

## ***Creativity and Critical Thinking Skills in School: Moving the Agenda Forward***

**An international conference organised by the  
OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI)**

**24-25 September 2019 - London, UK  
Nesta HQ - 58 Victoria Embankment, EC4Y 0DS**

### **Background**

There is a growing consensus that formal education should cultivate students' creativity and critical thinking skills to help them succeed in modern, globalised economies based on knowledge and innovation. However, the goal is hindered by a limited understanding of how these skills can be embedded in everyday teaching and learning, and assessed reliably. For education systems, promoting creativity and critical thinking in more systematic and effective ways requires developing strategies and tools that help teachers, students and policy makers to articulate these skills more visibly and tangibly, especially as part of the curriculum.

The conference aims to improve our understanding of how creativity and critical thinking skills can be promoted in educational settings. It will present the lessons from the OECD-CERI project *Fostering and Assessing Creativity and Critical Thinking Skills in Education*, which, since 2015, has worked with teams across 11 countries to develop a framework and bank of resources to improve the teaching and learning of these skills – and currently works with higher education institutions from 15 countries towards the same objective.

It will convene over 100 education policy makers, experts, innovators, and other stakeholders from OECD countries and partner economies to share experiences and reflect on how to further advance initiatives in these areas.

### **Objectives**

1. To highlight the role of creativity and critical thinking in current economies and societies
2. To share and discuss innovative approaches to fostering and assessing creative and critical thinking skills in school education
3. To discuss strategies for scaling up innovations around creativity and critical thinking in education
4. To discuss the expected impacts and the evidence base on pedagogical redesign

*The working language of the conference will be English.*



DAY 1 – TUESDAY 24 <sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER	
THE CENTRALITY OF CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING IN OUR SOCIETIES, CULTURES AND ECONOMIES	
8.45–9.15	Registration and coffee

9.15-10.00	Session 1	WELCOME AND INAUGURAL PRESENTATIONS
Plenary, Big room	<p>The OECD and Nesta will make welcome remarks and inaugural presentations. Innovation and quality education for innovation are key societal goals. What are the innovation challenges and how can education help to meet them? Why do creativity and critical thinking skills matter? Where do they fit in broader societal and economic agendas – and in the OECD work on education and skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geoff Mulgan, CEO, Nesta, England, United Kingdom</li> <li>• Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills, OECD</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD</p>	

10.00-10.45	Session 2	KEYNOTE: CARL WIEMAN
Plenary, Big room	<p>What is creativity and critical thinking in science, how does it relate to scientific expertise, and what does it imply for education and higher education? Professor Wieman, a Nobel Prize winner in physics, will reflect on this professional experience as a physicist and as an education researcher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carl Wieman, Professor of Physics and Education, Stanford University, United States</li> </ul>	

10.45-11.15	<i>Coffee break</i>
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11.15-12:15	Session 3	CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING IN THE ECONOMY AND SOCIETY - ROUNDTABLE
Plenary, Big room	<p>What do we know about the skills demand? What bundle of skills is becoming more important for people to succeed in the economy and their private life? Where do creativity and critical thinking fit into this? What can cultural and scientific institutions do about this? And what do companies do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council of England, England, United Kingdom</li> <li>• Helen Charman, Director of Learning, Victoria and Albert Museum, England, United Kingdom</li> <li>• Tom Ravenscroft, Skills Builder Partnership, United Kingdom</li> <li>• John Arboleda, Head of Primary and Secondary Schools EMEA, Adobe</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Geoff Mulgan, Nesta, England, United Kingdom</p>	

12.15-13.00	Session 4	THE CERI PROJECT ON FOSTERING AND ASSESSING CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING: KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES
Plenary, Big room	<p>Presentation of the OECD book <i>Fostering Students' Creativity and Critical Thinking: What it Means in School</i> and of the associated pedagogical resources. The session will present the goals of the project, its key findings and how the work is expected to continue, before a conversation with the audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD</li> </ul>	

13.00-14.00	<i>Lunch</i>
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14.00-15.10	Session 5	CHANGING EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE IN THE FIELD
	<p>Teams participating in the CERI project will present their approaches to implementing the pedagogical intervention, as well as their lessons, achievements and challenges from the fieldwork.</p>	

