

Western to host global leaders in human rights education

Western Sydney University will host hundreds of Australian and international leaders in human rights education from more than 50 countries at the 9th International Conferences on Human Rights Education (ICHRE). The conference series, which started in 2010, is an important dialogue on the contribution made by human rights education in furthering democracy, the rule of law, as well as the promotion of intercultural dialogue, social harmony and justice.

Conference Convener and Director of Equity and Diversity at Western Sydney University, Dr Sev Ozdowski, says it is vital that human rights are not considered just part of a lofty United Nations documents, but a set of practical ideas that should be taught in our schools.

"A knowledge of human rights is one of the major ingredients of social cohesion and democracy in a diverse society like Australia. Knowledge of these rights can both improve relations between people of different ethnicity and belief, and nourish civil society," says Dr Ozdowski.

Questions to be addressed at the conference – which coincides with the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 25th anniversary of the education-oriented Vienna Declaration and Program of Action – include: how important is human rights education (HRE) in the preservation of world peace and in countries like Australia where there is no bill of rights? How vital is human rights education in developing countries or in times of crisis? And how do local conditions both here and abroad shape the sharing of these universal values and protect the vulnerable?

The 9th ICHRE will also cover a range of human rights education issues such as national and international curricula, pedagogy and best practices, including in the context of discrimination faced by the First Nations, women, persons with disabilities, the LGBTIQ communities and those of refugee and minority cultural and religious backgrounds as well as contemporary challenges to human rights education.

Confirmed notable keynote speakers include:

- Emeritus Professor Rosalind Croucher, President, Australian Human Rights Commission
- Ms Paula Gaviria, former Presidential Advisor on Human Rights, Colombia
- The Hon Dr Xanana Gusmão GColIH GCL GCMG, the First President of Timor Leste
- Mr Steve Killelea AM, IT Entrepreneur and Founder of the Institute for Economics and Peace and of Global Peace Index
- The Hon Michael Kirby AC CMG, former Judge of the High Court of Australia,
- Dr Mmantsetsa Marope, Director of UNESCO International Bureau of Education,
- Professor Peter Shergold AC, Chancellor, Western Sydney University
- Ms Cynthia Veliko, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Representative for South-East Asia
- Professor John Mubangizi, Dean, Faculty of Law, University of the Free State, South Africa

The International Human Rights Education (IHRE) Conferences - initiated in 2010 by Dr Ozdowski to advance human rights culture worldwide - have been held in Australia, South Africa, Poland, Taiwan, USA, Holland, Chile and most recently in Canada.

Event details

When: 26-29 November, 2018

Where: Western Sydney University, Parramatta South Campus

For more information go to: www.ichre2018.com.au