



SIG 19 Religious and Spiritual Education Newsletter

Issue 10/2017

Dear SIG 19 members and friends,

Welcome to the Autumn 2017 issue of our Newsletter!

In this issue, you find information about the Earli-conference in August in Tampere, Finland. Elina Kuusisto gives some impressions of the conference and we have some photos. We are happy to introduce two interviews with a new and an experienced member of SIG 19 – Manfred Pirner and Terry Lovat. They give insight into their biography as researchers.

Furthermore, in our section “Spotlight on Research” we turn our spotlight on Germany, University of Bamberg, and Konstantin Lindner’s research. At the end of the Newsletter you will find important information about SIG 19 next conference and call for papers, membership and a list of the latest publications by SIG 19 members.

Eva-Maria Leven & Nasibeh Hedayati

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Laura Hirsto

SIG 19 – Coordinator

Dr. Laura Hirsto works as a professor at the Department of Applied Educational Science and Teacher Education at the University of Eastern Finland. She also holds the Title of Docent in educational psychology (Adjunct professor) at the University of Helsinki. Dr. Hirsto has worked at the University of Helsinki for over fifteen years at the Department of Teacher Education and at the Faculty of Theology. She also worked at the Aalto University as an educational/academic developer, and for the last couple of years at the University of Eastern Finland. Her research has focused on worldview issues in the learning processes of children as well as contextualized motivational and learning processes of university students. She has also studied (university) teacher learning. Currently, she is involved with investigating university students' and teachers' learning and motivational processes and educational development in a flipped learning environment, as well as elementary and secondary school students' experiences and perspectives to learning in a tablet based learning environment. Dr. Hirsto has been participating at EARLI –conferences since 1998, and she has been a member of the SIG 19 for almost a decade.

Elina Kuusisto

SIG 19 – Coordinator

Dr. Elina Kuusisto works as a Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki, Finland. She also holds the Title of Docent in education (Adjunct professor) at the University of Helsinki. Her research interests include moral and religious education and teacher education. Currently she is studying growth mindset, ethical sensitivity and life purposes.



Alexander Unser

JURE – Coordinator

Alexander Unser has studied theology and educational sciences in Freiburg, a city in the southwest of Germany. Since 2012, he is a research associate at the University of Wuerzburg (Germany) in the department of Practical Theology/Religious Education. His doctoral thesis focuses on the impact of social inequality in religious education. Further on he works on issues of interreligious learning and religion and human rights.

Eva-Maria Leven

Newsletter Editor

Eva-Maria Leven is a member of the SIG 19 since 2013. She organized the SIG 19 conference 2016 in Siegen together with her supervisor Ulrich Riegel. She is a PhD student and works as a research assistant at the institute of Catholic Theology for the department Religious Education and Practical Theology at the University of Siegen, Germany. Her research focus is RE teachers' competencies in planning, conducting, reflecting RE lessons. She uses qualitative methods. As a lecturer she concentrates on learning with (new) media and art in RE as well as on "theology of/with" children and teenagers.



Nasibeh Hedayati

Newsletter Editor

Nasibeh Hedayati is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, the University of Helsinki, Finland. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, her research investigates life purposes' of Iranian students and teachers as well as moral dilemmas in the context of Iranian schools.

Impressions of the conference

This year biennial EARLI conference was held in Tampere, Finland. Conference venues at the University of Tampere and at Tampere-hall provided an uplifting atmosphere for meetings with colleagues, for finding new networks, being inspired by keynotes and presentations, and becoming familiar with sights at Tampere. For example, many of us visited Moomin Museum that is located at Tampere-hall. Moomins by Tove Jansson have attracted children as well as adults around the world with their existentially moving wisdom and warm approach to life. This all made EARLI conference in Tampere, may I say, unforgettable.

Please find below insights from SIG 19 events during Tampere conference: Business meeting and Dinner at Wed August 30; Invited symposium Friday September 1.

