

SIG Report

Special Interest Group

Sustainability SIG

SIG Convenors

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Number of SIG members

39

Activities undertaken by the SIG since establishment

The aim of this SIG-group (started 2019) is to develop a space for networking and to encourage cross-national research and perspectives in the field of early childhood education for sustainability. The research agenda focuses on ways of understanding how young children are recognized as, and learn to be, active citizens for sustainability. A key aspect to consolidating this field of research is to broaden the theoretical and methodological perspectives shared and to incorporate multiple international socio-cultural lenses. Sustainability refers here to the interlinked social, economic, natural and political dimensions defined by UNESCO (2010), and these must underpin all decision-making for equitable global futures. Aligned international policies with import for early childhood education and education for sustainability are The UN Global Action Programme (GAP) and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) (UNESCO, 2017). These policies are integrated with the dimensions of sustainability and offer a global action plan for developing a sustainable world. The SDG's, in particular, are far reaching and highlight that global sustainability is not to be achieved by an environmental or human poverty focus alone. The GAP and SDG's are integral to a globally transformative agenda and the SIG collaborative research and publication initiatives will strongly support this agenda. The aims of the SIG are to:

- create a space for collaborative research about sustainability in Early Childhood Education,
- develop synergies between participants from a wide range of professional and scientific contexts,
- provide an academic and rigorous forum at European and international levels to develop and disseminate high quality research on sustainability in Early Childhood Education.

Report on SIG Activities this past year

- Ongoing communication with EECERA about membership, conference and publications;
- The SIG-group Facebook page is ongoing with postings about events, research and publications (66 members);
- A call for papers sent for a Special Issue of the Australian Journal of Teacher Education (AJTE) around ECEfS, SIG Convenors Sule Alici, Ann-Christin Furu as co-editors with Snowy Evans and Deb Harwood to be published March/April 2022;
- A forum shared on the theme: Teacher Education and Education for Sustainability in May 2020 and June 2020 for different time zones to discuss teacher education in ECEfS as a precursor to AJTE call for papers;
- A call for papers sent for a Special Issue of the International Journal of Early Childhood (IJEC) around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SIG Convenor Ann-Christin Furu as editor;
- A Special Issue of the International Journal of Early Childhood Environmental Education (IJECEE) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is underway to be published in December 2021, edited by Victora Carr, Eva Arlemalm-Hagser and Sue Elliott.
- A forum for shared presentations to showcase 2020-21 research/resources/initiatives held March 2021 with SIG Forum co-hosts Sule and Ann-Christin.
- Planning to host a SIG meeting at the EECERA online Conference 2021 with a focus on developing a Sustainability

SIG position statement and policy brief and forming a working group for this;

- Conducting 3 self-organised symposia (9 abstracts in total) for the EECERA 2021 online Conference;
- Hosting another online forum for SIG members October 2021, topic to be confirmed;
- Continuing to progress Special Issues noted above and develop other collaborative research projects and bids;
- Liaising with the World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC) to be held in Prague March 2022, Eva Årlemalm-Hagsér and Sue Elliott are the WEEC EC theme co-chairs with Katerina Jancarikova, Charles University, Prague;
- Forward planning for an EECERA Research Monologue may be feasible in 2023 as advised by EECERA; and,
- Forward planning for an EECERA Journal Special Issue may be feasible, however EECERA has advised there is a lengthy waiting list.

How SIG activities fit with aims and ethos of EECERA

The activities in the SIG encourage and support cross-national collaborations, with multi-disciplinary research and critically reflective approaches to early childhood education and early childhood education for sustainability. The collaboration between the researchers in the SIG group also aligns with outdoor education/nature play and applications to policy and practice as related to global sustainability.

Networking, future plans and links to other institutions

Each member of the SIG has a network within their own country and area of work. The collaboration within the SIG between members means that the SIG is informally associated with a wide variety of local, regional, national and international networks and organisations. For example, this includes the Transnational Dialogues Early Childhood Education for Sustainability Research Network (TND) which held an online symposium in September 2020 with attendees from eighteen countries and will again do so in 2021. There are significant synergies across the SIG and TND to be explored.

- I have read the privacy policy and agree