



## Education Leaders Forum 2010 – Event Communiqué July 7-8, 2010; Warsaw, Poland

### *Engaging Student Creativity and Innovation: A Key to Global Success*

Delivered under the theme of **Engaging Student Creativity and Innovation: A Key to Global Success**, the fourth global [Education Leaders Forum](#) was run in Warsaw, Poland on July 7-8, 2010. Bringing together over one hundred global education leaders the working conference provided opportunities for all participants to listen to and share with other leaders, to learn about practice across the world and to roll their sleeves up in working sessions. Run alongside the [Imagine Cup 2010 World Finals](#), the premier IT competition for post-secondary students worldwide, practical and theoretical had an opportunity to mix via participant visits to the Imagine Cup Student Showcase and World Finals Awards Ceremony.

Working in partnership with [UNESCO](#) and the [European Schoolnet](#), and under the patronage of the [Minister of Science and Higher Education for Poland](#), the [Education Leaders Forum program](#) aimed to share visions of future perspectives, consider key challenges and opportunities, explore issues related to Green Education and demonstrate successful Strategies and Solutions, all considered through the lens of key drivers for national competitiveness: Access, Innovation and Employability.

This Education Leaders Forum communiqué provides a short synopsis of the stimulating presentations, panel discussions and working sessions held during the one and a half days of the forum. More detailed notes and information on the event can be found at [www.ELF2010.org](#) including video of presentations, speaker PowerPoint presentations and [raw notes from the table discussions](#). You are welcome to share this web site and communiqué with your colleagues, associates and partners to help promote continuing dialogue vital to the change globally and locally needed to create educational experiences that will excite students, make them life and job ready, and assist driving national competitiveness in your country.

### Future Perspectives

[Anthony Salcito](#), the forum host opened with a video created by ex-student [Dan Brown](#), with a clear message - institutional education needs to change, and change quickly if it is not going to get in the way of digital native students' education. [Minister Barbara Kudrycka](#) provided specific examples of the changes being made in Poland to create a post-secondary education system that prepares students for jobs in a knowledge society and help them "*address modern and technology current challenges*" in her welcome address. We were reminded of the changing nature of post-secondary education access, innovation and employability in [Jean-Philippe Courtois](#)' keynote with examples of Cloud Computing, degrees delivered on smartphones and certification programs in Irish educational institutions, underpinning his reminder that 90% of jobs in Europe by 2015 will require ICT skills.

[Hal Plotkin](#) wonderfully reminded us that that "*95 % of our citizens don't have real or meaningful opportunities to develop their human capital into what it could be*" and that "*in that 95 % the riches of our generation reside*". And [Irina Bokova](#) reinforced the importance of partnerships in moving the education agenda and building "*equitable, inclusive and participatory knowledge societies*".



The first panel provided varying but complimentary stimulus for discussion on future perspectives through their presentations and panel discussion. [Geoffrey Scott](#) stressed the importance of leadership and planning, [Hossam Badrawi](#) made us think about the importance of an entrepreneurship culture in education, [Janice Richardson](#) explored both the value and practicalities of educational partnerships and [Michael Furdyk](#) highlighted the power of the internet to bring people together.

The [table discussions](#) that followed these discussions delivered valuable insights and reflections. While difficult to summarize all of the discussions from 22 tables, some key points worth were:

- Wise use of ICT and the internet can address traditional challenges: improving quality in all schools and optimizing cost in developing countries.
- Access to 21<sup>st</sup> century tools is also critical to scaling research, time and education reach.
- Entrepreneurship is a vital component of future education if it is to help local and national economies remain competitive and allow students to reach their potential.
- The transformation of education assessment to be able to measure what is important for system accountability and student learning is critical.
- Convincing society at large of the importance and value of education transformation remains elusive and is vital to success at the system level.
- Education transformation may only come about by running parallel education systems – continuing and scaling down the old model and at the same time spinning up a new model, providing choice to students.
- Gaps exist when considering alignment of learning with present and future work/life requirements. The reduction of these gaps is key to employability and future economic growth.
- Education needs to deliver less content, with more focus on skills and competencies. Society currently sees value of education in the quality of content; however a shift is happening towards to quality of the learning.

## Overcoming Obstacles

The panel on Overcoming Obstacles again provided deep insight and the opportunity for new thinking through their presentations and panel discussion. First speaker [Krzysztof Stanowski](#) led the discussion focusing on positive economic development through entrepreneurship and empowering local communities, [Balint Magyar](#) underlined his belief that digital literacy needs to be a basic human right for countries to prosper and individuals to achieve their potential, [Beno Csapo](#) presented his work around transforming assessment and the challenges this faces, while [Paula Vickers](#) provided a valuable exposure of her work in transforming a university infrastructure by moving it to the 'Cloud'.

