

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOPS

Rethinking quality and accountability in educational technologies

Bielefeld University and Wissenswerkstadt • May 26-27, 2026

May 26 – Bielefeld University

Focus on quality

When does technology become valuable in education?

May 27 – Wissenswerkstadt

Focus on accountability

Should we trust AI and digital technologies in education?

REGISTER HERE

Participation is free of charge,
but registration is required.



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Program

May 26 - Focus on quality - Bielefeld University

When does technology become valuable in education?

09:00-09:30 Arrival and registration

Welcome to Bielefeld University

- 09:30-10:00
- **Opening address** - Prof. Dr. Barbara Thiessen, Dean of the Faculty of Educational Science, Bielefeld University
 - **International projects and collaborations** - Kristina Schröder, Bielefeld University
 - **EdTech Talents project** - Prof. Dr. Janika Leoste, Tallinn University, Estonia
 - **Introduction to the event** - Dr. Cristina Popescu, Bielefeld University

Panel session

Digital landscapes in German education

Moderator: Dr. Antoanneta Potsi, Bielefeld University

- 10:00-11:00
- **Digital technologies: Services, spaces, and support at Bielefeld University** - Jan Felix Trettow, IT-Service center (BITS), Bielefeld University
 - **AI and digitalisation in higher education** - Dr. Fabian Schumacher, Bielefeld University
 - **University:Future Festival. Under Pressure!** - Johanna Leifeld, Hochschulforum Digitalisierung
 - **From idea to impact: Supporting EdTech startups in Germany** - Nik Riesmeier, Founders Foundation, Bielefeld

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

Panel session (hybrid)

Quality and assessment of EdTech solutions in practice

Moderator: Liis Siiraja, Edtech Estonia

- 11:30-12:30
- **Learning Cabinet initiative** - Olli Vallo, UNICEF (online)
 - **EdTech Evidence Report** - Dr. Nicole Law, Researcher at Instructure
 - **When certification substitutes regulation** - Dr. Veli Hillman, EDDS Institute and Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

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When does technology become valuable in education?

12:30-13:45

Lunch break

World café and round table

AI in (higher) education. Challenges and opportunities across countries

Moderators: Sebastian Schwaebe, Blinc eG, Germany and Prof. Dr. Piedad Tolmos Rodríguez-Piñero, Rey Juan Carlos University, Spain

13:45-15:45

Round table participants:

- Sarah Becker, CHE/Hochschulforum Digitalisierung
- Prof. Dr. Janika Leoste, Tallinn University, Estonia
- Prof. Dr. Luis Pastor, Rey Juan Carlos University, Spain
- Dr. Fabian Schumacher, Bielefeld University
- Prof. Dr. Giedrė Tamoliūnė, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania
- Dr. Eva Ulbrich, Linz University, Austria

15:45-16:00

Coffee break

Theme session (hybrid)

Pedagogy and digital tool design

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Simona Szakács-Behling, Helmut Schmidt University Hamburg, Germany

16:00-17:00

- **Co-design of digital tools** - Chaula Gupta and Dr. Stefani Pautz Stephenson, Digital Promise (online)
- **Frictions and fractures in the making of Edtech: When pedagogy meets technology** - Julie Lüpkes, University of Oldenburg, Germany



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May 27 - Focus on accountability - Wissenswerkstadt Bielefeld
Should we trust AI and digital technologies in education?

09:00-09:30 Arrival and registration

09:30-9:45 **Conference opening**

Theme session

The terms of trust

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Stephan Dahmen, Bielefeld University

- 09:45-10:45
- ***What counts as (un)ethical in educational AI?*** - Prof. Dr. Michal Wieczorek, University College Dublin, Ireland (online)
 - ***AI literacy for soft regulation: what frameworks do (and don't) do*** - Dr. Veli Hillman, EDDS Institute and Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

10:45-11:15 Coffee break

Theme session

Making sense of digital technologies in schools

Moderator: Dr. Davide Taibi, Institute for Educational Technology, Palermo, Italy

- 11:15-12:45
- ***Trained to take the lead? AI-related school leadership qualifications in Germany (and some impressions from China)*** - Dr. Sarah Fichtner, Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany
 - ***From policy to classroom practice: Educational technologists as key actors in Estonia's EdTech ecosystem*** - Tiina Kasuk, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia
 - ***Teachers' professional agency in the age of algorithmic tools*** - Prof. Dr. Tobias Röhl, University of Education Zurich, Switzerland

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12:45-14:00

Lunch break

14:00-15:15

Round table

Intelligibility and responsibility. Perspectives from the EdTech sector

Moderator: Dr. Cristina Popescu, Bielefeld University

Round table participants:

- José María Cañas, JdeRobot, Spain
- Balázs Pethő, Education:NEXT, Hungary
- Sebastian Schwaebe, Blinc eG, Germany
- Liis Siiraja, Edtech Estonia

15:15-15:30

Coffee break

15:30-16:30

Fishbowl conversation

Why research and evidence matter

Participants: researchers, teachers, students, edtech representatives

- Dr. Veli Hillman, EDDS Institute and Goldsmiths, University of London, UK
- Dr. Nicole Law, Researcher at Instructure
- Julie Lüpkes, University of Oldenburg, Germany
- Dr. Davide Taibi, Institute for Educational Technology, Palermo, Italy

15:30-16:30

Collective conclusion

What's next? Engaging with (post)digital futures



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On-site and online

About the event

This event brings together diverse stakeholders, such as educators, students, edtech professionals, or researchers, from across Europe to exchange perspectives on digital transformation in education through interactive workshops, evidence-informed discussions and invited talks. It offers a space to challenge assumptions and further develop ideas collaboratively.

Why this matters now

Educational technologies are increasingly used in different contexts, sometimes with the idea that their value is self-evident. Yet the ways in which they are introduced and interpreted raise important questions about who defines their value and under what conditions.

In this context, the event focuses on two interconnected notions, quality and accountability, both conceptually and in practice. They are intentionally framed in a broad way to create space for dialogue across diverse disciplines and professional contexts.

Quality

Quality is about the value given to educational technologies by various actors. This includes assessment practices, international frameworks, and policy approaches, as well as how certain technologies come to be seen as desirable or worth investing in. It also refers to more personal ways of defining what is good for one's own teaching and learning practice.

Within this landscape, stakeholders may assume they "know how things work", but do they?

Such situations highlight the need for clearer in-depth exchanges and raise questions of explainability and intelligibility. How do various groups make what they do clear to one another? How does this shape how people think and organize their activities?

Accountability

Further issues point to less discussed questions of accountability and responsibility.

They may be understood in a focused way, for example, in relation to data protection, transparency of AI processes, bias, or ethics.

But accountability can also be approached more broadly. What kind of education of tomorrow are we shaping through today's decisions? How are responsibilities distributed at both local, national and international levels?