



Call for Papers “Context and Learning” ENLIGHT Teaching and Learning Conference 2026 in Bern

Introduction

The theme for the Teaching and Learning Conference 2026 is *Context and Learning*. Students are often heard saying ‘But I’ll never use that - why should I learn it?’, and exactly this is what we aim to address. Contextualized learning is a learning approach in which knowledge and skills are embedded in a real and / or meaningful context. For example, teaching and learning in inter- and transdisciplinary settings, reflecting the interlinkedness of academia, different disciplines and approaches and the real world. Rather than learning in isolation, learning content is linked to the learners' contexts and lives in order to enable a deeper understanding and promote the sustainability of learning. Contextualized learning focusses on anchoring theory by putting it into practice, linking it to other areas (subjects, social issues, personal interests) and promoting scientific literacy.

The conference will address teaching and learning approaches and scenarios focussing on competences (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) in four key areas of learning and context:

- Teaching and learning context
Methodology such as problem-based learning and CBE
- Physical context
Innovative teaching spaces and learning environments
- Subject-based context
Trans- and interdisciplinary approaches in teaching
- Work context
Situating learning in the context of real fields of work, jobs, and tasks. Collaborating with external partners from the world of work.

The formats available for the ENLIGHT Teaching and Learning Conference 2026 at the University of Bern above all aim to inspire and connect participants. These formats encourage discussion, the showcasing of good practice, and allow participants to make meaningful connections for shared teaching and learning.

The conference program will strive to achieve a balance in participation between the 10 ENLIGHT universities.

Description of formats

We invite contributions from teaching staff, educational developers and students from the 10 ENLIGHT universities. Contributions can be submitted for workshops, campfire sessions and showcase sessions. Please select one of these formats for your contribution.

Workshop

The aim of a 90-minute workshop is to actively involve all participants. To achieve this, workshops are limited to a maximum of 25 participants. In line with our aims for the conference in Bern, we have selected 3 particularly collaborative types of workshops that presenters can choose from:

- Idea-generation
- Co-creation of teaching offers
- Critical friends

‘Idea-generation’ workshops are structured sessions where participants collaborate to produce a wide range of creative concepts or solutions. Guided activities, open discussion and creative and brainstorming techniques (e.g., design thinking) are used to encourage diverse thinking, challenge assumptions and spark new ideas related to contextualized teaching and learning.

The key question is: How can both you and the participants leave with fresh insights as well as actionable ideas that can be refined and developed further?

‘Co-creation of teaching offers’ workshops focus on collaboratively developing learning objectives and activities, and exchanging ideas with colleagues and students from other universities with the aim to inspire effective teaching and learning.

The key question is: What joint learning opportunities, i.e. products, courses or programs can we collaboratively develop?

‘Critical friends’ workshops provide a space to gather feedback, to discuss and refine educational projects or teaching offerings that are still in development or early implementation and may be adapted further. Gain fresh perspectives from colleagues and students on your own project in a constructively critical yet friendly way, or explore new initiatives and help shape their growth.

The key question is: What do we need to do in order to refine and improve our teaching offers or educational projects at this stage of development?

If you need inspiration, you may want to consult the following [guidelines](#).

Campfire session

The aim of the campfire session is a small (up to 20 participants) and informal, technology- and device-free setting. At the 2026 Teaching and Learning Conference in Bern, we use this format to formulate a range of challenges / problems surrounding the topic presented by the session leader. Afterwards, one or two challenges are chosen by the group to be discussed further. The focus of the session is not on solving, but on discussing the challenges.

The key question is: What can we learn from each other?

In a 90-minute campfire session, the session leader presents a topic, providing necessary background and context to participants (10 minutes). The participants then define potential challenges surrounding this topic. The whole group chooses one or two problems/challenges to focus on. These are then discussed for at least 30 minutes per problem/challenge.

The session will be moderated by the person submitting the abstract, i.e., the session leader; no additional moderation will be provided.