Threads that emerged from the panel discussion on overcoming obstacles included:

- Definitions for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills are still in development and will progress over time. They can and should include timeless competencies that are now represented in new and different ways due to the influence and development of technology and its adoption by society.



- E-Literacy is both an important challenge for education and a vital indicator for society's success as a whole.
- The continuing and growing need for skilled people and the importance of how to supporting young people to find their potential and become successful in life. Solutions differ country from country based on culture, political and economic situations.
- More effective methods of assessment alongside 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills development.
- New skills and roles are required within post-secondary institutions as new technology is integrated. Effective change management is required as these new ways of working are adopted.

[Anthony Salcito](#) provided a summary of the first day of the Education Leaders Forum.

## Green Education

Day two kicked off with a lively set of panel presentations and discussions on Green Education, covering issues related to aspects of opportunities for post-secondary education around new jobs to innovations happening at the local level to how education institutions and individuals within them are transforming practices. [Andy Hobsbawm](#) hit a high note with his presentation on how changes in behavior will be driven by creativity, innovation a positive view of working towards a more clever, smarter, better world, [Geoffrey Scott](#) followed with details of how his institution has leveraged Green Education to position itself as a community, national and international leader, and [Niels Soelberg](#) rounded up the panel with discussion on how a company such as Microsoft is innovating itself and helping educational institutions to reduce costs and increase efficiencies.

The [table discussion](#) after this panel yielded lively and stimulating debate, including:

- Green Education is a strategic strategy, and as such local systems should create educational policy and work together to achieve changes required for success.
- There is a need to introduce this fundamental thinking in training of teachers. Schools are in the old model and know a lot of the old model and reproduce what they have done for decades with no thinking about how schools should be.
- Sustainability as an issue between 1<sup>st</sup> world and 3<sup>rd</sup> world is a big gap and a big worry on how do we cover the gap. Does technology play a role as connectivity is advancing faster and being connected to the outside might help? But how do you justify internet connections for a school when there is no water?
- How do we change the behaviors through teaching and learning? How can ICT enable this? This is a challenge. In many countries there is not the free space in the curriculum which enables young people to think out of the box.
- Leadership is a key aspect to begin this change. The new generation is underestimated.
- The most powerful thing is how much innovation there actually is and how much passion to drive it.
- Firstly it's about peer group and how it can influence behavior, secondly it's about modeling, people do what they see, not what you say.



## Strategies and Solutions

The final panel brought together a number of different leading global practices in the form of strategies and solutions that are currently making a difference. [Deon van der Merwe](#) presented an institutional example from South Africa of the use of Cloud Computing for new opportunities to increase access for students, [Eppie Eloranta](#) highlighted a national example from Finland on approaches to promote and measure e-skills – from basic ICT skills to the skills people need for success in a knowledge society, and [Tarek Shawki](#) showcased the partnership outputs of the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers.

The themes to emerge from discussions included:

- Developing and measuring educator competencies in the ICT use to improve teaching and learning using an international framework that offers nations, states and institutions a significant lever to change practice, and increase the relevancy of the education experience for students.
- As the demand for expertise increases and in many countries the proportion of the population engaged in post-secondary learning grows, technology can contribute to solutions for reaching and supporting that growing audience.
- Cloud Computing offers exciting new solutions to enable organizations to support learning and to provide the type and quality of services now demanded by education.
- Changes in infrastructure underpin new models of access and innovation, and help drive education transformation
- Help people to join / rejoin the workforce through certifying ICT skills development.

The closing keynotes brought together diverse speakers to explore strategies and solutions at different ends of the spectrum. [Mario Franco](#) presented a national view of the impact of access to ICT and educational opportunities on learning and life, while two Bulgarian students, [Raya Yunakova and Kiril Rusev](#) provided participants with a glimpse of their journey from students to Imagine Cup winners, to young entrepreneurs.

[Anthony Salcito](#) brought the Education Leaders Forum 2010 to a close with a thoughtful reflection of the journey people had made over the one and a half days.

## Summary

The Education Leaders Forum of 2010 brought together education leaders from around the globe to continue the important dialogue of education's role in enabling jobs and opportunities, fostering local innovation and transforming itself to be fit for purpose in all settings. Through the one and half days we spent together, along with the exposure to the Imagine Cup World Finals, participants had opportunities to learn, share and experience new information, ideas and relationships. Microsoft and its partners will continue to deliver events and interactions such as this to bring together those sectors and education leaders who desire to support the reform and transformation of educational institutions where all students and educators can realize their potential. If you would like to find out more about the resources available to you along with further opportunities to network and learn, please visit [www.microsoft.com/education/leadership](http://www.microsoft.com/education/leadership). If you are interested in exploring a partnership with Microsoft please contact your [local Microsoft representative](#).