

Revista Latinoamericana de Educación

Facultad de Educación
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Call for papers - Special issue

Submission of articles

The Future of Higher Education: Challenges and Experiences of University–Community Engagement

September 15th – October 31st, 2025

Voces y Silencios: Revista Latinoamericana de Educación de la Universidad de los Andes (Colombia) is pleased to announce its call for papers for the special issue on “The Future of Higher Education: Challenges and Experiences of University–Community Engagement”

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Manuscripts will be accepted from September 15 to October 31, 2025.

Submissions are accepted in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. Texts must comply with the journal’s editorial and style guidelines, available at: <https://revistas.uniandes.edu.co/for-authors/vys/editorial-policy>

All manuscripts must be submitted through the OJS platform: <https://gestionrevistas.uniandes.edu.co/index.php/vys/login>

Presentation

The future of higher education depends on its ability to move toward inter- and transdisciplinarity; on its commitment to epistemological pluralism in order to value and integrate diverse forms of knowledge and epistemologies; and on its active presence in society through collaboration, dissemination, and articulation with other actors (UNESCO, 2023). Within this framework, the commitment of universities to their local and regional communities has become especially relevant for understanding the essence and dynamics of contemporary higher education. Likewise, communities and organizations of various kinds increasingly recognize universities as legitimate partners for collective work and for strengthening their capacity for agency within their territories.

There is no single recipe or infallible formula for universities to authentically materialize their commitment to communities, nor is there just one way of expressing such commitment. Although it now benefits from a broad theoretical and conceptual framework, university–community engagement requires ongoing reflection on its ethical, epistemological, and pedagogical implications. In addition, it is necessary to consider structural and contextual factors that can either foster or hinder the construction and care of a lasting relational fabric oriented toward participation and collaboration.

Experiences from around the world show us that authentic university engagement goes beyond activism or short-term cooperation projects: it requires that local and regional issues be integrated into curricula, involving communities in teaching processes and research projects at all stages—from conception to the social appropriation of knowledge—so as to collectively influence public agendas.

The complexity of today's global challenges should lead us to a renewed perspective on university engagement in three spheres: local action to ensure greater autonomy and leadership of communities in processes of development and peacebuilding; collaborative work with communities to foster necessary transitions in policies, budgets, institutions, and regulatory frameworks through participatory research; and regional–global dialogue for collective innovation aimed at building capacities in both communities and universities.

With this foundation, this special issue of *Voces y Silencios: Revista Latinoamericana de Educación* invites reflection and action on past, current, and potential collaborations between universities and communities, as well as on the contributions of community-based participatory research. It also offers an opportunity to envision the future of higher education in terms of knowledge democratization, decolonization of thought, and the building of bridges among diverse cultures and ways of knowing worldwide.

Inspired by the trajectory of the UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Participatory Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, the aim of this special issue is to contribute to the construction of a body of knowledge on the future of higher education and the challenges of university–community engagement, drawing on the contributions of community-based participatory research. We expect the articles in this issue to inspire higher education institutions, communities, and policymakers to support the praxis of university–community engagement. This call is particularly interested in articles that delve into the following thematic areas:

1. Challenges and Experiences of University–Community Engagement

This axis addresses the challenges and opportunities in the relationship between higher education and communities, exploring alternative models of teaching and learning based on participation, co-construction, and knowledge decolonization. Topics include:

- Alternative higher education experiences: Indigenous, intercultural, popular, and other universities.
- Experiences of democratizing knowledge and decolonizing knowledge from higher education.
- Community, Indigenous, intercultural, and popular education processes that challenge universities.
- Dialogues of knowledge between universities and communities around shared concerns such as education, sustainability, well-being/living well, gender, and others.

2. Epistemological Principles and Methodologies of Participatory Research

This axis explores the foundations and approaches of Participatory Action Research (PAR), highlighting its potential to generate situated knowledge, strengthen community trust, and foster social transformation through collaborative methodologies. Topics include:

- Epistemological, methodological, ethical, and political features and implications of participatory research.
- Methods and strategies for building trust with/among communities.
- Methods and strategies for identifying local problems and their structural causes.
- Methods and strategies for activating collective memory and creating new knowledge and action.
- Formats and possibilities for knowledge dissemination.
- Orlando Fals Borda and PAR: trajectory, contributions, and horizons of participatory research for social transformation.

The following types of manuscripts are welcome:

- **Empirical research articles and literature reviews:** These present results from quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method studies. Articles must include a clear and well-founded research question focused on current debates in education, pedagogy, and human development. Literature reviews that organize, integrate, and evaluate published material to provide a balance or analysis of research progress, conclusions, gaps, and contributions are also included.
- **Conceptual essays:** Theoretical research articles that provide a space for discussing ideas and proposals from a reflective and forward-looking perspective. Their aim is to stimulate discussion on the development of the educational and pedagogical field, particularly regarding issues relevant to the Latin American context.
- **Testimonies:** Texts written by individuals directly involved in educational practice, describing in detail significant experiences, pedagogical and didactic resources, or innovations in educational practice. These may be impactful experiences that generate new learning through reflection or unexpected reactions among participants, communities, or observers.

Voces y Silencios: Revista Latinoamericana de Educación is a peer-reviewed, open-access, electronic academic publication, issued every four months (since 2024). The journal is dedicated to the study and dialogue on questions and problems in education, pedagogy, and human development. It emphasizes topics of particular interest to Latin American education, while also welcoming contributions that present and discuss these issues in other parts of the world. Its intended audience includes researchers, teachers, administrators, and other professionals working in education, whether in formal educational institutions, policy-making bodies, NGOs, or non-formal and informal education spaces.

For inquiries regarding this call for papers, please contact Nicolás Aguilar Forero, Editor: nj.aguilar1902@uniandes.edu.co

References

UNESCO (2023). Knowledge-driven actions: Transforming higher education for global sustainability. UNESCO.