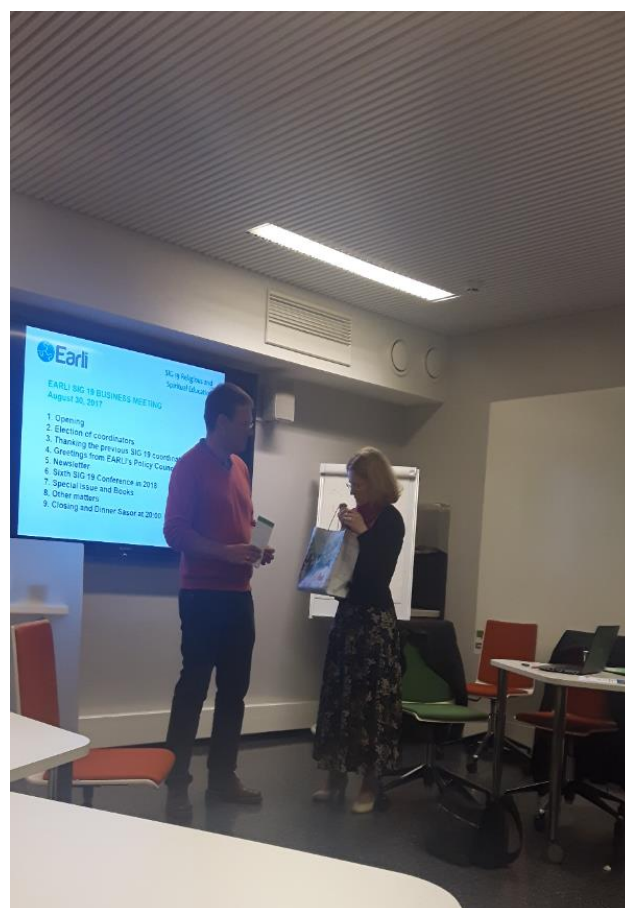
Participants at the business meeting were: Liam Gearon, Nasibeh Hedayati, Tapani Innanen, Laura Hirsto, Arnika Kuusisto, Elina Kuusisto, Konstantin Lindner, Niina Manninen, Manfred Pirner, Ulrich Riegel, Inkeri Rissanen, and Sanna Väisänen

Thanking Ulrich Riegel, Dan Fleming and Katharina Kindermann

At the business meeting Professor Ulrich Riegel gave his last speech as SIG 19 Co-coordinator, and he was and is warmly thanked for his efforts for SIG 19. We also wish to say our gratitude to Dr. Dan Fleming for working as JURE-coordinator and Katharina Kindermann as Newsletter Co-Editor. Hope to see you all in SIG19 in the future too!

Welcoming Laura Hirsto and Alexander Unser

Professor Laura Hirsto was chosen as the new Co-coordinator and Doctoral Student Alexander Unser as the new JURE-coordinator. They, Laura in person and Alexander in paper, introduced themselves and their ideas about SIG19 future. Sincerest welcome to Laura and Alexander!



Discussing about SIG 19 Identity and New Name

The biggest part of the business meeting was spent on discussing about identity of SIG 19. This discussion was motivated by the greetings Laura and Elina brought from the EARLI policy council meeting. EARLI wishes to develop SIG's further and one possibility is to merge SIGs that do not meet the criteria of min of 30 members. Please notice that our SIG 19 is one of the most active ones in terms of publishing Special Issues in journals and books in our own book series by Waxmann. For example, SIG 19 conference 2014 in Helsinki resulted three Special Issues for the Journal of Religious Education and a book!

So to cultivate our SIG19 and to highlight the importance of our contribution in EARLI, our SIG's identity was negotiated. One presented option is to broaden the scope of the SIG 19 so that EARLI members and scholars who are not yet familiar with EARLI could find our SIG and identify themselves with SIG 19. Thus, it was proposed that this broadening could be expressed by renaming the SIG. During constructive and positive discussions the following suggestions for were supported:

Religions and Worldviews in Education

Religions and Worldviews in Educational Contexts

Religious, philosophical, and spiritual education

The meeting decided to start more profound discussion and welcome all members and friends to contribute to this matter at next SIG19 conference in 2018 in Joensuu, Finland.

