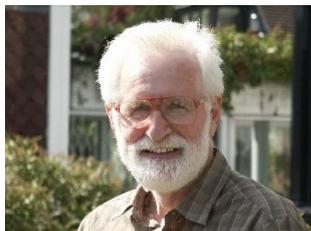


Keynote Speakers



Prof. Seamus Hegarty

Seamus Hegarty is a visiting professor at the University of Warwick. He served as Director of the National Foundation for Educational Research for twelve years until his retirement in 2005. He served as Chair of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) from 2005-12. He has edited the *European Journal of Special Needs Education* since founding it 32 years ago. He edited *Educational Research* for 21 years and serves on editorial/advisory panels for numerous other international journals. He has written and co-authored more than 20 books plus numerous papers.

Seamus has advised UNESCO and other international bodies on special needs issues for over 30 years. He prepared briefing papers and was Principal Academic Adviser for the Salamanca World Conference in 1994. He held a Marie Curie Visiting Fellowship at the National Institute for Intellectual Disability, Trinity College Dublin in 2010/11. He was appointed to the National Council for Special Education in Ireland, a statutory body, where he held the portfolio for research and dissemination (2007-2012).

He is a member of the Learning Indicators Task Force of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML) which is tasked with resolving the technical measurement issues surrounding SDG 4.1. He is a member of the Learning Outcomes Advisory Board for the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) and leads the Breadth of Learning project for the Brookings Institute. He chaired the Working Standards Group within the Learning Metrics Task Force under the aegis of Brookings and UIS. He was a member of the Advisory Board for the Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills project launched by Cisco, Intel and Microsoft. Seamus has been awarded honorary doctorates by the universities of London, Oxford Brookes and York. He is a Doctor *honoris causa* of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and a Fellow of the College of Preceptors. In 2011 he was elected as Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences.



Prof. Elizabeth Walton

Elizabeth Walton is an associate professor in inclusive education at the Wits School of Education where she teaches undergraduate and post-graduate courses in inclusive education, as well as supervising postgraduate students' research in aspects of inclusive education. She is a member of the forum of the UNESCO Chair for Teacher Education for Diversity and Development. She is an NRF-rated researcher and has published research on inclusive education in national and international journals and contributed to textbooks for pre-service and in-service teachers.

Elizabeth serves on the editorial board of two international journals. Her current research projects are investigating teacher education for inclusive education in South Africa, and exclusionary practices and pressures in schools.

Keynote Speakers



Robyn Beere

Robyn has been the Director of Inclusive Education South Africa (IESA) since 2010. IESA is an NGO, which has for the past 21 years, been involved in promoting meaningful participation in education for all children in South Africa. Robyn has an LLB and BA Hons Degree in Political Science and over 13 years experience in the development sector. In addition to her roles of oversight and strategic direction for the organisation, Robyn is involved in high level advocacy around the effective implementation of inclusive education policy in South Africa.



Marijke Wilssens

Marijke Wilssens is a Teacher Educator at Artevelde University College Ghent, Belgium. She taught both pre-service students and in-service teachers in the Advanced Bachelor Programs of Special Educational Needs. She combines her teaching, coordination and research activities with fieldwork: first in an early guidance center for families of young children experiencing barriers to learning, since 2014 in a pedagogical counselling service supporting teachers, internal and external support teams, additional educational needs coordinators and principals.

Her areas of interest are inclusion, empowerment and support for families and children, transdisciplinary cooperation, needs based assessment, flexible curricula, professional and school development and inclusive policy. Her participation in qualitative and practice based research projects resulted in some guidebooks for both parents and teachers, focusing on inclusive nursery education, reasonable accommodations and universal design for learning. After her Master's Degree in Pedagogical Sciences and her Academic Degree in Teacher Education in 1998, she finished a postgraduate in Professional Coaching in 2014. She developed a European program 'Inclusive education: on the long and winding road' (2002-2005) and a short training initiative 'Professionalization in special educational needs' (2012) for a group of teachers and practitioners from Ecuador, Suriname, Vietnam, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Department of Education asked her to do some research, to coach several professional development programs promoting inclusive policy and to participate in the EU-project 'Raising achievement for all learners in inclusive education'. For 2016-2020, she participates in the research project 'Potential – power to teach all', supervised by the University of Ghent.

Keynote Speakers



Prof. Dikeledi Mahlo

Prof Dikeledi Mahlo (Ded: Inclusive Education) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Inclusive Education at the University of South Africa (UNISA). Prior to joining academia she was a Foundation Phase teacher and an Inclusive Education Specialist at Mpumalanga and Gauteng Department of Education respectively. She is passionate about young learners who experiences challenges in learning and believes that through support all learners can achieve.

She offers modules in Inclusive Education at undergraduate and postgraduate level, while supervising Masters and Doctoral students. Her research interests are in, inclusive practices in the Foundation Phase, diversity in schools, teacher, learner and parental support in inclusive settings. She presented papers at a number of local and international conferences on teaching, learning and support in inclusive settings. She has published articles in a number of accredited local and international journals.



Prof. Mirna Nel

Prof Mirna Nel is a research professor in the Optentia Research Focus Area at the Vaal Triangle Campus, North-West University, South Africa. Her research interest is primarily focusing on the role teachers play in teaching and supporting all learners in inclusive classrooms. For her PhD, she was specifically interested in the plight of English Second Language learners in an inclusive classroom and how teachers deal with the barriers they experience.

In 2010, she was invited to become the South African project leader for an international collaboration research project between South Africa, England, Finland, China, Lithuania and Slovenia with the topic: A Comparative Analysis of Teachers' Roles in Inclusive Education. Several publications resulted from this project. She was the main organiser of a symposium: Teacher Education for Inclusion in October 2015. A key outcome of the symposium was the initiation of a collaborative partnership with De Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand (VVOB). VVOB invited her to lead a European Union (EU) funded application for a research project on inclusive education. This funding was awarded in 2016 to conduct research on teacher education for inclusion in collaboration with VVOB, the Universities of the Witwatersrand, Free State, Fort Hare, and Inclusive Education South Africa (IESA). In 2014, together with a colleague, a sub-programme was initiated in the Optentia Research Focus Area with the name: Holistic Learner Development in Diverse Contexts. Mirna has published 5 articles in national and 8 in international journals, written 24 chapters, co-edited 2 and sole edited 2 textbooks, and supervised and delivered 11 Masters and 3 PhD students. Conference papers were presented at 17 national and 16 international conferences. She has also been invited to do 12 keynote presentations at national conferences. Currently she is co-editing a special issue of the European Journal on Special Needs Education on social participation in inclusive education to be published in 2017 with Prof. Susanne Schwab (University of Wuppertal, Germany) and Prof. Frank Heimlich (University of Paderborn, Germany).