



Call for contributions

Conference of the EARLI SIG 18 - Educational Effectiveness and Improvement

Conference theme:

*Bridging Educational Effectiveness and Improvement Research:
Scientific Foundations and Implementations in the Field of Practice*

9-11 September 2026

Department of Educational Sciences

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium



Important dates:

Submission opens: 17 November 2025

Submission deadline: 31 January 2026

Registration opens: 16 March 2026

Notification of acceptance: 1 April 2026

Early bird deadline: To be announced

SIG18 conference: 9–11 September 2026

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[https://sig18conference.com/
sig18conference@vub.be](https://sig18conference.com/sig18conference@vub.be)

Conference theme

Bridging Educational Effectiveness and Improvement Research: Scientific Foundations and Implementations in the Field of Practice

Around the world, educational systems are confronted with different kinds and levels of pressure. These pressures can yield such as economic, political or societal challenges all affecting the field of practice in education. This has been shaping minds and hearts about what the value of education is. Also with regard to the work we have been doing in our field in educational sciences.

Over the past decades Our efforts of inquiry has been revolving around the ideas on the current status of our education system, how this is evaluated, and understanding what contributes to educational outcomes. This last element also became a very prominent research focus in endeavors to understand how educational improvement processes can be developed. This all has lead to some significant theoretical models and constructs that are helpful in understanding the educational effectiveness and improvement. Such theoretical foundation is crucial for advancing the field by (further) developing innovative approaches in measuring educational effectiveness, understanding differential effects, designing evidence-informed interventions for improvement, and anticipating contextual characteristics to promote educational quality and equity. With this conference we envisage to enhance the bridging between these two perspectives on effectiveness and improvement we share within our SIG community. We wish not only to foster the bridging between the effectiveness and improvement perspective within our SIG, also the connections between scientific insights and foundations, and the practical implementations are an important challenge to foster teaching and learning.

10th edition of the SIG18 conference marks a conference theme that has an inward-facing element, challenging us as a SIG community to reflect about our own activities and mission. The merger of the SIGs 18 and 23 which took place in 20XX, meant the combining of different strands of research with their own history, traditions and methodological lenses. However, the merger also inhibits a huge potential where strengths of both research strands could promote high quality educational research. Some central questions that connect to the conference theme: who are we as a SIG community, where are our touchpoints situated, how can we bridge different research perspectives, and how can we foster our high quality research by bridging the effectiveness and improvement areas?

We hope to foster these discussions and create an inspiring environment to learn from each other's insights, across contexts and jurisdictions, ... here in the heart of Europe. By hosting this conference at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, where the values of Free Inquiry are at core of our vision on research and education, we hope to stimulate this space for reflection, debate and collaboration.

For this SIG18 conference we look for contributions with a theoretical, methodological or empirical lens focusing on classroom, school, or system-level approaches and improvement efforts that might enlarge our understanding and bridging of educational effectiveness and improvement with the ultimate aim of promoting quality education. In line with the main topics of EARLI SIG 18 “Educational Effectiveness and Improvement” such studies may focus on:

- factors influencing classroom, school, and system effectiveness, including mediating and moderating variables;
- large-scale evaluation of classrooms, schools, programmes, and educational systems, including the nature and extent of the equity gap in achievement for different student groups;
- theoretical modelling of the relationship between educational evaluation, accountability, and school improvement;
- attempts to bring together issues of quality and equity at a theoretical, methodological, or empirical level;
- design of external evaluation and accountability systems of schools and teachers (e.g., concerning reliability and validity), their relation to internal evaluation systems as well as the impact of such systems on equal opportunities in education, school improvement, teaching and learning in the classroom and student achievement;
- empirical methods to address research questions within these main topics (e.g., longitudinal multilevel modelling, quasi-experimental approaches, regression discontinuity, randomised experiments).

We also actively encourage the presentation of various types of research approaches, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, meta-analysis, and synthesis studies.

We look forward to welcoming you to the heart of Europe, Brussels. Brussels is a vibrant blend of old-world charm and modern creativity, where stunning Art Nouveau architecture meets cozy cafés, world-class museums, and lively markets. Come for the legendary chocolate, waffles, and beer — stay for the warm, multicultural energy that makes every corner feel like a new discovery. In short, the ideal the place to talk education!

Submission guidelines

We invite submissions of individual papers, symposia, and round table formats. The guidelines for the different submission types are specified below. Proposals need to be submitted in English via the website. An account has to be created for submission. The link for submissions can be found on our website through the following link: <https://sig18conference.com/submission/>

Proposals for all submission types consist of an abstract and an extended summary (for details see below). All submissions should be done completely anonymously to ensure a fair

review process. Please do not include your name in your uploaded documents.

You cannot present more than two proposals as first author. In addition, you can act once as the chair of a symposium and once as the discussant. Lastly, you may participate as a non-presenting co-author as many times as you like.

The submission opens on November 17th, 2025.

