Call for Abstracts

The European Conference for Critical Edtech Studies (ECCES)

Theme: Power and Position

Dates: 22nd, 23rd & 24th of June 2027
Location: The University of Oxford, UK

In anticipation of the third edition of the European Conference for Critical Edtech Studies (ECCES), we invite conference contributions that engage with the themes of 'power and position', particularly with respect to reflection on the current standing and future orientation of Critical Edtech Studies.

Typically located amidst waves of public optimism, unease, and general hyperbole about the digital transformation of education, critical studies of education and technology have tended to occupy a position of (implicit or explicit) deviation from the 'mainstream'. Whether overtly resistant to the enthusiastic promotion and uptake of edtech products in schools, concerned with examining the underlying implications of data-driven and efficient educational governance, or working directly with communities to develop novel kinds of 'ground up' technologies and approaches, the general orientation of such work has been to reveal, if not to actively work against, the prevailing assumptions of technology's instrumental role as a mere 'enhancement' for education. While research in Critical Edtech Studies has typically sought to 'unearth' processes of *power* in these contexts, attention to what this term means, or how power functions specifically, has not always been explicit.

Nevertheless, while certainly not straightforwardly aligned with dominant 'mainstream' assumptions about education technology, it would seem somewhat inadequate to describe Critical Edtech Studies as simply 'marginal', at least not in the pejorative sense. Indeed, such research has often explicitly worked to connect the minutiae of specific educational practices with technology to the substantive questions of our time; to social justice, inequality, and sustainability, for example. However, key questions remain about how this area of research might be *positioned* and how exactly *power* might be operating; academically, methodologically, politically, and so on. What are its disciplinary conventions and methodological commitments? What kinds of social change are sought, and how? Who should decide the research agenda(s), and through what ways of knowing should such research be articulated and developed? What audiences does (and could) this research speak to? What are the consequences of, and strategies for, operating (in and) against dominant views of what 'counts' and what 'works'?

These politics of power and position extend outwards and are not only concerned with matters of scope and disciplinary orientation within a nascent domain of study but equally concern an opportunity to interrogate the centres and margins of power in a broader sense. We therefore invite a community of scholars to come together in Oxford in 2027 to reflect upon 'power and position' in the context of the study of education and technology, across the following suggested themes:

- **Political Economy**: business practices, capitalization, assets, value creation, corporations, EdTech industry, startups, edu-businesses.
- **Policy and Governance**: the role of governments, institutions, networks, and particular discourses in shaping edtech development and adoption.

- **Social Justice and Decoloniality**: the impact of edtech on marginalized communities, the (re-)production of inequalities, and how edtech is (not) addressing heterogeneous or postcolonial audiences.
- **Methodologies**: the various ways in which Critical Edtech Studies is investigating and contributing to (re-)shaping the study of edtech
- **Sustainability and the Environment**: the planetary impact of edtech, how it matters, and how it might be mitigated.
- **Histories and Futures:** patterns and repetitions, hidden histories, speculative futures, and alternative pathways for edtech development

The inaugural ECCES conference in Zurich in 2025 established a foundational research agenda through the themes '*Defining the Field, Envisioning the Future*', which was taken forward into the smaller, workshop-focused practical orientation of the 'Futuring Studio' in Hamburg in 2026, engaging the themes of '*Shaping (Better) Educational and Societal Futures through and with Critical Edtech Research*'. In 2027, we return to the standard conference format while building on previous themes, and invite contributions to the programme that adhere to the following requirements:

- **Length of Abstract:** 750 words
- **Deadline:** January 31st, 2027 (midnight CET)
- **Format:** In order to enhance equal opportunities for presentation, the submission format is individual paper abstracts only (no panel submissions). Individual abstracts can be single-authored or include multiple authors (the maximum number of authors per paper will be limited, and communicated following acceptance).
- **Further requirements:** Abstracts must clearly articulate the author's critical position within the domain of Critical Edtech Studies, be empirically grounded, and demonstrate a strong understanding of relevant theoretical and methodological frameworks. Submissions should engage constructively with critical approaches and make explicit the ways in which the conference themes are being addressed empirically: we strongly encourage reflection on how the research being submitted for presentation might be positioned with respect to its disciplinary orientations, audience, influence, and impact.
- **Notification of Decision:** February / March 2027 – registration details will follow acceptance notification. Participation in the conference will require an accepted abstract.
- **Submission:** exclusively via the conference email ECCES@education.ox.ac.uk

Registration fees

ECCES aims for the lowest possible registration fee relative to the venue, with particular provision for early career and other precarious academic positions. For ECCES 2027, the regular registration fee for the conference will be £250. Doctoral students as well as participants in precarious positions will be given the option to register for a reduced fee of £125. Registrations will aim to open in March 2027.

Contact Information

Please submit your abstract exclusively to ECCES@education.ox.ac.uk. Please also use this address if you have any other queries about the ECCES conference – we will make every effort to respond as soon as possible.