



Education and Learning Sciences (ELS)

Wageningen University & Research, Department of Social Sciences



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Our Mission

The Education and Learning Sciences group aims to maximise human potential in response to global challenges, particularly challenges in the domain of life sciences. We aspire to support humans in overcoming these challenges in a valuable (and “value-able”), responsible, and critical manner with an awareness, knowledge, and understanding of their own identities and abilities.

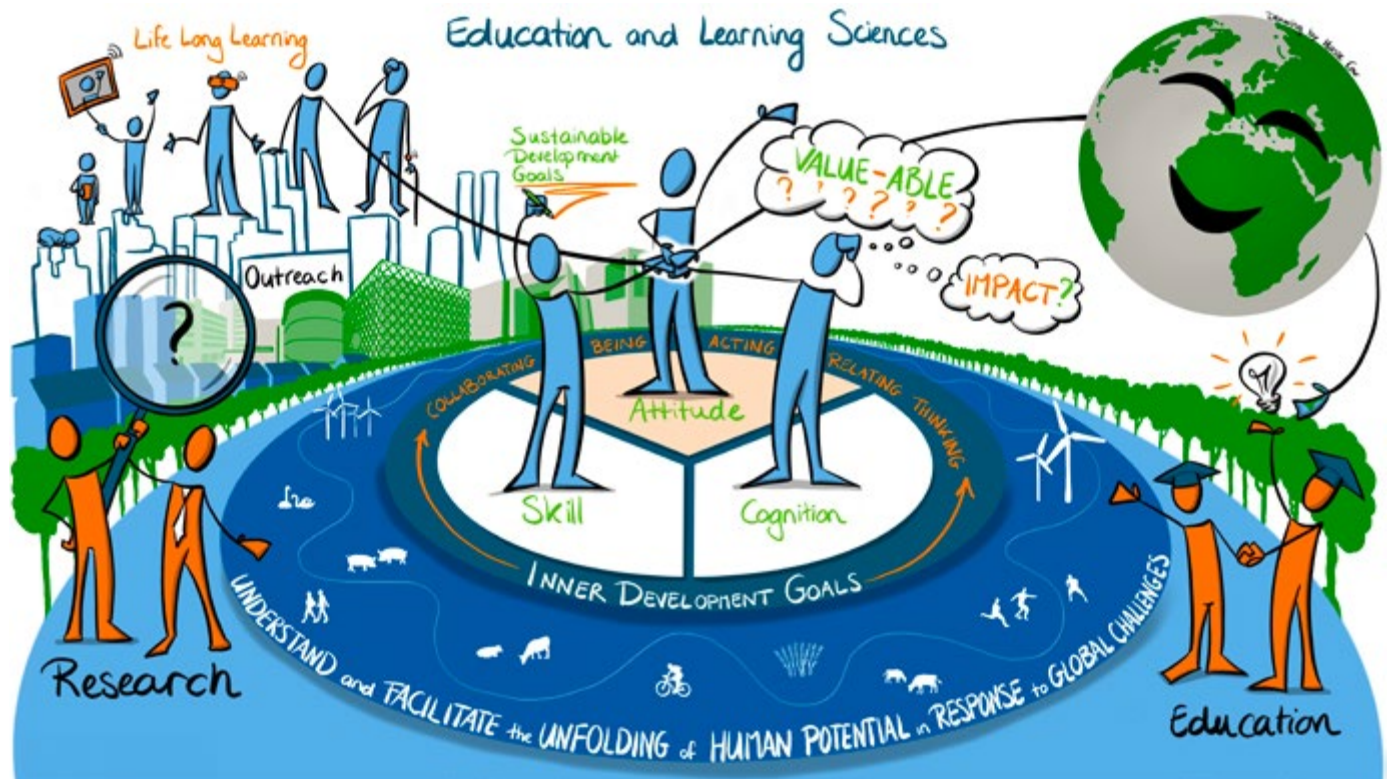
How

ELS engages in various types of research, providing education and being involved in activities with societal impact at the local, national, and international levels. The context of our research is formed by educational environments (in secondary, vocational, and higher education), business and society, and the intersections between these environments. We consider these environments, with their full complexity, as educational ecosystems, with a focus on individual potential and learning trajectories. ELS strives to be at the forefront of developments in education and learning, with its own education and research serving as an example of these developments. In our education, we also place particular importance on both the educational ecosystem itself and the individual. ELS is part of CPTe (the section Communication, Philosophy, Technology Innovation and Education), and we collaborate with other sections, chair groups, and educational support staff at WUR, as well as with companies, NGOs, secondary and vocational education institutes, and other parties involved in the learning and education of individuals and/or groups, both in the Netherlands and internationally. Thanks to our contextualised approach, societal impact is a central outcome of all our activities. At ELS educators, researchers and teaching staff work together in multidisciplinary teams to fulfil their various tasks, and many of our staff are involved in multiple tasks that cross the boundaries of their own fields.

A focus on the future

Moving forward, ELS will remain focused on its original focal areas: innovation in learning environments, learning processes and outcomes, particularly in education and adjacent fields, learning and teaching for sustainability, entrepreneurial learning, technology-enhanced learning, educating professionals and teachers, and professional development. At the same time, we will increasingly emphasise supporting people as they develop and achieve their Inner Development

Goals (IDGs) – being, thinking, relating, collaborating, and acting – in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and create a prosperous future for all humanity. This falls under the umbrella of “value-able” learning and education and will include attitude development, an ethical and entrepreneurial mindset, boundary-crossing skills, professional identity development, supporting new skills and qualities focused on resilience, anxiety, and dealing with



