

The 6th ARC Summit

A Focus on Democracy, Inclusion and Advanced Technology in Education

Oslo, Norway

May 5 to 8, 2023

Overview

This year, the annual ARC Summit was hosted by the ARC Secretariat in Oslo, Norway from May 5-8, 2023. It was a wonderful return to in-person ARC events and a powerful opportunity to learn with and from one another and our invited thought leaders. As ARC President Andy Hargreaves stated in his welcome message, “the ARC summit is not a conference. Rather, it is a meeting of leaders from different education systems to share practices, challenge each other and work on issues together.” During the Summit, ARC delegates from Iceland, Ireland, Nova Scotia (Canada), Scotland, Uruguay and Wales, the president and president-elect from the International Confederation of Principals, ARC Ambassador Fiona Forbes, the ARC Secretariat and invited global thought leaders and guests collaborated around two key strategic issues:

- **Promoting democracy, peace and inclusion in education.**
- **AI and technology in education.**

As stated on the Summit agenda, the main objectives for this year’s ARC Summit were:

a) To connect with and learn from education systems that share a broad set of values linked to the ARC guiding principles of equity, broad excellence, inclusion, wellbeing, democracy, sustainability and human rights in high quality, professionally run systems.

b) To discuss strategies for each education system to:

- *Advance the agenda for peace, democracy, inclusion, and equity in education.*

How do we help students explore and experience democratic and peaceful practices, the nature and importance of inclusion, and principles of equity in the official and hidden curriculum of school life? What needs to change in the curriculum and in the climate of the school to advance the cause of greater peace, inclusion and democracy in education and society?

- *Improve leadership and policy-making.*

How does leadership and policy-making model and promote democratic and inclusive decision-making and the peaceful resolution of disputes? What did we learn from our collective experience of managing COVID-19 in our schools, systems and professional organizations?

- *AI and Technology in education – more of a good thing or a bad thing?*

In what ways do technology and new advances in AI support and/or hinder democracy, inclusion and equity? What is the impact on student learning and assessment? How does technology and social media

influence critical thinking, knowledge and well-being? What does sustainable and ethical technology use look like?

c) To share and develop strategies for leading change and transformation.

What does a professionally-led system look like that is inclusive, democratic, and peaceful in its aspirations and processes? What tools and frameworks can help transform our schools and our systems to enhance peace, democracy and inclusion? How do we empower and deepen collaboration with teachers, school leaders, parents, students and community members?

d) To agree on next steps for ARC and develop a sustainability strategy.

How do we regenerate and renew our work as a policy learning network? How can ARC reach more systems and their students without losing the existing levels of quality and intimacy? Where and when should the next summit be? What actions will take place and what strategies will we commence between now and then?

ARC 2023 Summit Summary

Day 1 Highlights:

- A focus on peace, technology, democracy and inclusion in Norway.
 - A visit to the Nobel Peace Institute with Director Olav Njølstad.
 - A wonderful welcome by staff and presentation by students at our host Ruselokke skole.
 - A conversation with Norwegian students, educators and system leaders from Apallokka skole, a session facilitated by Marlen Faannessen, Senior Consultant for the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities & Tore Skandsen, Director of IMTEC and ARC Secretariat member:
1. Lifting democracy through student voice: A student-led discussion with delegates.
 2. Meeting Student leaders, such as Petter Andreas Lona from the School Student Union of Norway.
 3. A discussion on student influence in all school decisions: Principal, Teacher & Student perspectives.
- A guided tour at the Munch Museum.

Key take-aways from the Nobel Institute.

- The Nobel selection committee meetings are designed with a process that enables everyone to speak openly and as a committee, they try not to make their minds up too early.
- Democratic countries don't go to war against other democracies.
- Focusing on peace with an unwavering commitment to our established values and principles in the face of challenge is a brave thing to do.
- How can we get more young people engaged in promoting peace and democracy?

Key take-aways from our visit with staff and students from Apallokka skole at Ruselokke skole.

