

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

Critical Literacy and Social Justice: Report on the Engaged Minds Symposium

The ARLE Special Interest Group on *Literacies: Reading, Writing & Oracies*, in collaboration with the Department of Arts, Open Communities and Adult Education at the University of Malta, held a three-day, international research symposium titled Engaged Minds: Exploring the Intersection of Critical Literacy and Social Change, from 22 to 24 October 2025, at the Valletta Campus. Convened by Prof Carmel Borg, the symposium brought together educators, researchers, activists, and community practitioners to examine the role of critical literacy in analysing social inequalities, challenging dominant ideologies, and contributing to broader social justice movements. Participants explored how both traditional and digital literacies shape power relations and considered examples of critical literacy in action across local and global contexts.

Across presentations, workshops, and network sessions, the symposium emphasised practical strategies for integrating critical literacy into educational and community settings. Discussions focused on fostering critical engagement with media, supporting the development of critical digital literacies, and encouraging collaboration between sectors to drive social change. The event highlighted participants' shared commitment to using literacy as a tool for empowerment and concluded with reflections on personal and collective responsibilities in advancing more just and equitable societies.

Third International UNESCO Chair Malta Seminar on Global Adult Education

On 4 and 5 November, the 3rd Global Adult Education Seminar, organised by the UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education, took place. As in the previous two editions, this 'intimate' Seminar was held over two days in the UM [Faculty of Education](#) Boardroom. As in the previous years, a small group of 6 guests was invited to address the chosen theme. This year, the theme was Community Education.

The invited speakers, the bulk of whom were lodged at the Urban Valley Resort and Spa at Kappara, just behind the UM's Msida campus, were the following: Professor Maria Slowey, Emerita, Dublin City University, Ireland; Professor Edith Gnanadass, University of Memphis, USA, Professor Jesus Jaime Diaz, Colorado State University Pueblo, USA, [Dr Maria Brown](#), University of Malta, Malta, Dr Sandra Vatrella, University of Naples Federico II, Italy, Dr Sehnaz Nigar Celik, Yuzuncu Yil University, Turkey.

The seminar, convened by [Prof. Peter Mayo](#), UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education, was officially opened by [Prof. Colin Calleja](#), Faculty of Education Dean, who outlined the Faculty's work to date in adult education.

Second International UNESCO Global Adult Education Chair Malta Conference on Critical Adult Learning and Education - CALE 2025

The University of Malta Valletta Campus was once again, after 2023, venue for a massive international conference organised and convened by the *UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education* on Thursday 6 and Friday 7 November 2025.

Over 70 participants were registered for this conference, hailing from South and North America, Africa, Eastern and Western Europe and Asia. This conference followed on the one held in May 2023 in which Adult Learning and Education was combined with Critical Education in general. This conference focused exclusively on *Critical Adult Learning and Education* (CALE).

The conference programme was planned by the present UNESCO Chair incumbent, [Prof. Peter Mayo](#) and the onsite running of the two days was coordinated by Prof. Mayo and prospective UNESCO co-Chair, [Dr Maria Brown](#), with logistical support before and during the conference forthcoming from the University's Conference Unit, particularly [Lucienne May Bugeja](#) and [Maria Evelyn Vella](#).

The conference was officially opened by the Dean of Education, [Prof. Colin Calleja](#) and the two keynote speakers, one keynote address at the start of each day, were Prof. Roberta Piazza, Università di Catania and [Prof. Kenneth Wain](#), University of Malta.

The programme was jam packed and involved three rooms on the Valletta campus' second floor, including the Aula Prima.

The general enthusiasm for and satisfaction with this event, expressed by many participants are leading the convenors to mull changing this from a bi-annual to an annual event. Work is now about to be carried out on the publication of the conference proceedings.

Both the preceding 'intimate' two day seminar and the CALE conference are considered important events on the international adult continuing education calendar. They constitute two important activities in the work package of the UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education.