Showcase session

The aim of the showcase session is to inspire others and share good practice. Showcases focus on your learning scenarios that account for teaching and learning in context.

In each 60-minute showcase session, three showcases will be presented. Presentations will consist of 12 minutes of presentation, followed by 7 minutes for questions and discussion. Time will be strictly moderated.

The key question is: What inspirational aspects of teaching and learning would I like to share with the ENLIGHT community?

Guidelines for Abstracts

Abstracts can be up to 1500 characters long (approximately 200-250 words). No referencing is required.

All abstracts must relate to the conference theme.

Abstracts must be submitted via this [form](#) on the conference website **by 31 March 2026 (23:59 CET)**.

Please note that your home university might only allow one speaker per abstract to attend the conference.

Workshop abstracts must include:

- Workshop type (co-creation, idea generating, or critical friends)
- Aims of the workshop
- Topic of the co-creation, idea generating, or project to be discussed with critical friends
- How you will ensure active participation of everyone attending your workshop

Note: If you need inspiration, you may want to consult the following [guidelines](#).

Campfire abstracts must include:

- Session topic (for creating challenges/problems)
- Background / context of the topic
- Two back-up challenges/problems. The aim is not to discuss your own challenge/problem, but those generated by the group. Your back-ups are to be used only as examples in case the group struggles to get started on defining challenges/problems.
- 5-minute ice-breaker activity to set the scene for informal discussion

- 10-minute reflection task to round up the session

Showcase abstracts must include:

- Context / initial situation
- Question or problem / challenge addressed
- Solution or measures
- Impact and recommendations
- One question for the moderator to ask during the question time

Please note: Moderators will strictly adhere to the 12-minute presentation time per showcase. If using a slideshow, we recommend no more than 2 slides for each of the elements listed above and slides must be submitted by **30.09.2026**. If your abstract is accepted, the conference team will contact you via email in due time.

Review criteria

All abstracts are reviewed following a double-blind review process. Please ensure that author information is not provided in the abstract field. The notification about acceptance/rejection will be sent only to the corresponding author.

All applications will be assessed using the following selection criteria:

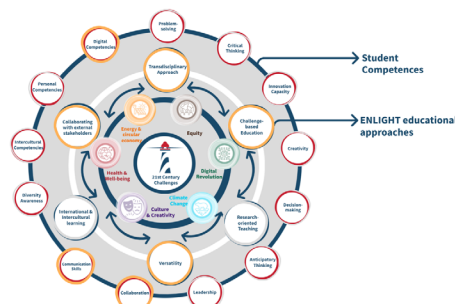
- **Relevance of proposed topic:** How does the proposed topic align with the conference theme? What insight or benefit does the proposed topic provide to session participants regarding the theme or challenge that it addresses?
- **Relevance to ENLIGHT education principles:** Does the proposal adequately take the ENLIGHT education principles the 2026 conference in Bern focuses on (see below) into account?

ENLIGHT education principles the 2026 conference in Bern focuses on:

- Challenge-based education
- Collaboration
- Versatility
- Communication skills
- Digital competencies
- Transdisciplinary approach
- Collaborating with external stakeholders

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- Challenge-based education
- Collaboration
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- Communication skills
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- **Session format and planned outcomes:** How does the proposed contribution align with the available session formats? What are the planned outcomes and do these align with the overall conference idea of active participant engagement?
- **Audience engagement:** Is the plan for how participants will engage and interact during the session feasible? Is it congruent with the format of the session? You can look up the criteria for the different formats [here](#).
- **Student/learner perspective:** Does the proposed contribution include perspectives of learners eg. by mentioning student input/feedback or including them as co-presenters?
- **Potential for expansion/scale up:** To what extent can the innovative teaching practices presented be scaled up to be adopted by other ENLIGHT community members?

Following the review process, the scientific committee and the organising team may suggest a change in the format of the presentation.