NERUPI CONVENTION
17-18 September 2020

NERUPI *network*
Evaluating & Researching University
Participation Interventions

Day 1: Online Learning: Quick Fixes or New Beginnings?

Programme

The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in a rapid move to online provision in teaching, outreach and support services resulting in new partnerships, fresh approaches and innovations in teaching and learning. The pandemic has also illuminated and exacerbated existing inequalities in education and how they affect groups under-represented in higher education. This first day of the NERUPI Convention 2020 will explore how online pedagogies can be designed to foster active engagement, develop a sense of agency and enable the capabilities needed for success in higher education.

- **09.45**   **Virtual Coffee and Registration**

- **10.00**   **Welcome**
  Annette Hayton, NERUPI Convenor, University of Bath

- **10:15**   **Online pedagogy, equity and engagement: a research-led approach**
  Professor Diana Laurillard, UCL, Institute of Education

  The pandemic has begun to change HE. People are discovering what online learning actually is: not necessarily second-rate, nor much cheaper, but an approach that can have many benefits for learners - flexibility, inclusiveness, social and even personalised learning. But these potential benefits do not just happen; they must be well understood, and planned. This talk will show how we can support academics and practitioners in optimising the opportunities that online learning offers to make teaching and learning more inclusive.

- **11:00**   **Break**

- **11:15**   **Decolonising pedagogy and e-learning: challenges and possibilities**
  Dr Gurnam Singh, Coventry University

  Core to the decolonising education project is the disruption of individualistic ontologies and the erasure and/or dehumanisation of the 'non white' other. This presentation will explore ways in which the advent and, as a consequence of COVID 19, entrenchment of e-learning can facilitate the decolonisation project, as well as identifying limitations.

- **11:45**   **Break**

- **12:00**   **Reflections on the educational pivot**
  Professor Julie McLeod, Birmingham City University

  The pandemic has provided opportunity for HE to engage with a multi-modal approach to supporting student engagement and achievement aligned to diverse needs. However we must consider how best to support learners engaging with remotely-accessible scheduled and guided learning. The session will reflect on our learning so far and how best to inform the future.

- **12:30**   **Facilitated discussion groups**
  Discuss the morning's presentations in small group sessions facilitated by NERUPI members.

- **1:15**   **Lunch break**

- **2.00**   **Update from the Office for Students: getting Access & Participation Plans back on track**
  Chris Millward, Access & Participation, Office for Students

  Chris will update members and answer questions on access and participation planning in the current climate.

- **2.30**   **Member presentations and case studies: parallel sessions**
  See next page for an overview of these parallel sessions.

- **3:30**   **Break**

  Feel free to use this time to continue conversations in your session groups as needed.

- **3.45**   **Final Thoughts**

- **4.00**   **Close of Day 1**

Parallel Sessions Day 1, 17 September 2.30 - 3.30pm

Select one session from A to F. Each session includes two presentations/case studies. All sessions will run from 2.30 to 3.30pm. However, the final session of the day does not start until 3.45pm to allow time for follow-on discussion if needed. Presentations you have missed will be available to view in the NERUPI website members' area after the Convention, subject to speaker permissions.

◆ Session A: Student success in undergraduate teaching

Using contributory digital technologies to promote student knowledge, confidence and voice
Sally Tazewell, Weston College / WIN Uni Connect
This session shares pedagogic practice mindful of promoting students' voices in digital learning. It draws on both NERUPI and the principles of Universal Design for Learning to ensure that diverse and non-traditional students are able to connect meaningfully with each other and their learning environment. It uses a 'funds of knowledge' approach, using digital technologies to support emerging communities of practice. It will include examples of a range of digital tools for learning.

Community Pedgagogies: taking a community approach to adapting modules and learning to help others online
Rachel Walls, University of Leeds
This session will share research-informed work in-progress for adapting a first year module for mature learners to online delivery. It will reflect on the process of developing pedagogical knowledge through interaction with learners, working with colleagues in the Lifelong Learning Centre and drawing on broader personal networks. It will explore the increasing use of interactive and collaborative learning with examples given in the session.

◆ Session B: Developing skills for HE online

Digital outreach and sandbox creativity: using the NERUPI framework to deliver a digital festival through Minecraft
Scott McKenzie & Emily Warwick, Cardiff University
The WP Team at Cardiff University will summarise how they transformed their usual summer school programme into the Gŵyl eCampws Festival for July 2020, a digital festival. The session will then focus on the Discovery strand of the Festival, which used Minecraft as a digital tool to teach young people with autism spectrum conditions about university life, whilst also developing some of the essential skills needed for undergraduate study.

Online learning: a case study of how we dealt with COVID in Biosciences for Year 12s at the University of Bath
Jen Weston, University of Bath
This session provides an honest account of how the Biosciences WP team did and did not adapt to COVID as they worked with Year 12 students day to day through lockdown. It will explore what the team learnt, what they think is missing from online learning and how they intend to bridge that gap going forward.