Lauching a book edited by Arniika Kuusisto and Liam Gearon



To illustrate our SIG's activity in publishing area, Arniika and Liam introduced at the business meeting the new edited volume 'Value learning trajectories: Theory, Method, Context.' The book had just been published in our series "Research on Religious and Spiritual Education" by Waxmann. The official book launch was held at SIG 19 invited symposium, where some of the authoring teams/authors presented their research. Warmest congratulations for Arniika and Liam for creating such an interesting and important book!

Pondering the moral dimensions of RE

The invited symposium was organized by welcoming SIG 19 members to submit papers. Finally four of the propositions were chosen under the following topic “The Moral Dimension of Religious Education”. Ulrich Riegel acted as the chair and Laura Hirsto as the discussant giving constructive feedback and reflecting presentations in a larger context. Presentations were:

Liam Gearon & Arniika Kuusisto (Great Britain, Finland): Value Learning Trajectories: Theory, Method, Context

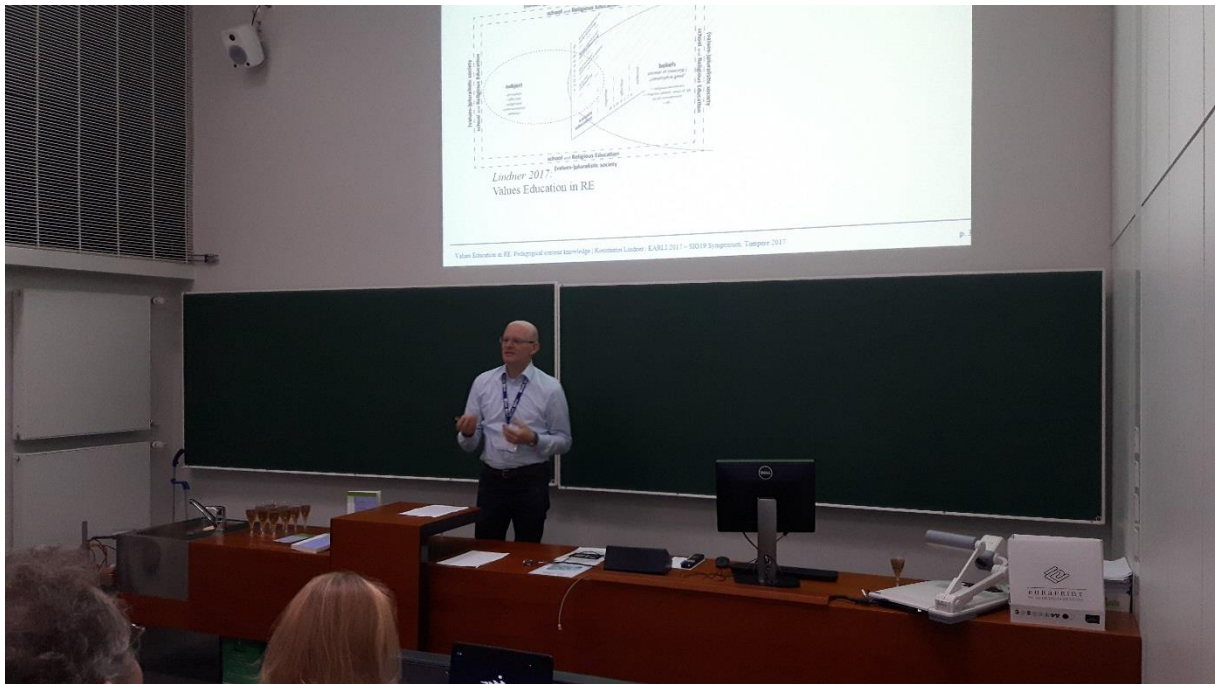
Konstantin Lindner (Germany): Value education in RE: Competencies and success criteria

Nasibeh Hedayati, Elina Kuusisto, Khalil Gholami & Kirsi Tirri (Iran, Finland): Moral Dilemmas in Iranian schools identified by students

Dimitris Pneumatikos (Greece): Beliefs in Afterlife: The Role of the Religious Background



Ulrich Riegel, Arniika Kuusisto, Liam Gearon



Konstantin Lindner



Dimitris Pneumatikos



Nasibeh Hedayati, Elina Kuusisto



Discussant Laura Hirsto

Enjoying Dinner

Informal social gatherings are a beautiful tradition of SIG 19. This year we dined at Sasor-restaurant, which was chosen also by other SIGs, such as SIG 13 Moral and Democratic Education. This gave opportunity for coordinators Laura and Elina to meet with SIG 13 coordinators. The unanimous vision in both SIGs is to collaborate in the future but also stress the independence and uniqueness of both SIGs within EARLI.



