

Introduction

As we enter a new decade it is right for Lifewide Education to review its purpose, role and work and where appropriate to refresh its approach. This document outlines a strategic framework within which Lifewide Education can locate its work. It is intended for organisations, educational practitioners and decision makers who are interested in lifewide learning and education in the context of the UN's Sustainable Development Goal #4 'lifelong learning opportunities for all'. The review on which it is based can be found at <https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/2030-vision.html>. This

The lifelong – lifewide learning paradigm

Learning is a lifelong project for all humans and knowing how to learn in the ever more complex, hyperconnected and disruptive world we live in, is the core aptitude we need for our survival and prosperity. Education is the formal means by which societies prepare people for a lifetime of learning, but people also create their own opportunities for learning within the circumstances of their life. We need a paradigm for learning that integrates these two domains and recognises that “the whole of life is learning therefore education can have no ending” (Eduard Lindeman). Lifewide learning and education embrace this paradigm and better represent the dynamics, challenges and realities of a lifetime of living, working and learning in and for a complex and messy world.

The United Nations General Assembly recognised the importance of sustaining long, complex learning lives in a world that is in perpetual and rapid formation within its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The fourth SDG calls on Member States to, “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, defining lifelong learning as: “*The integration of learning and living, covering learning activities for people of all ages (at home, at school, in the workplace, in the community, etc.) through formal, non-formal and informal modalities, which together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands.*”

The challenge is to encourage, guide and nurture at a global scale, a multitude of educational systems, cultures and societies to practically embrace the vision of lifelong learning for all within a paradigm of lifelong learning for the survival and flourishing of mankind and the planet. “*Lifelong learning for oneself, for others and for the planet.. it is about the sustained and sustainable freedom of individuals, linking social freedom to environmental responsibility*” “*lifelong learning is lifelong and life-wide, from birth to death (any time) and exists in and out of the education system (anywhere). Learning is undertaken by people of all ages (anyone), takes place through a range of modalities, including face to face, at distance and, increasingly, online, and concerns all domains of knowledge (anything).*”

The UK's Centenary Commission Report on Adult Education recently set out a vision for lifewide adult education aligned to SDG #4. It provides a strategic vision and a rough map of the ecosystem for adult lifelong-lifewide learning within which to locate Lifewide Education's role and work. In this way our advocacy for lifewide learning and education, our role in developing and sharing our understandings of what lifewide learning and education means, and our support for practitioners and practices, is connected to the global vision of future adult learning.

Lifewide Education's role in a lifelong-lifewide learning ecosystem

Lifewide Education is a social learning enterprise inspired by Eduard Lindeman's vision and led by a small band of learning and education activists at the heart of a community of interest that advocates a lifewide, ecological approach to learning, personal development, education and achievement.



We believe that 'lifewide learning' embraces the most comprehensive understanding and practice of learning, knowledge and knowing, personal development and achievement. It includes all contexts for learning – learning that is developed in both structured educational environments and informal settings, learning that is directed or self-managed, learning that is intentional or unintended, learning that is driven by our interests and its intrinsic value, as well as our needs, and learning which just emerges during the course of our daily activity.

Lifewide learning is connected to a number of ideas that are all important to future learning.:

- ✓ learning anything/anywhere/anytime/anyhow/for any purpose
- ✓ that learning involves interacting with our environments through a multiplicity of technological tools
- ✓ that we have to motivate, plan, manage and self-regulate learning, development and achievement.
- ✓ that learning is both personal and individual, yet also social and collaborative.
- ✓ that learning involves, perception, reasoning, imagination, emotion and creativity

Lifewide Education recognises the lifewide dimension of learning, development and achievement and enables the learner to view themselves as the designer of an integrated, meaningful life experience that incorporates formal education as one component of a richer set of experiences that embrace all forms of learning and achievement across and their life.

Our achievements so far

Since its formation in 2011 Lifewide Education has:

1. established a reputation as an effective advocate for lifewide learning and education
2. attracted and served a global community of interest with nearly 600 subscribers to our mail list
3. created a HUB <https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/> hosting a range of freely available open access resources
4. conducted scholarly explorations of ideas relating to lifewide learning and education and published these through our open access Lifewide Magazine (now in its 23rd issue and accessed online over 24,000 times)
5. brought together practitioners in UK universities who are responsible for skills awards to share their practices through a conference and e-book
6. developed an innovative award scheme to show how lifelong-lifewide learning could be supported and recognised <https://lifewideaward.uk> featured in an EU Foresight Study 'Open Education 2030'
7. developed an ecological perspective on learning and practice gaining international recognition for our scholarship through Harvard University's Learning Innovations Laboratory (LILA) inquiry into learning ecologies

Our ambition - to add value and understanding to the lifelong-lifewide learning ecosystem

Working with others we aim to enhance the ecosystem for lifelong-lifewide learning and education by:

- A. Expanding and refreshing our team of supporters and activists by securing representation from diverse professional groups who have an interest and involvement in lifelong-lifewide learning.
- B. Reaching out to practitioners in different professional groups to expand our community and considering the most appropriate form and structure for our organisation
- C. Building understanding and practice through discussions and the sharing of ideas and resources through social media, webinars and collaborative active learning projects, to stimulate thinking and share practices.
- D. Encouraging practitioners to share their ideas and practices through our magazines and books
- E. Reaching out to the political sphere and contributing to initiatives to influence policy that recognises and values the lifewide dimension of learning
- F. Contributing a lifewide ecological perspective to the third edition of the Oxford Handbook for Lifelong Learning commissioned by Springer as a Major Reference Work for publication in 2023.
- G. Supporting initiatives that value learning as one of the 5 ways to wellbeing proposed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF), which now underpin many local health strategies
- H. Working nationally to support the Centenary Commission on Adult Education's vision for lifewide adult education and internationally with the International Association for Lifewide Learning and UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Our invitation to you

Our ambition is to build an inclusive global community that enables educators and practitioners from many different areas of professional interest to work together to create an adult learning ecosystem that is better able to support a lifewide approach to learning and education for anyone who would like to experience it. If our vision for lifelong-lifewide learning and education resonates with you, please get in touch with Norman Jackson, Director Lifewide Education lifewider1@gmail.com or join our community using the contact form on our website at <https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/>.