◆ Session C: Engaging mature students and parents/carers online

Possible selves: exploring online parental engagement
Kirsty Allen & Kelly Mill, Aim Higher London;
Louis Howell, Revolution Hive
Exploring the possibilities of online engagement to inspire and include parents in HE outreach, this session will look at how Aim Higher London's Possible Selves has evolved into a sustained programme of online workshops for Year 9-10 Uni Connect parents and carers. The programme includes 'Surviving to Thriving' workshops. subject demystifying sessions and, it's hoped, a campus visit in the spring. This session will consider evaluation of impact on the participants as parents and as lifelong learners.

Moving from online into blended: quick fixes and new beginnings for non-traditional and mature learners
Hester Gartrell, Ali Dunk & Sophie Swain, Birkbeck, University of London
This session will explore the move to online delivery from the perspective of London's evening university, whose outreach work focusses on supporting mature learners and those with non-traditional qualifications into HE. The session will include case studies from recent delivery and a discussion around creating community pre-enrolment in online spaces.

Session D: Moving summer schools online

Virtual 'Discover Brookes' summer schools: sense of belonging as a culture, not a campus
Steph Atherton, Oxford Brookes University
This presentation looks at a post-16 initiative which shifted from four days on campus to a two week virtual event. NERUPI-led aims remained core throughout the project re-design, with a formative evaluation plan in place to assess impact. Perhaps initially perceived as a lesser alternative, the activity proved to have a positive impact on students' confidence to navigate the process of applying to university and engage with social opportunities as well as academic content.

Delivering summer schools online
Sam Dunnett, University of Sussex
This session will look at how Sussex re-thought its summer school experience in light of lock down and its findings. It will explore how they tried to recreate what a residential summer school hopes to achieve, platforms used, approaches to evaluation, how academic colleagues experienced the virtual delivery world, how students gained in different ways and how practitioners gained. The session will conclude with thoughts for the future on blended learning and opportunities.

Session E: Delivering virtual outreach with schools

Pushing the boundaries of online outreach
Charlotte Wisson & Nathan Robertson, University of Derby
This session will provide an overview of the virtual activities piloted for a Year 10 cohort at a Derby city secondary school focused on developing students' knowledge of study skills and pathways. The team will provide an insight into the aims of the two activities and how these meet the objectives outlined within the NERUPI framework. They will also examine the Blackboard Collaborate platform used to virtually deliver the session, and how the platform can be modified to engage but also safeguard the students interacting with the activities.

Creative literacy: in person and online
Alex Martin-Carey & Danne Jobin, University of Kent
This session will outline the key elements of the University of Kent's creative literacy programme for secondary school students. It will then explore how Kent has utilised online platforms for literacy activities during Covid-19, with examples of online tasks for delegates to participate in. The session will include reflections on what they have learnt from this process about bringing creativity, playfulness and community building to online learning.

Session F: Evaluating virtual outreach with schools

The virtual learning curve
Naomi O'Brien & Helen Doyle, University of Bristol
This session gives a review of the University of Bristol response to the initial challenge to move outreach work online, evaluation of the approach taken and how they are applying learning to plan future delivery. As well as looking at the decisions taken about outreach in context, the session will describe the monitoring and evaluation process, provide insights on evaluating at a distance and reflect on how the experience and learning from it has been used in the planning of future online delivery, specifically virtual taster days.

Student ambassadors, student voice online and a theory of change model
Amy Burt, University of Kent
Anecdotal evidence suggests that being an outreach ambassador increases students' retention, success and future employability. The University of Kent is testing this hypothesis by developing and applying a theory of change to evaluate the impact that the scheme has on their ambassadors. It will include consideration of the voice of student ambassadors in online outreach activities – upskilling student ambassadors and enabling them to play a key part in online delivery and content creation.

Day 2: Evaluating for Equity: A Praxis Based Approach

Programme

The COVID19 pandemic has exposed inequalities in all areas of our society and higher education must play its part in reducing disparities in access, participation and progression; the importance of evaluating and assessing the impact of our work has never been more critical. This second day of the NERUPI convention explores how teams can come together to use both research and practitioner knowledge to create a new praxis that can address inequalities in higher education.

♦ **09.45   Virtual Coffee and Registration**

♦ **10:00   Welcome from Chair of NERUPI Academic Advisory Board**
Professor Jacqueline Stevenson, University of Leeds

♦ **10:15   Delivering fair outcomes through institutional transformation**
Dr Zainab Khan, London Metropolitan University

Reflecting on the move away from traditional widening participation approaches towards values-led practice which can meet the needs and rights of contemporary university student populations, this session will explore why it is so important to work in partnership with students and to centre the lived experience at the heart of system change.