- We need to think about democracy at every level of the system level.
- The importance of moving student voice beyond input on the fun things at school, to harnessing students as meaningful contributors in discussions on teaching, learning and the school structure (e.g. student experts).

- Language week: “Talk as if your mother could hear you”.
- Sammen om (We are all in this together).
- How do we move deep student involvement to scale as a system?

Delegate reflections on Day 1

- ARC is about leaders with common values from different education systems and different contexts meeting to learn with and from one another.
- Post-Covid is not (or should not be) a return to the old normal.
- The power of student voice needs to be harnessed in schools and youth need to be involved in meaningful ways in school improvement initiatives.
- It is important to have ongoing conversations to support learning for all.
- There is a global democracy deficit and an urgent need to promote it within education systems.
- The approach to assessment in Norwegian schools and students' perspective on evaluation and system-wide testing sparked lively discussions and deep thinking.

Day 2 Highlights

- Keynote by Mel Ainscow, Professor of Education at the University of Glasgow “Promoting inclusion and equity in education: Lessons from international research”.
- Keynote by Andy Hargreaves, ARC President & co-founder “Leadership from the middle – the closer we get the better we lead.”
- Keynote by Yngve Lindvig, Learnlab CEO & ARC co-founder “AI and technology in education – more of a good thing or more of a bad thing?”
- Start-Stop-Continue Activity (A system-based discussion).

ARC Talks by:

- **Fiona Forbes**, ARC Ambassador
 - Lead Now - Lead Next: A journey of shared school leadership promoting inclusion.
 - <https://youtu.be/5-LCYbdpuD8>
- **Mel Ainscow**, ARC Summit thought leader
 - Promoting inclusion and equity in education: Lessons from international research.
 - <https://youtu.be/9E9fawfkHWk>
- **Trista Hollweck**, ARC Director
 - Leveraging expertise to create a professional growth culture in high quality systems.
 - https://youtu.be/rB9ER_LxLqE
- **Marlen Faannessen**, Senior Consultant for Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities
 - Student voice: How it can be used to make education systems more inclusive & democratic.
 - https://youtu.be/lakvCU_9dOU

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Key take-aways from Day 2

On school improvement & policy-making:

- Education is a collaborative endeavour and requires collective responsibility.
- School improvement & change is technically simple but socially complex.
- Policy-making is done at all levels of an education system, not least in the classroom.
- Teachers are policy-makers.
- It is important to have flexibility in education systems.
- Consider the language of school & system improvement. What metaphors do we use? Consider the difference between delivery, tools, scaling-up vs. heart and soul, growth, life-cycles.
- Our language matters: Are we using the language of ourselves or of other people?
- Context is everything when it comes to school improvement & change.

On inclusion & equity:

- Inclusion and equity are not policies - they are principles.
- We must measure what matters; Don't only value what you *can* measure. Measure what you value.
- Every learner matters and matters equally.
- Celebrate diversity, recognize identity and develop deep collaboration (collective mosaic example).
- Challenge deficit thinking: the barrier is not children and families, but can be context-specific.
- It takes courage to lead a truly inclusive school and to stay true to your values.

On student voice, teaching, learning and democracy in education:

- Find meaningful ways to involve all stakeholders in school & system decisions and ensure clear communication at all levels.
- Student voice is fundamental for improvement for teachers, schools and systems.
- Democracy lives with students in the classroom.
- We need to leverage the expertise within the system.
- Schools know more than they use. How do we better circulate the knowledge.
- Scheduled time and space for collaboration and deep thinking for educators signals it as a priority.
- Develop a language of practice and culture of experimentation.