Breakout 5.A, Big room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sian James, Arts Council of Wales, Wales, United Kingdom</li> <li>• Szilvia Németh, T-Tudok, Hungary</li> <li>• Kraiyos Patrawart, Education Equity Fund, Thailand</li> </ul>
Breakout 5.B, Room#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usha Bhaksar, Learning Links Foundation, India</li> <li>• Matt Doyle, Vista Unified District, United States</li> </ul>
Breakout 5.C, Room#3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laura di Pizzo, Ayrton Senna Institute, Brazil</li> <li>• Marina Pinskaya, Higher School of Economics, Russian Federation</li> </ul>

<b>15.15-15.45</b>	<b>Session 6</b>	<b>A CONVERSATION WITH DEBORAH BULL</b>
Plenary, Big room	<p>Deborah Bull, former principal dancer of The Royal Ballet and former creative director of the Royal Opera House will give her perspective on how to foster creativity. After a prestigious ballet career, including the Prix de Lausanne, she promotes creativity as distinct from the arts, sometimes through the arts, including in science. And she applies it in (higher) education as a leader of King’s College.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baroness Deborah Bull, Vice President &amp; Vice Principal (London) and Senior Advisory Fellow for Culture, King’s College London; Member of the House of Lords, England, United Kingdom</li> </ul> <p>Interviewer: Paul Collard, Creativity, Culture and Education, United Kingdom</p>	

15.45-16.00	<i>Coffee break</i>
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<b>16:00-17:15</b>	<b>Session 7</b>	<b>REENGINEERING TEACHING AND LEARNING - ROUNDTABLE</b>
Plenary, Big room	<p>What are the pedagogies that support the teaching and learning of creativity and critical thinking across subjects? What are some of the key features of the tasks and methods that help to promote these skills, and to what extent are they discipline-specific? In this session, a panel of teachers, researchers and pedagogues will present and discuss how the pedagogical principles and techniques aligned with creativity and critical thinking stretch or vary across different subjects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Collard, Creativity, Culture and Education, United Kingdom</li> <li>• Anne Fennell, San Diego Unified School District, United States</li> <li>• Andria Zafirakou, Alperton Community School, England, United Kingdom</li> <li>• Barbara Schneider, Michigan State University, United States</li> <li>• Zemira Mevarech, Bar-Ilan University, Israel</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Bill Lucas, University of Winchester, England, United Kingdom</p>	

<b>17:15-18:00</b>	<b>Session 8</b>	<b>INITIATIVES TO FOSTER CREATIVITY OR CRITICAL THINKING</b>
Plenary, Big room	<p>Creativity has become a consensual policy objective, generally associated to innovation, economic development, and people’s wellbeing. It is supported in and out of school. “Creative Ireland” is a five-year all-of-Government initiative (2017-2022) placing creativity at the centre of public policy. Other initiatives led by foundations or intergovernmental organisations also try to make creativity more central to society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gary Ó Donnchadha, Deputy Chief Inspector, Ireland</li> <li>• Garrett Jaeger, LEGO Foundation, Denmark</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Carlos González-Sancho, OECD</p>	

<b>18.00-18.15</b>	<b>Session 9</b>	<b>WRAP UP DISCUSSION - DAY 1</b>
Plenary, Big room	<p>Participants will share their take-aways of the first day of the conference.</p>	

18:15	<i>Cocktail reception</i>
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**DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**  
**TAKING THE AGENDA FORWARD**