♦ **10:45   Break**

♦ **11:00   Whose values matter? Ethics as a guide to evaluative practice**
Dr Matt Lumb & Dr Rhyall Gordon, Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education, University of Newcastle, Australia

How might we evaluate for equity rather than on equity? This small prepositional shift allows critical questions to be asked around evaluation. In this session, we consider the Australian context of equity and WP work, its opportunities and limitations, and discuss the praxis-based approach of the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education at the University of Newcastle in NSW, Australia.

♦ **11.45   Improving evaluation regulation and practice: a collaborative approach to developing the OfS standards of evidence and self-assessment tool**
Richard Shiner, Access & Participation, Office for Students

This session will discuss the approach taken at the OfS (and previously OFFA) to engage the sector in developing guidance and resources to support better evaluation practice. Richard will discuss the benefits of engaging with experts and working collaboratively, and sometimes iteratively, to develop outputs with the greatest possible impact. The importance of piloting resources will also be considered and how we hope to understand if they have been effective.

♦ **12:15   Lunch break**

♦ **1.00   Praxis teams and the NERUPI reflexive evaluation cycle**
Annette Hayton, NERUPI /University of Bath

Addressing inequalities in HE is a process of cultural and social transformation requiring collaboration across the organisation. With insights from theory and practice, the NERUPI Framework and reflexive cycle provide a basis for creating provision and increasing understanding about the reasons for inequalities in HE. In this session Annette will introduce the reflexive cycle and explore the role of Praxis Teams to create meaningful change.

♦ **1:30   Facilitated discussion groups**
Focussing on the NERUPI Toolkit and Reflexive Cycle

♦ **2:15   Break**
Feel free to use this time to continue conversations in your breakout groups as needed.

♦ **2.30   Expert sessions**
See next page for an overview of these parallel sessions including speakers: **Liz Thomas**, Edge Hill University; **Anna Anthony**, HEAT; **Alan Donnelly**, Sheffield Hallam University; **Joanne Moore**, University of Exeter; and **Sarah Dirrane**, Cosmos Engagement.

♦ **3.15   Final Thoughts**

♦ **3.30   Close of Day 2 and Convention**

Parallel Sessions Day 2, 18 September   2.30 - 3.15pm

All sessions will run from 2.30 to 3.15pm. Sessions you have missed will be available to view in the NERUPI website members' area after the Convention, subject to speaker permissions.

♦ **Using logic chain and theory of change tools to evaluate widening access, student success and progression: From theory to practice**
Liz Thomas, Edge Hill University
This session will share key ideas from programme theory evaluation, particularly logic chains and theory of change, and use practical examples to demonstrate how they can be used to evaluate interventions that aim to widen access and improve student success and progression beyond HE, both as part of institutional Access and Participation Plans and more generally. The session will draw upon the recently published paper Thomas (2020) and will invite participants to draw on their own work, and share their ideas in a supportive environment.

♦ **Including comparator groups in HEAT's tracking reports**
Anna Anthony, HEAT
This session will explain how choosing a suitable comparator group is crucial to raising the standard of evidence provided through HEAT's tracking data and reporting. It will discuss how to move from Type 2 to Type 3 evidence according to the OfS Standards. It will consider the practicalities around how to identify and collect data for a comparator group, drawing on examples from the HEAT membership. We will also give advice on how to record data for your participant and comparator groups on HEAT so that you can access the tracking outcomes for these groups from HEAT.

♦ **Questions, questions, questions: The importance for research and evaluation of asking the right ones**
Joanne Moore, University of Exeter
This session will explore the importance for evaluation of asking the right questions. It will unpick different types of research question and how they link to evaluation methods. The session will also look at the formulation of evaluation tools such as questionnaires and pool expertise around what questions work best in particular access, participation and success contexts.

♦ **'I can't get no (survey) satisfaction': Eliciting and unpacking responses using creative evaluation methods**
Alan Donnelly, Nathaniel Pickering & Liz Austen, Sheffield Hallam University
This workshop shares practical examples of creative methodologies that have been used and developed at Sheffield Hallam and across the sector to evaluate access and success activities, which involve Widening Participation students. These methods, employed within mixed-methods approaches, focus on the role of contextual factors and seek to capture meaning and unintended outcomes. The first example focuses on the use of caricature activities to evaluate a pre-16 engagement programme aimed at developing essential life skills. The second example is the use of digital storytelling to amplify, illuminate and empower voices which are often marginalised in more conventional methodologies.

♦ **Creating impactful outputs through data visualisation**
Sarah Dirrane, Cosmos Engagement
This session will focus on how raw data can be turned into striking visual stories, focusing on data visualisation. The masterclass will cover how to analyse and organise your data, how to visually present research findings in reports and case studies for publication and the importance of effective visual storytelling with examples of good practice.