

Special Session Call for Papers for ICL 2026

Sept 30–Oct 02, 2026, Wasserturm Hotel, Cologne, Germany



“Special Session: Human-Centred Professionalism in Engineering, Science and Education: Practice, Pedagogy and Professional Identity (HCP)”

as part of the 29th International Conference on Interactive Collaborative Learning &
55th IGIP International Conference on Engineering Pedagogy

HCP Background and Overview

Professional university disciplines such as engineering, science, and related STEM fields have traditionally focused on the development of technical competence and, to some extent, generic professional skills such as project management and communication. However, growing societal, organisational, and educational challenges highlight the increasing importance of human-centred professionalism—including empathy, inclusion, ethical judgement, emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and reflective professional identity.

While these dimensions are widely acknowledged as important, particularly in professional practice, they are often assumed to be addressed implicitly, fragmented across curricula, or treated as secondary to technical education. Furthermore, approaches to human-centred professionalism vary significantly across institutional, disciplinary, and cultural contexts. In contrast, some domains (notably health and nursing) have developed more explicit person-centred or human-centred professional frameworks, offering valuable insights that remain under-explored in engineering and science education.

This special session provides an international forum to explore Human-Centred Professionalism (HCP) as an integrative concept linking workplace practice, curriculum design, and pedagogy. The session aims to document and showcase current research and educational practice in this space, while fostering dialogue across disciplines and cultural contexts.

Key questions addressed include:

What are the most pressing challenges related to human-centred professionalism in technical and scientific education?
How can HCP be meaningfully integrated into curricula without compromising technical rigour?

How can students be provided with authentic opportunities to develop and practise human-centred professional capabilities?

How do educators, institutions, and professional communities model human-centred professionalism in their own practice?

How can HCP be recognised, valued, and sustained within higher education and professional environments?

The session is exploratory and dialogic in nature, aiming to establish a shared language, identify research directions, and support the development of a growing international community of practice.

HCP Topics

- Human-centred professionalism in engineering, science, and STEM education
- Professional identity formation and reflective practice
- Empathy, respect, and relational dimensions of professional work
- Inclusive education, inclusive workplaces, and inclusive faculty cultures
- Emotional intelligence and ethical decision-making in technical professions
- Transition to university and early professional identity development
- Human-centred pedagogy and curriculum design
- Describing, developing, modelling and evaluating human-centred professional practice
- Cross-cultural and international perspectives on professionalism

HCP Special Session Chair(s)

- Ines Aubel, TU Freiberg, Germany, ines.aubel@chemie.tu-freiberg.de
- Alexander Kist, University of Southern Queensland, Australia, kist@unisq.edu.au
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HCP Committee Member(s)

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General Information and Proceedings

Special sessions, held in parallel with the general conference, are an integral part of the conference. They provide researchers in focused areas the opportunity to meet and present their work and offer a forum for interaction among the broader community of technology-enhanced learning, and online engineering worldwide.

Special sessions papers are required to meet the same standards as papers in the general conference and are published in the same conference proceedings. Special Session papers must be submitted to STE submission server (ConfTool® Submission Server) to the respective Special Session track. Special Session papers will be reviewed by at least two members of the Special Session's Program Committee, and acceptance decisions will be made by the conference program Co-Chairs and Special Sessions Chairs. All accepted and presented papers will be published as ICL2026 Proceedings in the Springer series "Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems", which is indexed among others in Scopus and Compendex.

Important Deadlines

Submissions for the ICL2026 Special Sessions may be submitted by the following deadlines:

15 May 2026	Submission of complete Special Session Papers (no abstract stage)
15 June 2026	Notification of acceptance
15 July 2026	Camera-ready due & Author registration deadline
30 Sept 2026	ICL2026 Conference Opening