8.45–9.00	<i>Coffee</i>
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<b>9.00-10.00</b>	<b>Session 10</b>	<b>REFORMING EDUCATION SYSTEMS FOR INNOVATION</b>
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Plenary, Big room	<p>Most countries have included creativity and critical thinking as one of the expected learning goals for students. Why is it the case? How does it affect curriculum, assessment professional development policies? How are teachers supported for changing their practice? What kind of initiatives are developed? Three ministers of education will give their insights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kirsty Williams AM, Minister for Education, Wales, United Kingdom (video address)</li> <li>• Michele Bruniges, Secretary of Education, Australia</li> <li>• H.E. Nataphol Teepsuwan, Minister of Education, Thailand</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD</p>
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<b>10.00-11.15</b>	<b>Session 11</b>	<b>NEW CURRICULA AND EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES FOR INNOVATION</b>
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Plenary, Big room	<p>This session will continue the discussion on different ways to support creativity and critical thinking in school. One key dimension is the integration of creativity, critical thinking and other higher order skills in countries’ curricula. But there are also other ways to pursue this agenda. After a presentation of the Indian and Russian approaches, the session will give an overview of how this is integrated in curricula worldwide and within OECD countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R. Ramanan, Additional Secretary, Mission Director, National Institution for Transforming India Aayog, India</li> <li>• Pavel Zenkovich, Deputy Minister of Education, International Affairs, Russian Federation</li> <li>• Bill Lucas, University of Winchester, England, United Kingdom</li> <li>• Yuri Belfali, Head of Division, OECD (moderator)</li> </ul>
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11.15-11.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
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<b>11.45-13.00</b>	<b>Session 12</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT, PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND INFORMAL EDUCATION</b>
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Breakout 12.A, Big room	<p><i>Innovative assessments for a broader set of skills</i></p> <p>This session will present large-scale initiatives (either established or in pilot phase) to assess creativity, critical thinking and other higher-order skills in education settings. The PISA innovative domain on “creative thinking” will briefly be presented as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thierry Rocher, Ministry of Education, France, and International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)</li> <li>• Todd Lubart, Université Paris-Decartes, France</li> <li>• Sharon Foster, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, Australia</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Carlos González-Sancho, OECD</p>
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Breakout 12.B, Room#2	<p><i>Changing the culture and practices: the practitioners’ view</i></p> <p>What does it take to change teachers’ practices in the field? How can district leader or school principals help teachers to put creativity, critical thinking and other higher-order skills at the centre of their instructional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matt Doyle, Vista Unified District, United States</li> <li>• Rolf Hitschfeld, Kopernikus Schools, Chile</li> <li>• Lamis Sabra, FORM, Australia</li> <li>• Headteacher, Wales, United Kingdom</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Mathias Bouckaert, OECD</p>
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Breakout 12.C, Room#3	<p><i>Partnerships between formal and informal education</i></p> <p>Partnerships between schools and organisations from other sectors are a strong way to give students more opportunities to develop their creativity and critical thinking. After-school and out-of-school activities play a key role in this respect. The session will present three examples of how to promote and implement partnerships to that effect in science and in the arts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iina Berden, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland</li> <li>• Fátima Sánchez, Botín Foundation, Spain</li> <li>• Ajith Basu, Agastya Foundation, India</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Federico de Luca, OECD</p>
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13.00-14.00	<i>Lunch break</i>
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14:00-15:00	Session 13	FOSTERING CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION
Plenary, Big room	<p>Alignment and continuity between efforts in primary, secondary and post-secondary levels is necessary to achieve systemic change. What are the specific challenges and opportunities in higher education? How does it apply to initial teacher education? How can higher education teaching and learning be changed to foster creativity, critical thinking, and just better learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carl Wieman, Stanford University, United States</li> <li>• Wendy Díaz Pérez, University of Guadalajara, Mexico</li> <li>• Paul Sowden, University of Winchester, England, United Kingdom</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Barbara Schneider, Michigan State University, United States</p>	

15.00-16.00	Session 14	NUDGING THE SYSTEM TOWARDS IMPROVEMENT
Plenary, Big room	<p>How to make sure that teachers innovate in the right direction? How to establish compelling evidence and make it available to teachers and school principals? How to build learning communities among teachers? Do we need new types of agencies, new types of support to schools and teachers? From small innovations that are difficult to evaluate to mainstreaming good practice: how does it work – and how does it work with the political time of reform?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robbie Coleman, Education Endowment Foundation, England</li> <li>• Barbara Schneider, Michigan State University, United States</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD</p>	

16.00-16.30	Session 15	WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS
Plenary, Big room	<p>Participants will share their take-aways and focus on distilling key messages and policy recommendations for mainstreaming the teaching and assessing of creativity and critical thinking skills in formal education. The OECD will present the next steps of this agenda for the Organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD</li> </ul>	

16.30	<i>Close</i>
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