1. Individual Papers

Individual papers will be grouped in paper sessions according to their themes and keywords. Paper sessions (90 minutes each) consist of three to four papers, followed by questions and a discussion with the audience. We welcome empirical, theoretical, and methodological papers. For empirical papers, it is important to include at least preliminary results in order to be accepted. Research which is at an earlier stage of progress is suitable for roundtable presentations.

Submission guidelines for individual papers:

Paper submissions consist of an abstract (max. 200 words) and an extended summary (max. 1000 words, including references). Please provide information on the following points:

- ☐ Title of the paper (max. 100 characters)
- ☐ Author(s): Name, affiliation, and e-mail address
- ☐ Abstract (max. 200 words): The abstract should describe the paper concisely and must be self-contained.
- ☐ Keywords: Indicate 4 keywords that describe the paper.
- ☐ Extended summary (600-1000 words): Please describe the paper with respect to:
 - I. Objectives and purposes
 - II. Theoretical framework and background
 - III. Research questions and/or hypotheses
 - IV. Data, methods, and modelling approaches
 - V. Results and discussion
 - VI. Significance of the study

Theoretical or methodological papers will include information that is equivalent to element (iv) for those genres of scholarly work.

2. Symposia

Symposia provide opportunities to present papers that coherently address one research topic. A symposium comprises three to four thematically grouped papers, each of which will be presented in 15-20 minutes. After the paper presentations and a few minutes for questions, a discussant will synthesize and review the papers (10-15 minutes). The symposium is concluded by an open discussion with the audience (10-15 minutes). Each symposium lasts 90 minutes and is led by a chairperson.

Submission guidelines for symposia:

Symposia submissions consist of a short session abstract (max. 200 words) which describes the session as an ensemble.

Please provide information on the following points:

- ☐ Title of the symposium (max. 100 characters)
- ☐ Chair: Name, affiliation, and e-mail address
- ☐ Discussant: Name, affiliation, and e-mail address
- ☐ Session abstract (max. 200 words): The abstract should describe the symposium concisely and must be self-contained.
- ☐ Keywords: Indicate 4 keywords that describe the session.

Moreover, for each individual paper, a title (max. 100 characters), an abstract (max. 200 words), and an extended summary (max. 1000 words, including references) has to be submitted.

- ☐ Title of each individual paper (max. 100 characters)
- ☐ Abstract of each individual paper (max. 200 words): The abstract should describe the paper concisely and must be self-contained.
- ☐ Extended summary of each individual paper (600-1000 words): Please describe the paper with respect to:
 - I. Objectives and purposes
 - II. Theoretical framework and background Research questions and/or hypotheses Data, methods, and modeling approaches
 - III. Results and discussion
 - IV. Significance of the study

3. Roundtable

Roundtable sessions offer opportunities for a more discursive exploration of research issues. This may well involve discussion of work in progress. The presenters elaborate on their emerging data and theory, and invite the participants to contribute to a discussion on potential challenges. Three to five presenters will explain and discuss their research one after another.

Roundtable sessions are scheduled for 90 minutes and consist of 3 to 5 thematically clustered roundtables. Each presenter provides a 5-minute presentation, followed by time for questions, equally divided among the number of roundtables per session.

Requirements for preparing a roundtable:

- ② A title of up to 100 characters (including spaces)
- ② An abstract of 100-200 words
- ② An extended summary of 600-1000 words, detailing the aim, methodology, findings, and theoretical and educational significance of the research. This extended summary is the basis for the reviewers.

Please note that roundtables are submitted individually and then clustered thematically into a roundtable session by the conference organizers.

Review criteria

The International Organising Committee (IOC), the local organizing committee, the international SIG EARLI community as well as the SIG 18 coordinators, will be involved in the review process. Each of the submitted contributions will be reviewed by at least two reviewers. Depending on the format and type of submission, the proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

Individual papers (empirical)

- ② Relevance to the domains of the EARLI SIG 18
- ② Significance for theory, policy, and practice
- ② Theoretical framework, conceptual rationale, or pragmatic grounding
- ② Research method and design for both quantitative and qualitative approaches
- ② Clarity of results and conclusions
- ② Overall quality and scientific originality

Individual papers (theoretical)

- ② Relevance to the domains of the EARLI SIG 18
- ② Significance for theoretical debate
- ② Theoretical framework, conceptual rationale, or pragmatic grounding
- ② Embeddedness in relevant literature
- ② Clarity and robustness of the theoretical argument
- ② Overall quality and scientific originality

Individual papers (methodological)

- ② Relevance to the domains of the EARLI SIG 18
- ② Significance for methodological debate
- ② Theoretical framework, conceptual rationale, or pragmatic grounding
- ② Embeddedness in relevant literature

- ☐ Clarity and robustness of the methodological argument and/or proposed approach
- ☐ Overall quality and scientific originality

Symposia and Roundtable

- ☐ Relevance to the domains of the EARLI SIG 18
- ☐ Significance for theory, practice, and policy
- ☐ Theoretical perspective, conceptual rationale, or pragmatic grounding
- ☐ Organization and internal logic of the whole symposium
- ☐ Overall quality and scientific originality

Each symposium paper will be reviewed as an individual paper using the criteria outlined above.