SIG 19 Dinner



SIG 19 Dinner



SIG 19 Dinner

PREPARING NEXT CONFERENCES

- SIG 19 conference 2018 in Joensuu, Finland: Please see call for papers in this Newsletter and via this link <http://www.uef.fi/sig19conference2018>
- EARLI conference 2019 in Aachen, Germany: SIG 19 plans to arrange an invited symposium and one or two symposiums in order to make our topics more available and visible within EARLI, and for our members and friends as well as new audiences.

I am looking forward to meet you at the next SIG-conference.

Text Elina Kuusisto

Photos Nasibeh Hedayati



SIG 19 Symposium 2017



Values Education in Religious Education

Konstantin Lindner

Currently reflections on values are gaining ground – in social, political, economic or other contexts. In times of plurality, the need for orientation support becomes necessary when people need orientation for their decisions and actions. Values can provide guidance for a successful life and it is young people who are most likely to need assistance. Among others, especially schools are faced with this challenge. Because of their educational mandate they have the task to provide opportunities for their pupils to reflect and to become aware of their own values. In Germany, (denominational) religious education as a teaching subject is challenged to make suitable learning offers, because value learning is an important part of this teaching subject. This context marks the background of Lindners' explanations, which showed a theoretical conception of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge about teaching values in RE.

The conceptualization is leaned on a theoretical model of teachers' professional competence developed in the German COACTIV-studies. Originally intended to do research on mathematics teachers, the COACTIV-model has been applied to teachers of other subjects in recent years. It distinguishes different aspects of professional competence: motivational orientations, self-regulation, beliefs/goals/values, and professional knowledge. Professional knowledge consists of five dimensions: counseling knowledge, organizational knowledge, pedagogical/psychological knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. The latter dimension is described as a core element of teachers' professional competence.

Konstantin Lindner specified three domains of pedagogical content knowledge about teaching values:

First of all, teachers need knowledge about the values pupils prefer and how they interact within the plurality of values. This includes knowledge about the development of their moral self in accordance to their moral motivation, their moral emotions and their moral reasoning. In regard to RE, it has to be mentioned, that there are only a few relevant correlations between religiousness and value orientation among adolescents: Compared to their non-religious counterparts, religious young people prefer more family- and community-based values.

Secondly, teachers should be competent in representing values in generic strategies. For example there is a difference between teaching values according to an idea of transmission or with the concept of values clarification. Values communication however focusses on negotiating values. To stimulate the moral development according to Kohlberg, dilemma discussions could be used. The approach of "experiencing values" seeks to enhance the

behavioral component of values education. As values education means more than forming lexical knowledge about values, teachers should ensure to take four different dimensions into account: The biographical, self-reflecting dimension reveals that it is important to motivate students to contemplate their own values and how their way of life is based on those. The personal-communicative dimension refers to other people since values must be negotiated and legitimized in communicative situations. As individuals live in various communities, the social-initiating dimension draws attention to values in their societal influences. The fourth dimension adds a religious perspective: The so-called transcendence-referencing dimension directs the attention of students to the possibility of reasoning values in reference to transcendence. Another core component guiding professional values teaching is the ability to integrate several processes in the handling of values. There are five typical processes, which teachers should take into account: perception of values, reflection about them, judgement on values, communication about values and value-based behavior.

