

Call for papers

Conference: „Hochschullernwerkstätten: Was war? Was ist? Was kommt? – Spuren, Standpunkte und Visionen“

Date: 23–25 February 2027

‘Hochschullernwerkstätten’¹ have been centres of innovative teaching practice for over 40 years: they combine learner-centred, inquiry-based and resource-supported learning with professional development processes in teacher training, early years education and beyond.
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In the discourse shaped by educational science, subject-specific scholarship and didactics – as documented, for example, by the diverse activities of the community, including its regular conferences and the series “*Lernen und Studieren in Lernwerkstätten*” as well as by the International Network for Hochschullernwerkstätten (NeHLe e.V.) – key concepts are discussed within the thematic contexts of learning processes (Herrmann, 2023) and learning support (Gruhn, 2021), space and materiality (Tänzer et al., 2019; Weber et al., 2024), digitality (Holub et al., 2021; Weber et al., 2024), inclusion (Schmude/Wedekind, 2016), diversity, democracy (Franz et al., 2024) and sustainability. The foundation for this is provided by the fundamental discussion on processes of academic professionalisation (Peschel/Kelkel, 2018; Baar et al., 2019; Kihm et al., 2023) and the intertwining of theory, research and practice (Schneider et al., 2024) as well as the associated ongoing development of (higher education) teaching methods (Hildebrandt et al., 2014; Kekeritz et al., 2017; Stadler-Altman et al., 2020; Kramer et al., 2020; Longhino et al., 2025; Hempel et al., forthcoming).

The concept of Hochschullernwerkstätten is constantly evolving, and the groups of stakeholders involved are becoming increasingly diverse: alongside the self-assessment and profiling of (Hochschul-)Lernwerkstätten (Stadler-Altman et al. 2025), similar learning and educational spaces have emerged in parallel, both within the higher education sector and in other continuing education and training contexts. These are conceptually linked in their commitment to learning cultures with appropriately designed learning environments (e.g. learning laboratories, library concepts) and, despite differing characteristics, are compatible with the Hochschullernwerkstätten-movement. These developments thus enable a mutual broadening of horizons, as framed, among other things, by the decentralised 19th Conference of Hochschullernwerkstätten, “Aufbruch in Neue Welten”.

The 20th Conference of University Learning Workshops at the University of Siegen provides an opportunity to trace developments from these perspectives, assess the current situation and outline visions for the future.

We invite all interested parties to participate in the conference by submitting a paper on the following thematic areas. Both conceptual-theoretical and empirical contributions in German and English are welcome.

¹ We decided to use the term (Hochschul-)Lernwerkstatt in the English version of our Call for papers, since there is no specific English term in educational theory that translates the concept exactly. However, ‘Hochschullernwerkstätten’ also adopted some of the basic ideas of Teachers’ Centers/Workshop Centers which have been prominent in the 1970s (cf. [Müller-Naendrup 2024](#))

² All sources cited below can be found on the [publisher’s website](#).

Focus 1: What was? – Historical trajectories and developments in discourse

- How can the developmental trajectories of Hochschullernwerkstätten be reconstructed in relation to progressive education, higher education reforms, constructivist didactics and contemporary higher education didactics? Which historical concepts continue to influence current Lernwerkstatt practices, and which experiences from the formative phase can be utilised in current development processes?
- What discontinuities and continuities are evident in the self-image of Hochschullernwerkstätten? To what extent have concepts such as 'open learning', 'inquiry-based learning' or learning support differentiated and transformed within Lernwerkstätten? How do institutional frameworks shape the work of Lernwerkstätten over time?

Focus Area 2: What is it? – Current perspectives, empirical findings and reflections on learning journeys

- Which theoretical models and conceptual frameworks shape current discourse within the academic community?
- How can pedagogical practice in heterogeneous learning groups be examined from a power-critical perspective? What opportunities for critical reflection on the framework conditions for educational processes in (Hochschul)Lernwerkstätten are being utilised?
- How can the phenomena and (learning) processes situated in Hochschullernwerkstätten be empirically recorded (e.g. video-based, ethnographic, documentary)? What methodological particularities and challenges arise in this context?

Focus Area 3: What lies ahead? – Visions, transformations and future prospects

- Which disciplinary, subject-specific didactic and educational science topics will shape the role of Hochschullernwerkstätten in transformative higher education against the backdrop of societal developments, currents and trends (e.g. digitalisation, sustainability, the growing strength of anti-democratic positions) in the future?
- How do these topics influence the design of practice and research in Hochschullernwerkstätten? What transdisciplinary synergies and opportunities for cooperation arise from this?

Presentation formats

Presentation format	Description	Duration	Abstract
individual presentation	A presentation followed by a discussion on one of the conference's three thematic focuses (research papers, workshop reports, reflections on practice, etc.)	30 minutes (20-minute presentation and 10-minute discussion)	Max. 2000 characters
symposium/panel discussion	related and moderated presentations relating to one or more of the conference's thematic focuses	90 minutes	Please submit a joint abstract along with descriptions of the individual contributions; maximum 5,000 characters in total
Werkstatt	Joint exploration of the thematic focuses in exploratory, material-based, action-oriented, ... settings	90 minutes	max. 5000 characters
spotlight	A media-supported presentation (e.g. poster, podcast episode, video, etc.) on a topic or aspect of personal significance (project, concept, material, challenge, etc.). Several spotlights are grouped together by the organising team, and there is opportunity for discussion and exchange.	10 minutes	max. 1000 characters

Submission Guidelines

Submissions may be sent by email to hslwtagung2027@uni-siegen.de from now until 31st July 2026; we will notify authors of the acceptance of their papers by 30th September 2026. Registration for the conference will open by the end of September 2026. We plan a publication of the conference presentations; further information will follow.

All abstracts should contain the following information:

- Presenter(s)
- Title
- Presentation format
- Thematic focus(es)
- Research question / objective
- Theoretical framework and/or methodological approach

A maximum of one contribution per person will be accepted, with the exception of the 'spotlight' format.

We look forward to a wide range of presentations and lively discussions at the 20th International Conference of Hochschullernwerkstätten, and we warmly welcome you all to Siegen.

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Lernwerkstatt
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