

## Introduction

This document outlines a strategy within which Lifewide Education can present the five themes of our work — Engagement with ideas, people and systems, Networking & Community Building, Advocacy, Research & Development and the Provision of Resources that we hope will help practitioners, institutions and policy makers. It is intended for organisations, educational practitioners and decision makers who are interested in developing an ecosystem to support lifelong, lifewide learning.

## Lifewide Education

***“the whole of life is learning therefore education can have no ending”***

***We advocate, encourage and support lifewide and ecological approaches to learning and education, connecting a diverse community of practitioners, engaging in research & development & producing free resources***



## The lifelong – lifewide learning paradigm

Learning is a lifelong project for all humans and knowing how to learn in the increasingly complex, hyperconnected and disruptive world we live in, is the core aptitude we need for our survival and prosperity. Education is the formal means by which societies prepare people for a lifetime of learning, but people also create their own opportunities for learning within the circumstances of their life. We need a paradigm for learning that integrates these two domains and recognises that “the whole of life is learning therefore education can have no ending” (Eduard Lindeman). Lifewide learning and education embrace this paradigm and better represent the dynamics, challenges and realities of a lifetime of living, working and learning in and for a complex and messy world.

The United Nations General Assembly recognised the importance of sustaining long, complex learning lives in a world that is in perpetual and rapid formation within its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The fourth SDG calls on Member States to, “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, defining lifelong learning as: “The **integration of learning and living**, covering learning activities for people of all ages (at home, at school, in the workplace, in the community, etc.) through formal, non-formal and informal modalities, which together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands.”

The challenge is to encourage, guide and nurture at a global scale, a multitude of educational systems, cultures and societies to practically embrace the vision of lifelong learning for all within a paradigm of lifelong learning for the survival and flourishing of mankind and the planet. “Lifelong learning for oneself, for others and for the planet.. it is about the sustained and sustainable freedom of individuals, linking social freedom to environmental responsibility“

The UK’s [Centenary Commission Report on Adult Education recently set out a vision for lifewide adult education](#) aligned to SDG #4. It provides a vision and map of an ecosystem for adult lifelong-lifewide learning within which to locate our work. In this way our advocacy for lifewide learning and education, our role in developing and sharing our understandings of what lifewide learning and education means, and our support for communities of practitioners and practices, is connected to a global vision of future adult learning.

## **Lifewide Education's role in a lifelong-lifewide learning ecosystem**

Lifewide Education is a social enterprise inspired by Eduard Lindeman's vision and led by a small band of learning and education activists at the heart of a community of interest that advocates a lifewide, ecological approach to learning, personal development, education and achievement.

We believe that 'lifewide learning' embraces the most comprehensive understanding and practice of learning, knowledge and knowing, personal development and achievement. It includes all contexts for learning – learning that is developed in both structured educational environments and informal settings, learning that is directed or self-managed, learning that is intentional or unintended, learning that is driven by our interests and its intrinsic value, as well as our needs, and learning which just emerges during the course of our daily activity.

Lifewide learning is connected to a number of ideas that are all important to future learning.:

- ◆ learning anything/anywhere/anytime/anyhow/for any purpose
- ◆ that learning involves interacting with our environments through a multiplicity of technological tools
- ◆ that we have to motivate, plan, manage and self-regulate our own learning, development and achievement.
- ◆ that learning is both personal and individual, yet also social and collaborative.
- ◆ that learning involves, perception, reasoning, imagination, emotion, embodied action and creativity

**Lifewide Education** recognises the lifewide dimension of learning, development and achievement and enables the learner to view themselves as the designer of an integrated, meaningful life experience that incorporates formal education as one component of a richer set of experiences that embrace all forms of learning and achievement across and their life. Our aim is to support educational institutions and practitioners who would like to implement Lifewide Education.

## **Our achievements so far**

Since its formation in 2011 Lifewide Education has:

- ◆ established a reputation as an effective advocate for lifewide learning and education
- ◆ attracted and served a global community of interest with nearly 600 subscribers to our mail list
- ◆ created a HUB <https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/> hosting a range of freely available open access resources
- ◆ conducted scholarly explorations of ideas relating to lifewide learning and education and published these through our open access Lifewide Magazine (now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> issue and accessed online over 24,000 times)
- ◆ brought together practitioners in UK universities who are responsible for skills awards to share their practices through a conference and e-book
- ◆ developed an innovative award scheme to show how lifelong-lifewide learning could be supported and recognised <https://lifewideaward.uk> featured in an EU Foresight Study 'Open Education 2030'
- ◆ developed an ecological perspective on learning and practice gaining international recognition for our scholarship through Harvard University's Learning Innovations Laboratory (LILA) inquiry into learning ecologies

## **Our ambition - to add value and understanding to the lifelong-lifewide learning ecosystem**

Working with others we aim to enhance the ecosystem for lifelong-lifewide learning and education by:

- ◆ Expanding and refreshing our team of supporters and activists by securing representation from diverse professional groups who have an interest and involvement in lifelong-lifewide learning.
- ◆ Reaching out to practitioners in different professional groups to expand our community
- ◆ Building understanding and practice through discussions and the sharing of ideas and resources through social media, webinars and collaborative active learning projects, to stimulate thinking and share practices.
- ◆ Encouraging practitioners to share their ideas and practices through our magazines and books
- ◆ Reaching out to the policy makers and contributing to initiatives that recognise and value the lifewide dimension of learning
- ◆ Contributing a lifewide ecological perspective to the third edition of the International Handbook for Lifelong Learning
- ◆ Supporting initiatives that value learning as one of the 5 ways to wellbeing proposed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF), which now underpin many local health strategies
- ◆ Working nationally to support the Centenary Commission on Adult Education's vision for lifewide adult education and internationally with the International Association for Lifewide Learning and UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning, 'Futures of Education' initiative.

## **Our invitation to you**

Our ambition is to build an inclusive global community that enables educators and practitioners from many different areas of professional interest to work together to help create an adult learning ecosystem that is better able to support a lifewide approach to lifelong learning and education.

If our vision resonates with you, please get in touch with Norman Jackson, Director Lifewide Education [lifewider@gmail.com](mailto:lifewider@gmail.com) or join our community using the contact form on our website at <https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/>.