uncertainty. We will also focus on the relational dimension, including dialogue and collaboration. The need to increase our focus on this non-cognitive dimension emerges from a wide range of developments in education and research, and our wider context such as more flexible and personal learning paths and the question of what guides learners in their choices, learning how to deal with failure, tension, and dilemmas when no right or wrong answer exists, for example in the case of real-life assignments and approaches such as challenge-based learning. This approach includes studying these personal queries and journeys, the role of innovative environments and tools as both a means and a cause for rethinking the roles and identities of learners, as well as dealing with the reliability of information. This shifting focus has several important consequences:

- New research and education questions emerge, such as how to effectively educate and train for IDGs (within specific target groups), how to assess progress, and how to optimise and personalise innovate learning trajectories, learning environments, and tools?
- Our focus will also encompass lifelong learning, from toddler to retirement. We will focus more on the post-university period (or rather, the transition from university student to the work force) than we did in the past, although studies in our more “traditional” contexts will remain important.
- Our collaborations with stakeholders outside of education will increase in order to create a “spill-over” effect to groups other than academia and affect other parts of society.

- Our research focus will remain on various levels (and the interactions between these levels), including individuals, groups and larger entities, institutions/ organisations and society. We will also focus on empowering individuals to act – and interact – on these multiple levels.
- We will also develop new expertise. For example, we will create a new tenure track covering the topic of educating for inner development, and we will increase our focus on this topic in research grants, innovation projects, and both existing and new courses.
- We will increase our focus on collaborating with (and within) CPTe. The aim of the section is to understand and enhance learning and developmental processes at the interface between life sciences and social sciences, including communication, ethics, the use of technology to facilitate social, and collaborative processes.

More information about the Education and Learning Sciences (ELS) group can be found [here](#)

An overview of our research activities can be found [here](#)

Our education activities can be found [here](#)

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*We look forward to working together
with you as we realise our mission!*



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The mission of Wageningen University & Research is "To explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life". Under the banner Wageningen University & Research, Wageningen University and the specialised research institutes of the Wageningen Research Foundation have joined forces in contributing to finding solutions to important questions in the domain of healthy food and living environment. With its roughly 30 branches, 7,600 employees (6,700 fte) and 13,100 students and over 150,000 participants to WUR's Life Long Learning, Wageningen University & Research is one of the leading organisations in its domain. The unique Wageningen approach lies in its integrated approach to issues and the collaboration between different disciplines.