On the use of advanced technology in education:

- There are powerful possibilities for AI to support student learning in school and at home. AI teaching may well become a replacement for home-tuition. If we don't build our values and principles into advanced technology use, this may create ethical and equity issues.
- Do we know who controls the content and approach for the use of AI in our system? Commercial publishers? Non-democratic countries? Our democratic governments? The region? The school? The community? The teacher? The student?
- AI can move the teacher away from the role of knowledge-giver to facilitator and manager of resources. How do we help teachers adapt to this new role?
- There are significant implications of AI for evaluation and assessment. How can we help to shape this positively?
- We need to take a step back and consider the opportunities and threats that AI brings and think through our use of advanced technology in schools strategically and ethically.

Day 3 Highlights

- System-to-system consultancy.
- Next steps for ARC.
- Delegate reflections on the 2023 ARC Summit.

Final delegate reflections on the 2023 ARC Summit:

- The power of playing with Chat GPT to explore possibilities and tensions for education.
- Time to think and talk together.
- Opportunities to learn from students, school leaders and each other.
- Powerful to get outside of one's own context and consider new possibilities.
- Opportunity to have meaningful conversations within one's own system and with others.
- Embedding student voice & the learner perspective is essential in the work we do.
- The honesty, collegiality, generosity and candour of delegates contributed to quality conversations, deeper insights & learning.
- The system-to-system consultancy is an integral & powerful ARC activity.

System-to-System Consultancy Steps

1. Decide who will be the “client” and “consultant”.
2. Client: State your strategic issue for discussion.
3. Consultant: Summarize the strategic issue that you heard from the client. Clarify any misunderstandings.
4. Consultant: Explore with the client any strategies that have already been considered, why they have not been effective so far and ask the client to suggest other strategies that might work.
5. Consultant: Using questions, provide some possible challenge to the analysis at this point.
6. Consultant: Based on your own system's experience & expertise, suggest other possible solutions and ideas.
7. Consultant: Support the client in deciding a way forward and immediate next steps.
8. Switch roles & repeat.

Next steps for ARC as a policy learning network

ARC Network Study (2023-2025)

- Purpose: To understand the impact of ARC as a global policy learning network on member systems (activities, knowledge circulation & influence).
- Methodology: A mixed-methods research study (questionnaires, interviews and focus groups).

Literature Review

What is a policy network?

- A set of formal institutional and informal linkages between governmental and other actors, structured around shared and endlessly negotiated beliefs and interests in public policymaking and implementation (Rhodes, 2006, p. 426).

What do effective educational policy networks do?

- Act as sense makers / sense givers to their members, enabling them to identify with a shared identity and goals.
- Use a systems level approach to promote institutional change and innovation.
- Provide a platform for credibility and presence to impact long-term policy making.

What does policy network sustainability depend on?

- Consideration of human and non-human (i.e. funding) network components.
- Trust among human actors.
- Practice-based network leadership.

What is ARC?

ARC is a global movement of nations and systems committed to advancing broad excellence, equity, inclusion, wellbeing, democracy, sustainability and human rights for all students in high quality, professionally run systems.

ARC was established in 2016 to advance these values by holding and hosting summits drawing together teams of Ministers, senior civil servants, and leaders of professional associations from participating systems and global members.

Together, ARC members:

- reaffirm and clarify these core values, share policies and practice that represent them,
- coach and mentor each other on how to implement policies that represent these values,
- visit schools and classrooms in the host country to see these values at work,
- engage with and get feedback from international experts and thought leaders.

ARC is based at the University of Ottawa in Canada. It was co-founded by educational change specialist Professor Andy Hargreaves and learning systems expert Yngve Lindvig. ARC events are facilitated by Steve Munby, former CEO of England's National College for School Leadership and Trista Hollweck, the ARC Director and Research Fellow at the University of Ottawa. ARC works in partnership with LearnLab and IMTEC, Norway, who concentrate on developing and improving communications and learning systems within and beyond ARC.

Current ARC member systems are: Ireland, Iceland, Scotland, Uruguay, Wales, and the Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan, and ARC's global member, the International Confederation of Principals (ICP).

The ARC Advisory board includes: the ARC President, ARC Director, two ARC Ambassadors, and representatives from each member system, global member, one teacher union, and the University of Ottawa.

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Thank you!