The third domain of pedagogical content knowledge about teaching values indicates that teachers for RE should be able to offer learning approaches which make values accessible in discussing to semi-realistic situations or in recourse to own experiences. In addition, these approaches should show that commitment to values can be explained by reference to religious beliefs. Since specifically religious values do not exist, the peculiarity of value-based learning arrangements in RE can be located in the justification. References to the Bible, the Qu'ran, the Vedas or to religious people and their way of life mark contexts of meaning that offer sense and provide guidelines for thought and behavior. However, it is challenging that RE at schools in Germany increasingly has to deal with the fact that many pupils lack personal religious experience. Therefore, they have hardly any relation to strategies of a religious justification of values. Therefore, proposals have to be created in order to familiarize them with the possibility of justifying values in reference to religious beliefs. Hence the following competences that pupils should acquire in RE can be defined: the ability to enrich orientation knowledge by analyzing and discussing religiously motivated value-based acting, the ability to verify and consult their own values from a religious perspective – and vice versa to consult a religious justification of values, the ability to reflect potentials and limits of justifying values in reference to transcendent contexts.

Finally, Konstantin Lindner gave an overview of three typical opportunities for values-learning in RE teachers should know – especially regarding an effective orchestration in the classroom: the use of moral dilemmas, dealing with role models, the potential of so called "negative moral knowledge".



Name: Manfred Pirner
Position: Professor for Religious Education
Institution: University of Erlangen-Nuremberg
Country: Germany
Research key words: Teacher professionalism, public theology and education, human rights education and religious education, popular culture and religion, media education and religious education, content and language integrated learning (CLIL)

What started your career as a researcher in the area of religious and spiritual education?

The opportunity that I was given after graduating from university by Professor Rainer Lachmann. He judged me as talented for academic work and offered me a post at his chair of religious education. When after several years of work as a high school teacher I started the university job, I was not at all sure if this was the right thing for me. I had been a passionate teacher with quite good contact to the kids and well integrated into the team at my school, and now, during my initial time at university I felt quite lonely brooding over the books for my doctoral dissertation. However, after some time I found out that the university work offered a highly attractive combination of doing self-determined academic research, teaching students and coaching practical studies at schools. And after some time, I discovered that obviously I had the potential for an academic career.

What, in your opinion, is the most important area for religious and spiritual education research today?

There is not the one most important area for me, but among the most urgent challenges in my opinion is researching and defining the relationship between heterogeneous religions and worldviews on the one hand side and the common principles and values that hold our pluralistic societies together. This is why I engage e.g. in human rights education, but also in reflecting the role of religious schools in democratic societies.

What was your personal highlight at EARLI Conference 2017 in Tampere?

Apart from our SIG 19 symposium in which several interesting papers were presented, I appreciated the paper session on teacher ethos that was chaired by my Bamberg colleague Karin Heinrichs and opened by veteran Fritz Oser. The major idea of this session was that the personal morality and the professional ethos of a teacher are two different things and not necessarily tied up. I think this is as correct as it is risky to over-emphasize the difference and to underestimate personality traits in their significance for teacher professionalism. It was this controversy and the empirical findings in this context that fascinated me about the session.



Name: Terry Lovat

Position: Emeritus Professor,
Honorary Research Fellow,
Former SIG19 Coordinator

Institution/Country: University of
Newcastle, Australia; University of
Oxford, UK

Research key words:

Social Education, Religious Education,
Islamic Studies

What started your career as a researcher in the area of religious and spiritual education?

I was a high school teacher who became involved in new syllabus development in the New South Wales public education system. In the late 1970s and through to the early 1990s, new social science subjects were developed for senior high school, called Society & Culture and Studies of Religion. Society & Culture was effectively an introduction to Sociology tailored to a high school audience. It entailed a general overview of various sociological approaches (structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, critical theory, etc.) and their attached methodologies, followed by application to a number of fields of sociological study. One of these fields was titled 'Religion and Belief'. I ended up on the State-based syllabus committee for the subject and later was appointed the Chair of the sub-committee for the 'Religion and Belief' component. This component proved to be very popular in both public and private education and, partly as a result, a few years later, I was appointed to a new syllabus committee established to design and set up another new syllabus called Studies of Religion.

It was an interesting time in Australian history because the religious make-up of the country was rapidly changing, so the focus of any study of religion had to include a rapidly increasing Hindu and Buddhist population (the latter largely as a result of post-Vietnam War immigration) and, a little later, an even more rapidly increasing Muslim population, this one largely as a result of Middle East immigration. Hence, the religious education that was already in place in religious schools was of little use as a model, firstly because it was focussed fairly exclusively on one or other denomination of Christianity and secondly because it was confessional, whereas a public syllabus had to be educationally oriented in the way of any other subject. It was a particularly interesting innovation for the public systems of education

because there had been no tradition of religious education functioning as part of the public syllabus; the only religious education that was to be found in public schools was exclusively one run on a volunteer basis by the churches and, for the most part, not extending beyond the primary school. Its educational reputation was exceedingly low.

So, with the help of others, we really had to start something afresh for Australia, first of all getting to know some of these new religious communities and then working out what religious and spiritual education in a public, non-aligned and thoroughly educational context might look like and how it would function. We took a leaf out of some books overseas, especially from Ninian Smart's phenomenological approach and a home-grown typological approach, and also Thomas Groome's praxis approach. I eventually put all these together in a melded approach I described as the Critical Model (Lovat, 1989, 2002, 2009). It combined the essence of Smart's approach, based on Husserlian phenomenology and so emphasizing the need for teacher neutrality, with Groome's approach, based on Habermasian critical theory, and so the need for engagement with the subject, or praxis.

What, in your opinion, is the most important area for religious and spiritual education research today?

As time has gone on, I have become more and more involved with Islam, still employing the methodology of the Critical Model in analysing the distinction between Islam as a tradition built around sources and a sacred history, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, radical Islamism, or Jihadism, built around a highly contentious (many would say skewed) interpretation of the same sources and history. Distinguishing between and educating about these two ends of Islam, especially at a time that sees so much political discourse and media commentary focussed on the skewed version, has become an urgent task of religious and spiritual education at all levels, school, post-school and community education. I have become heavily involved in this work in terms of publications (Lovat & Crotty, 2015; Lovat & Moghadam, 2017) as well as public lectures and consultancies in both Western and Islamic countries.



Worldviews in creating meaning and purpose for learning

EARLI SIG 19 Conference
June 11-13, 2018, Joensuu, Finland

www.uef.fi/sig19conference2018

email: EARLISIG19_2018@uef.fi

Welcome!



**SIG 19 Religious and
Spiritual Education**



**UNIVERSITY OF
EASTERN FINLAND**



CALL FOR PAPERS

Worldviews in creating meaning and purpose for learning

EARLI SIG 19 Conference

June 11-13, 2018, Joensuu, Finland

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The sixth biennial conference of the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction EARLI, Special Interest Group 19: Religious and Spiritual Education provides an international academic forum for presenting and discussing latest research findings on religious and spiritual education taking place in different societal and educational settings and across age groups. The EARLI SIG 19 is addressing both junior and senior scholars to present their work.

The topic of the conference discusses how worldviews impact people's motivation to learn, how worldviews guide people's life choices and future orientation, and how worldviews and religions help people to find meaning and purpose in life. The conference includes keynote addresses from Professor Alyssa Bryant Rockenbach (North Carolina State University, USA), Associate Professor Jenny Berglund (Södertörn University, Sweden), Professor Kirsi Tirri (University of Helsinki, Finland) and Professor Ulrich Riegel (University of Siegen, Germany).

As a Special Interest Group, we have a strong tradition of publishing a selection of the biennial conference papers in high quality, peer-reviewed academic publications. These have included Special Issues in the Journal of Empirical Theology (2009), the Journal of Beliefs and Values (2014), and the Journal of Religious education (2015, 2016a, 2016b), as well as edited volumes in the Research on Religious and Spiritual Education series published by Waxmann (2012, 2017a, 2017b). We intend to publish a selection of papers either as a Special Issue and/or an edited volume also following the 2018 conference.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

We welcome proposals that address some of the thematic questions presented above or other issues related to our conference theme. Theoretical and empirical inquiries that challenge methodological boundaries and explore non-traditional approaches to religious and spiritual education are particularly welcome. We also encourage young researchers to submit proposals, and welcome not only presentations of finished research projects but also papers or posters presenting ongoing research and preliminary results.