Conference venue

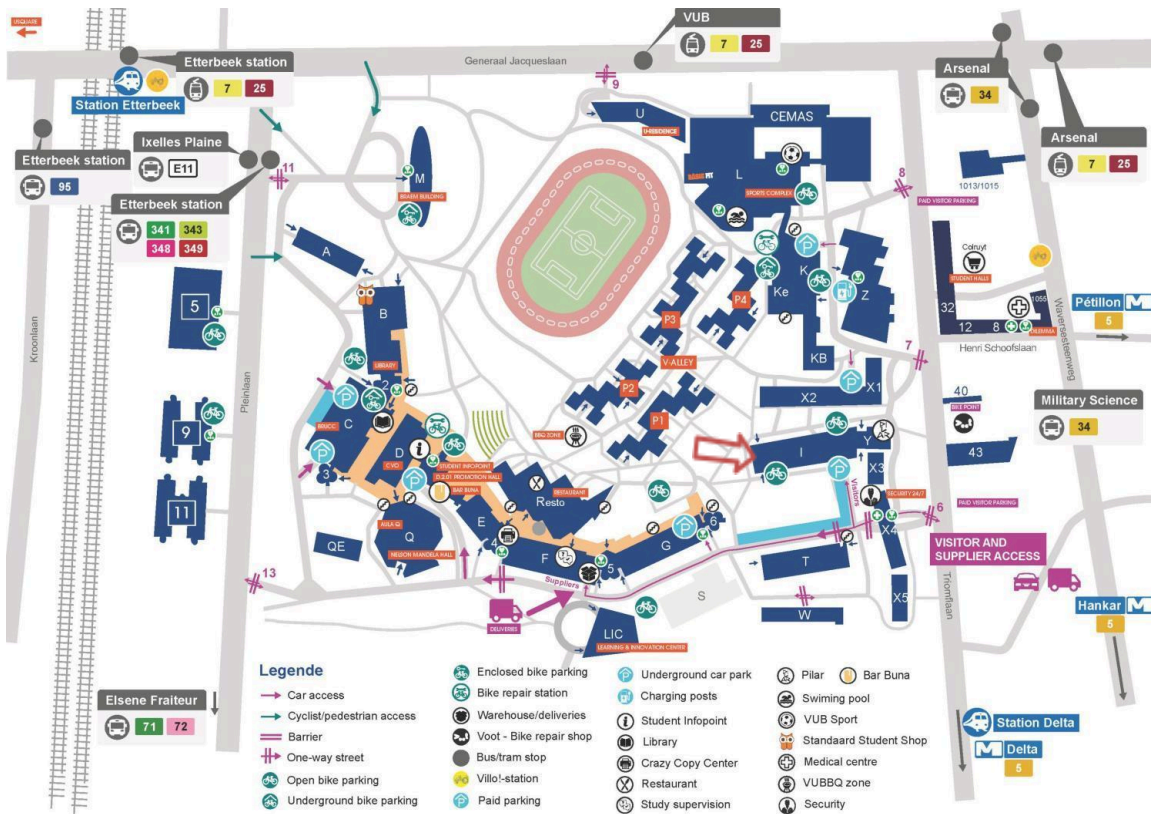
The conference will take place at:

Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)

Main Campus Etterbeek

The full address is: Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussel, Belgium ([Google Maps](#)).

More information on how to reach the venue can be found on the conference's website.



General information and contact

- ☐ For queries regarding the conference, please contact us via e-mail: sig18conference@vub.be

- Please find further information about the conference on the webpage: <https://sig18conference.com/>
- Further information on hotels and accommodation will be made available on the webpage at a later stage.
- Detailed information on the registration procedure, early bird and regular conference fees will be published on the conference website by December 15, 2025.

Conference Committees

The conference is organized by the Department of Educational Sciences of Vrije Universiteit Brussels, and it is supported by the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI).

Conference Chair

Jerich Faddar, assistant professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Email: sig18conference@vub.be

Organizing Committees

International Organizing Committee

- o Jerich Faddar, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Chair)
- o Hannah Bijlsma, postdoctoral researcher, Radboud University
- o Tosca Daltoe, postdoctoral researcher, University of Tübingen
- o Ruud Lelieur, postdoctoral researcher and guest professor, University of Antwerp
- o Charalambos Y. Charalambous, Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of Cyprus
- o Tryfonas Papadamou, PhD Student, Department of Education, University of Cyprus
- o Beat Rechsteiner, postdoctoral researcher, University of Zurich

Local organizing committee

- o Jerich Faddar, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- o Christophe Kegels, researcher, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- o Margaux Pyls, researcher, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- o Alex de Pape, researcher, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- o Shiyin Li, researcher, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- o Narges Pishkari, research intern, Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel