seminar at the Paro College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan, in Paro, Bhutan. The College will be hosting the seminar for the second time.

ISfTE 2023 will be hosted in Bhutan, which is the home of Gross National Happiness and the Happy Schools framework. It could not be timelier to gather in Bhutan to reflect on the past and look into the future. ISfTE 2023 will provide opportunities for colleagues from diverse fields who deeply care about education and future generations to share wisdom through dialogue and discussion. Through connecting our perceptions with the source of the emerging future, we will experience a profound shift and make a commitment to align our actions with our inner values and align the noble mission of education with our attention.

The 2023 Annual Seminar Highlights

Due to the great demand to attend this conference and the limited physical facility in Bhutan, ISfTE Bhutan 2023 will expand the opportunities of sharing through online platforms for those who are unable to travel to Bhutan in person.

First, we will present a series of free live webinars from February to May 2023. These will highlight key themes that will be explored in the live Seminar. Topics include intergenerational transfer of knowledge from an indigenous perspective, Happy School education, nutriment and child development, and mindful practice in education. We are expecting to connect educators from across the globe through these important webinars. To register for the free online webinars that will be presented before the seminar in Bhutan, please visit ahacd.org/webinars.

For those who can travel to Bhutan, we will have a deep learning and self-transformation journey with a specially designed program with outstanding presenters gathering in this unique venue. The six-day Seminar is an opportunity for wisdom sharing and cocreating the future of education on Earth.

We are also planning to post recordings of the live Seminar online for those who are unable to physically participate in Bhutan.

Attendance and Participation

Traditionally, participants from approximately 25 countries attend this annual Seminar including teacher educators, researchers, policymakers, teachers, students, administrators, home educators, and others interested in the development of professional educators throughout the world. Participants range from members who have the experience of attending seminars to persons attending for the first time. Participation is open to the general public and both presenter and observers are welcome. Space at the conference is limited to 150 participants. Please register early.



Seminar Venue

Bhutan is a tiny Himalayan country in South Asia with a population of about 0.8 million and area of 38,394 sq. km. Bhutan shares its borders with China in the North and India in the South. The government system is a constitutional monarchy; the chief of state is the king, and the head of government is the prime minister. The country's most popular development philosophy is the "Gross National Happiness" which was initiated by His Majesty the Fourth King.

The Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) was established in June 2003 bringing together nine tertiary colleges located across the country. Two of the constituent colleges are teacher education colleges, Paro College of Education in the northwest and Samtse College of Education in the southwest.

To provide quality education to the Bhutanese youths the teacher education programmes in Bhutan have been undergoing immense changes over the years. Considerable progress has been made in teacher education in just about forty years. However, there is still a great deal that the Bhutanese teacher education can learn from teacher education programmes worldwide.

The Seminar will be held on the campus of the Paro College of Education (PCE), located in the western Bhutan approximately about 2250 metres above sea level. The College is home to about 1025 pre-service student teachers and some 500 in-service students who study by a part-time, distance mode, and also full-time. Paro is a small town with a population of about 15,000 and is located 10 minutes drive from the Paro International Airport. Bhutan's capital city, Thimphu, is an hour drive from Paro.

Sub-Themes include:

- Relevance of the formal education
- Individual student's potential
- Non-cognitive skills
- 21st Century skills
- Blended learning
- Educational technology
- Social media and education
- Professional development of teachers
- Education for sustainable development
- GNH in education
- Local biodiversity and culture diversity in Placed Based Education
- Regenerative education
- Health/healing education
- Educational leadership
- STEM education
- Competency based assessment
- Culturally relevant/decolonizing curriculum
- Teaching for competencies
- Inclusive education
- Global citizenship education
- Parental role
- Early Childhood Care and Development

Call for Papers and Submission of Abstracts

Participants are invited to submit an abstract of approximately 200 words (max. 250 words) by 15th February, 2023. Please use our online submission facility at:

www.pce.edu.bt/isfte2023

Alternatively, abstracts will be accepted by direct e-mail and as an attachment to the Seminar Organising Committee, PCE.

Email: isfte2023.pce@rub.edu.bt

Confirmation of acceptance of the abstract, and a letter of invitation, will be provided.

Each presenting participant should bring 20 copies of their written paper to the Seminar for distribution and private reading prior to group discussion of the paper. The word limit for the paper should be between 2500–3000 words in length. Electronic (PowerPoint) presentations are discouraged because paper group members will have already read the paper and be familiar with the content—the focus is on discussion of the ideas in the paper and not presentation of content. The paper may be a report on research findings related to teacher education, an outline of work in progress, a statement of an idea or a paper ready to present for refereeing prior to publication. Each paper is allocated approximately one hour for discussion and constructive dialogue and feedback. The paper group format of the seminar actively promotes international collegial dialogue and cross-cultural research.

