

Mobile Learning Week 2019

Call for proposals

AI has risen to the forefront of public discourse in recent years. The breakthrough in AI is on an accelerated development path, and has been further propelled by innovations in other frontier technologies, including cloud computing, big data, Internet of Things, and virtual reality. As a convergence of a widening spectrum of frontier technologies, AI has garnered the potential to bring new possibilities for global development and societal change.

The transformative power of AI crosses all economic and social sectors, including the education sector. In particular, AI has the potential to accelerate the process of achieving SDG 4. It promises to reduce barriers to access education, automate management processes, analyse learning patterns and optimise learning processes with a view to improving learning outcomes. However, the penetration of AI in education comes with concerns about ethics, security and human rights. Without policy intervention, the commercial deployment of AI will also exacerbate digital divides and deepen existing income and learning inequalities, as marginalised and disadvantaged groups are more likely to be excluded from AI-powered education.

The rapid growth in AI technologies will also significantly impact the skills required by different sectors. Already today, there is a major skills gap in the labour market when it comes to AI-related jobs and skills. Educational institutions and training providers will need to address these skills gaps to ensure that future graduates will meet the requirements of the job market and enable an AI-literate citizenry.

As frontier technologies, AI processors and AI applications become the new norm for smartphones and other mobile devices, mobile learning is entering a new epoch. At the dawn of the next generation of mobile learning, AI-augmented mobile learning - Intelligent Mobile Learning - has arrived, but its key potentials remain to be explored and unleashed. There is a strong need for a holistic review of its implications for equity and inclusion in education, efficiency of education management, quality of learning, and skills development.

To maximize AI's benefits and mitigate its potential risks, system-wide planning and collective actions to reinvent the core foundation of education and learning are required. The rapid deployment of AI in education tests the readiness of stakeholders to harness AI, posing new challenges pertinent to all areas of education and learning, such as policy planning, curriculum and resources development, teacher education, and skills development.

UNESCO and its confirmed partners - the International Telecommunication Union and the Profuturo Foundation - are convening a special edition of Mobile Learning Week (MLW) from 4 to 8 March 2019. MLW 2019 will examine how the international educational community, governments, private companies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders can join forces to (1) ensure inclusive and equitable use of AI in education; (2) leverage AI to enhance education and learning; (3) promote skills development for jobs and life in the AI era; and (4) safeguard transparent and auditable use of education data.

For this purpose, UNESCO calls for proposals under the following categories.

1. Ensure inclusive and equitable use of AI in education

1.1 Large-scale initiatives to support developing countries in boosting the development of AI technology for education, enabling access to AI platforms and resources, and nurturing local innovations in AI

1.2 Successful projects or proved-effective AI solutions to break through barriers for vulnerable groups to access quality education (e.g., natural language processing AI to overcome language barriers, satellite imagery technology to track refugees or other vulnerable groups and/or deliver education, AI technology to enable learning for persons with disabilities, etc.)

1.3 Strategies or programmes that are aimed at preventing gender bias and other discriminations in algorithms and principles used by the design and development of AI

1.4 Projects that are proved successful in promoting gender equality in accessing and applying AI technology for life, learning, and work

2. Leverage AI to enhance education and learning

2.1 Research or projects that dynamically define human independent cognitions, which are machine-resistant, and human capabilities to live and work together with AI – namely, human-machine collective intelligence

2.2 AI-powered education management information systems (EMIS) and/or (big) data-boosted education planning systems, supported by evidences drawn from pilot tests of such systems

2.3 AI-boosted learning management systems (LMS) or other AI in education applications that are designed to analyze learning patterns in order to automate the optimization of learning processes or to support teachers to teach students and administer assessments more efficiently and more effectively (rather than 'replacing' the need for teachers)

2.4 AI applications or AI-based solutions that have been proven successful in improving outcomes of learning in subject-specific areas or interdisciplinary activities, or in developing creativities

2.5 Research or reviews on whether and how AI can enhance quality of learning and how AI in education will transform teachers' roles, including reviews on AI applications that are designed to help learning scientists better understand how learning happens

3. Promote skills development for jobs and life in the AI era

3.1 International or national policies, strategies or programmes that aim to define frameworks on AI-related skills and/or mainstream AI-related skills development in K-12 and higher education curriculum and/or adult learning programmes, including upskilling and reskilling the existing workforce

3.2 Programmes, including those of academic institutions, that develop skills for AI professionals who develop, deploy or manage AI Systems, and nurture the creation of innovative AI applications, particularly for AI in education professionals who develop, deploy and manage AI in education

3.3 Programmes and initiatives that develop and promote relevant AI skills for those that are most at risk of being left behind, including women and girls, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups, in particular in developing countries

3.4 Programmes and initiatives that promote the development of AI literacy for all citizens who are exposed to AI in daily life and work without consciousness about how AI technologies are utilizing their personal data

3.5 Programmes that prepare AI-ready policy makers, headmasters, teachers, and other key stakeholders in the education and learning sector

4. Safeguard transparent and auditable use of education data

4.1 Research or reviews on the ethical dilemma between making education data available and protecting the confidentiality and privacy of learners' personal data with a specific focus on children

4.2 Regulatory frameworks adopted to safeguard the transparent and auditable use of education data and learners' personal data, and AI in education approaches to adopting algorithms that are transparent, explainable and auditable for teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders

4.3 Projects or AI applications in education that use decentralized or distributed data technologies that remains under the control of users rather than being controlled centrally

4.4 Research or reviews that examine the trends of AI's development that may enable or disable the protection of the confidentiality and privacy of learners' personal data, or enlighten the hidden perils in the use of AI in education.

To submit a project proposal to present at the conference follow these links:

Symposium

<https://bit.ly/2Bod38j>

Workshops

<https://bit.ly/2Ty3o6g>

For more information:

Visit our Webpage (<https://en.unesco.org/mlw>) or contact us at: mlw@unesco.org