

# **Next-Gen Learning: Multimodality, AI and Multilingualism**

**Thursday, 26 November 2026 - Sunday, 29 November 2026**

## **Scientific Programme**

*Next-Gen Learning: Multimodality, AI & Multilingualism*, the inaugural conference of the MERLIN (Multimodality in Educational Research and Learning International Network), foregrounds multimodality as a central lens for understanding and shaping the future of education in a world where acquiring knowledge is dynamic and deeply interconnected. As learning increasingly unfolds across digital, physical, linguistic and cultural spaces, meaning-making extends beyond language to include images, sound, gesture, movement, and material interaction, allowing knowledge to be created and experienced in richer, more interactive ways.

At the same time, AI-driven technologies are transforming the ways that multimodal resources are produced, accessed and scaled, introducing new forms of responsiveness, creativity and personalization while intensifying questions of equity, access and the value of human engagement. Drawing on different understandings of multimodality, the conference critically examines how multimodal and multilingual practices can counter industrial-era models of schooling and redefine assessment, teaching and literacies in collaborative and AI-augmented environments.

The conference aims to inspire inclusive, human-centered learning ecologies and to establish a shared vision for multimodal research and practice within the MERLIN community.

#### CONFERENCE THEMES

We invite research-based submissions that explore, but are not limited to, the following themes:

## **Redefining Learning and Knowledge-Making**

Multimodal meaning-making in diverse formal, informal and non-formal (e.g. museums, science centres) learning environments and sites.

## **Multimodality and Learning Across Domains**

Exploring how multimodal meaning-making intersects with sociocognitive perspectives, affective and individual difference models and other approaches to learning.

## **AI-Enhanced Multimodal Learning**

Designing, evaluating, and critically reflecting on AI-supported multimodal learning environments and resources.

## **Multilingualism and Translanguaging in Multimodal Contexts**

Investigating the interplay of multiple languages, semiotic resources and cultural practices in education.

## **Rethinking Criticality in the New Communication Landscape with AI**

Exploring how power, meaning and representation are negotiated across physical, digital and AI contexts.

## **Hybrid and Flexible Learning Ecologies**

Rethinking the balance of face-to-face, online and immersive multimodal experiences.

## **Future Literacies for New Digital Environments**

From digital, visual and data literacies to multiliteracies and new designs for criticality, embodiment and creativity.

## **Embodiment, Creativity, and Human Experience in AI-Driven Learning**

Ethical reasoning, care, values, creativity and hands-on learning.

## **Equity, Access, and Social Justice in Multimodal and AI Learning**

Addressing the risks of inequality in scalable online and AI-enhanced education.

## **Assessment and Collaboration in Multimodal Learning**

Developing methods to evaluate collective, interactive and multimodal work while recognizing individual contributions.

## **Next-Gen Educators and Learners**

Preparing teachers and learners as designers of learning.

## **Reimagining Pedagogies for the 21st Century**

Transformative, experiential and inclusive pedagogies across diverse learning sites.