Tentative Programme

Date	Tentative Programme
Day 1–Sunday, 11th June Seeing the world from the future’s eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival & Registration • Seminar orientation • Keynote • Happiness Education Book Launch • Welcome Dinner & Cultural Programme by RAPA
Day 2–Monday, 12th June Seeing the world with fresh eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote Address: Good teachers teach, great teachers heal • Panel Discussion: From self-healing to social transformation (educators, doctors, parents, community leaders, business leaders, government officials, spiritual leaders) • Paper Group/Reading time • Lunch • Paper Group • Panel discussion: Himalayan art in education/Mindful art and GNH entrepreneurship (Artists, Art educators, Art business leader, Culture leader, GNH Business leader, Himalayan Art practitioners, youth) • Home Host Dinner
Day 3–Tuesday, 13th June What Bhutan shares with the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote Address: Mindful practice—Protocols during the culture learning journey • Sensing the culture through the path to a sacred mountain • Sensing sculpture through the hands of local artisans • Lunch • Sensing through the most beautiful movie of the year: <i>A Yak in the Classroom</i> • Panel Discussion: Film industry/social media impact on child education (Film Director, Educators in film and social media, Artist, Parents, Investors and Youth) • Dinner and event at a Bhutanese culture style hotel
Day 4–Wednesday, 14th June What truly matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote Address: Mama Food Forest/Regenerative education • Panel discussion: Biodiversity and cultural diversity in education (educators, nature educators, wholistic agriculture practitioners, indigenous culture elders, spiritual leaders, parents, and homeschool teachers) • Paper group • Lunch • Paper Group • Panel discussion: Nutriment and child development (doctors, parents, teachers, chefs, farmers, artists, spiritual leaders.) • Dinner for six senses (folk art & music, local food)
Day 5–Thursday, 15th June What is future global citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote Address: How to awaken the power of nourishment • Panel discussion: Transformative parenting practice for future generations • Paper group • Lunch • ISfTE 2024 presentation • Paper Group presentations • Dinner: Mindful dinner at a temple • My ideal school (educators, youth, parents, spiritual leaders, school chefs) • Group circle time discussion in monastery
Day 6–Friday, 16th June Link the future with head, heart and hand (workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation for plenary session (interest groups discussion) • Paper group representation • ISfTE Annual General Meeting final • Lunch • Panel discussion: Planting the future together (educators, doctors, parents, community leaders, agriculture experts, chefs, spiritual leaders) • Farewell dinner (Journey reflection/gratitude circle)

Registration Information

Please note that the **registration** includes all meals and snacks, hotel accommodation, ISfTE membership fee, cultural tour, local transportation including airport pick-up and drop, and all specified events during the seminar.

Registration Fees	Early Bird Rate (on/before 5 th April 2023)	Standard Rate (till 5 th May 2023)
Developed Countries	US \$1300	US \$1400
Developing Countries	US \$1000	US \$1100
SAARC Countries	US \$800	US \$900
Students who wish to participate may contact at isfte2023.pce@rub.edu.bt Please note that every visitor to Bhutan will have to pay a Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) of US \$200/day to the Bhutanese government. Limited scholarships to pay the SDF are available. Please contact the conveners.		

Online registration is available at: www.pce.edu.bt/isfte2023

Accommodation

All accommodations will be arranged in standard hotels in the Paro Valley. While some hotels are within a walking distance to the College where seminar will be held, most hotels are within 15 to 20 minutes drive.

Transportation

Paro city where the seminar is going to be hosted has air route connections with many neighbouring nations/cities such as the India (Delhi, Kolkata, & Bagdora), Thailand (Bangkok), Nepal (Kathmandu), Bangladesh (Dhaka), and Singapore. Flights arrive daily, which are operated by the two airlines, Druk Air (www.drukair.com.bt) and Bhutan Airlines (www.bhutanairlines.bt).

Important Dates for Seminar Registration

Deadline for Abstracts	15 February, 2023
Abstract Acceptances	Within 2 weeks of submission
Early Bird Registration	05 April, 2023
Registrations Close	05 May, 2023
Cancellation of Registration	20 May, 2023

Please direct enquiries to:
Conveners: +975-17957949 and +975-17561739
Email: isfte2023.pce@rub.edu.bt

Cancellation Policy

All cancellations must be made in writing to the 2023 Organising Committee. Registration cancellations before 20 May 2023 will forfeit USD 100 of registration fee to cover administration costs. No refunds will be made after 20 May 2023, but substitute delegates are acceptable.

Privacy

In registering for the ISfTE Seminar relevant details will be incorporated into a delegate list for the benefit of all delegates (name and organisation and e-mail address only), and may be made available to parties directly related to the conference including venue and accommodation providers.

Disclaimer

ISfTE Seminar organising committee reserves the right to make changes to the seminar programme if necessary. Information is accurate at time of printing. All fees are in US Dollars and include GST.

Online Seminar Registration and Dates

To register for the free online webinars that will be presented before the seminar in Bhutan, please visit ahacd.org/webinars (Bhutan time.)

Ancient futures, indigenous elders	21 February 2023
Happy School/GNH in education	22 March 2023
Nutriments and child development	21 April 2023
Mindful practice in education	20 May 2023