



INTERNATIONAL
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Global Doctoral Consortium - Media Release

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ICDE together with founding partners launches the first and unique global consortium to support doctoral students in the research field of online, open, flexible and technology enhanced learning.

In all parts of the world countries are experiencing massive changes in education caused by societal needs, rapid digital growth and reforms to adapt to new realities. There is a global and urgent need for new relevant knowledge on the field, innovations, and visionary leadership for inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning. To have success for a sustainable future*, we need success for education, success for students.

Recognising that challenge, International Council for Open and Distance Education, ICDE, with its headquarter in Norway, together with key partners from other regions of the world, today take the initiative to establish a global organization and support for doctoral students in the research field of online, open, flexible and technology enhanced learning. Doctoral students are future leaders in educational activities and institutions, guarantors for quality and will play a crucial role in sustaining quality education and student success. To support doctoral students that are in the most innovative field in education and learning, in particular those from the developing world, ICDE and partners see as a key action for future education.

The Global Doctoral Consortium (GDC) is a virtual network and knowledge hub that will support doctoral students in building academic relationships and collaborate across regions. The idea of connecting for quality research related to online, open, flexible and technology enhanced learning is to provide insight in the related research themes and topics, stimulate collaboration and peer evaluation among doctoral students, and to foster international collaboration between higher education institutions.

We truly believe that the GDC will be a significant contribution to the internationalisation in education, both in practical terms and in virtual collaborative mobility.

The membership in the ICDE Global Doctoral Consortium is free for relevant doctoral students, and includes ICDE membership. A scholarship fund will be raised to enable doctoral students from all regions to attend high profile events around the globe, to build and share knowledge. The initiative connects to ICDE's global scientific journal [Open Praxis](#) to speed up for publishing of open research papers.

The Global Doctoral Consortium is an ICDE lead initiative in collaboration with our partnering member institutions:

- Asia eUniversity (Malaysia)
- Charles Sturt University (Australia)
- Contact North (Canada)
- HBMS – Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University (United Arab Emirates)
- Lillehammer University College (Norway)
- UNISA (South Africa)
- Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Spain)

A virtual community is being designed for the GDC, and the first virtual activities (knowledge sharing, webinars and facilitating collaboration) will start to run during autumn 2016. The doctoral students will have physical gatherings together with leading scholars when invited, and all are invited to the 2017 ICDE World Conference 17-19 October, in Toronto, Canada .

Doctoral students in the related field may already sign up to receive an invitation to participate in the Global Doctoral Consortium. All interested doctoral students will receive an invitation to register for the GDC.

Doctoral students may [sign up for invitations here](#)

Higher Education Institutions or other interested who want to engage with or support the Global Doctoral Consortium are welcome to take contact by email: gdc@icde.org

For more information about the Global Doctoral Consortium, visit: www.icde.org/gdc

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About ICDE: The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) is the leading global membership organization for open, distance, flexible and online education, including e-learning, and draws its membership from institutions, educational authorities, commercial actors, and individuals. ICDE has consultative partner status with UNESCO and shares UNESCO's key value – the universal right to education for all. ICDE's Permanent Secretariat is in Oslo, Norway, and has been hosted by this country on a permanent basis since 1988. ICDE is supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and by membership fees. For more information about ICDE, visit: www.icde.org.

*Education is a fundamental right and the basis for progress in every country. Parents need information about health and nutrition if they are to give their children the start in life they deserve. Prosperous countries depend on skilled and educated workers. The challenges of conquering poverty, combatting climate change and achieving truly sustainable development in the coming decades compel us to work together. With partnership, leadership and wise investments in education, we can transform individual lives, national economies and our world.

— BAN KI-MOON, UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL