



Call for proposals and guide to submissions Employability Symposium 2027.

From Preparation to Participation: Rethinking employability, enterprise and the graduate contribution

18 March 2027, Virtual event

Deadline for submissions: 7 January 2027

Please [click here](#) to submit your abstract

Overview

What is higher education preparing students for, and what are we enabling them to participate in?

Employability has evolved considerably. It is no longer simply about preparing students to enter employment, nor can it be understood solely through the skills required by today's labour market. Graduates navigate complex and changing working lives, create and lead organisations, contribute to communities, build careers across multiple roles and sectors, and continue to learn and adapt throughout their lives.

This raises a bigger question for higher education: what does it mean to enable students and graduates to participate, contribute and shape the world beyond university?

The 2027 Employability Symposium will explore this question, bringing together perspectives from across and beyond the institution. We want to consider how employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship intersect with learning, professional identity, opportunity, work and contribution, and what this means for the way universities work with students, employers, communities and one another.

We are particularly interested in the people and practices that operate across traditional boundaries. Third-space professionals, careers and employability practitioners, enterprise and entrepreneurship educators, academics, employers,



entrepreneurs, students and graduates. All of whom have distinctive roles to play in creating the conditions for meaningful participation.

Rather than asking simply what graduates need to be ready for, we want to explore what higher education can enable graduates to become, contribute and create.

Thematic areas:

From employability to participation

Rethinking the purpose and scope of employability in the context of changing work, careers and society.

Enterprise and entrepreneurship as participation

Developing entrepreneurial agency, innovation and enterprise capability

The third space of practice

Exploring the distinctive contribution of colleagues working across academic, professional and external boundaries to create opportunities and enable student development.

Creating meaningful connections with work

Placements, work-integrated learning, live projects, employer partnerships, authentic assessment and other approaches that connect learning with professional practice.

Employability and social contribution

Considering the contribution students and graduates make through entrepreneurship, employment, professional practice, civic engagement, communities and wider society.

Equity of participation

Exploring whose opportunities, networks and voices are valued, and how institutions can create more equitable access to meaningful experiences and participation.

Evidence, impact and institutional change

What do we know about what makes a difference, and how can institutions move from individual initiatives to sustainable approaches that shape the student and graduate experience?

Symposium aims:

- Challenge established thinking about employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship.
- Connect people and perspectives across academic, professional and external boundaries.

- Share evidence, experience and learning, including what hasn't worked.
- Inspire new thinking, partnerships and action that improve outcomes for students and graduates.

Who should attend?

Teaching practitioners including heads of departments, academic programme leaders and developers, all lecturing staff, learning technologists and staff focused on employability including those in careers departments, enterprise teams and with employer liaison roles.

Call for contributions

Colleagues are invited to submit higher education initiatives that address at least one of the symposium themes above. Submissions can include case studies, research reports, and in-progress initiatives that appropriately prepare our graduates for future employment.

We particularly welcome papers that are co-delivered with students and from, or focusing on, colleagues from underrepresented groups.

Session types

Workshops should be 40 minutes in length, with at least 20 minutes of the session involving active participation from delegates. Workshops should clearly provide solutions to challenges that can then be replicated in delegates' home institutions.

Oral presentations should be 15 minutes in length and will be followed by 5 minutes of Q&A with delegates. Your session should include a PPT presentation or visual stimulus to accompany your talk.

Lightning talks should be 5 minutes in length. These will be grouped alongside other talks and followed by a group Q&A session. The use of PPT slides for this session type is optional.