We accept paper presentations and posters, as well as roundtable sessions which can be suggested for being co-organized by the conference participants working on a particular theme. Each presentation format provides specific opportunities:

(a) Paper format provides the opportunity for the author(s) to communicate personal empirical and theoretical enquiry. Papers are organized into thematic sessions.

(b) Poster format makes it feasible to combine a visual presentation of data and a more informal discussion on the study. The posters are displayed in area hall where each presenter has some 5 minutes for introducing their work, followed by informal conversations on that. Poster format is encouraged for on-going, explorative research work and preliminary results. It is also a good format for young researchers to start with one's first conference presentation.

(c) Roundtable format provides an opportunity for interaction with several researchers working on related research problems or a theme; the emphasis here is on discussion and linkages between different studies and projects. In the Roundtable format, the organizer(s) of the session can invite 3-5 scholars, ideally from different research groups or institutions, for discussing a specific contemporary topic related to the Religious and Spiritual Education research. This working format is well suited for senior researchers who would like to discuss their projects with others.

For submissions you will need to prepare:

An abstract of 200-250 words maximum (excluding references) submission December 1st - December 15th, informing about:

- Mention your preference for a paper or a poster presentation, or a particular roundtable session.
- Include your research questions and objectives,
- Theoretical framework and the referred literature,
- Research design (research approach, methods and tools for collecting and analyzing data) for empirical research or data sources, evidences and materials for others research projects,
- Findings of the study.

We ask you to target the conference theme 'Worldviews in creating meaning and purpose for learning'. This will also make it easier for you to offer your paper into our similarly themed publication later on (i.e., a journal Special Issue, or an also reviewed edited volume). Abstracts are to be downloaded to the electronic submission system via the conference web pages www.uef.fi/sig19conference2018

Contributors will be informed about the results of the abstract review process January 15st.

After having received the results of the review, you are asked to submit an extended summary of your accepted abstract (maximum 2000 words excluding references) by April 30th, 2018.

Interested in proposing a manuscript to a Special Issue?

EARLI SIG 19 has had discussions about special issues in refereed international journals and possibly a book. The authors are asked whether they have interest in having their original full proposals being evaluated for suitability for publishing via this route. The evaluation will be made on the basis of the full proposal (deadline 30th of April 2018). The estimated publication will be in 2019. Full articles will be expected in October-November 2018. We will give more information about the procedure and the concrete options in due course. In principle, the journal publication option applies only to manuscripts based on paper proposals. The final decision on publication will be made on the basis of interest and quality of proposals.

IMPORTANT DATES

December 1st - December 15th	Proposal submission
January 15st	Review results and decisions
February 28th	Early bird registration fee
April 30th	Conference registration ends
April 30th	Deadline for full papers and contributions
June 11-13th	EARLI SIG 19 conference in Joensuu

You and your colleagues and students are warmly welcome to join us in Joensuu!

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SIG 19 NEWSLETTER: NOTES AND GUIDELINES

We want to encourage a wide participation in SIG 19 and in the Newsletter. If you intend to contribute to the newsletter, please take into account the following issues. You can make suggestions concerning to content of the SIG 19 and the newsletter. However, the editors retain the rights to alter and modify the contributions.

Interviews:

In each newsletter we will focus on one or two researchers connected to the SIG 19. One of the covered researchers is preferably a junior researcher. Please do not hesitate to make suggestions concerning the interviewees.

Reviews:

In this section the SIG members can review different things, such as, books, articles and conferences, etc. Please do not hesitate to contribute and to present also your own works. A review should not exceed 250 words.

Special feature:

This section we feature some interesting and inspirational aspect concerning the SIG 19 areas of interest. The author is invited by the editors with regards to the suggestions by the members. The contributions should not exceed 500 words.

Announcements:

If you feel that there is something relevant happening in the interest areas of SIG 19, please use this section. Such things are up-coming conferences and projects. This section can also include propositions for shared projects. The announcements should be 100 words at maximum.

New members:

We wish new members warmly welcome to our SIG 19! We will list the new members in this section after we have been informed by them.

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EARLI SIG 19 MEMBERSHIP – HOW TO JOIN US?

To become a SIG member, you must first become a member of EARLI. For more information, please visit the EARLI website: <http://www.earli.org/>

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