NORRAG SPECIAL ISSUE

NSI 09: Foundational Learning: Current Debates and Praxes >
Call for Contributions

NORRAG, an associated programme of the Geneva Graduate Institute, Switzerland, invites contributions to NORRAG Special Issue (NSI) 09 on Foundational Learning: Current Debates and Praxes.

The contributions are expected to be short written articles (typically around 1200-1500 words) or multimedia material that can speak to a wider audience of policymakers, academics, researchers, civil society organizations, and other actors working in education and training. Articles should be submitted in English or French, but if you wish to send one in any of the other UN languages, please let us know.

As a first step, please indicate your interest by sending us a short abstract by **31 January 2023** of no more than 250 words. This will help us ensure a good balance of articles from diverse contributors in different regions.

Foundational Learning: Current Debates and Praxes.
NORRAG Special Issue 09 intends to explore the redoubled emphasis on foundational learning, and the framing of "relevance" as standing in tension with basic literacy and numeracy, that has emerged at this midway point to Agenda 2030. How do we think about foundational learning in ways that really make sense in 2023, in the world we see around us? Ideas about what is foundational in education have always resided in contested terrain. The current debate, on the surface, perhaps, tends to polarise around those who believe foundational learning should involve only literacy and numeracy and those who believe it must involve other foundational skills and content as well. In reality, the debate is as complex as it is crucial: it reflects financing decisions and constraints, policy priorities and planning within education systems; it embraces many encompassing questions about the purposes of education and the nature of the social compacts we construct to deliver equity and quality in education; it is fundamentally about pedagogy and how pedagogy is understood.

We are seeking 5 or 6 contributions to each of the following themes, which are explained more fully in the **background notes** to this call. We are looking for new contributions to this debate and will welcome articles that either focus solely on one theme or that combine two or more themes:

1. **Excavating narratives on foundational learning:** Does the current debate reflect a clash between traditionalist and critical approaches to education and how has this come about? Is there something of fundamental importance about foundational learning that needs to be reclaimed?

2. **2 – Value in numbers: metrics and financing:** What metrics or International Large-Scale Assessments are helpful for promoting foundational learning? How much financing is devoted to implementing foundational literacy compared with other approaches to foundational learning, or other goals and targets for SDG4?

3. **3 – Foundational insights from early childhood and extra-mural activities:** What are the insights from the early childhood field? How foundational are play and other mostly 'extra-mural' activities?

4. **4 – Learning from implementation:** What is experience showing us? What are the effective ways in which teachers and schools are currently promoting foundational learning?

5. **5 – Revisiting the futures of education:** How can the big themes of our time – such as climate change, war, social media, or democratic participation – energise ideas about foundational learning and core skills acquisition? Is there really only an either-or choice?

Selection

The selection process will prioritize a diverse range of contributors across different regions and will welcome experience-based contributions from education practitioners as well as policy specialists, academics journalists and independent thinkers that contribute fresh ideas to this debate.

Guest editor: Hugh McLean, NORRAG Senior Advisor.

Deadline for submission of abstracts: **31 January 2023**

Submission of Abstracts and Articles: Hugh McLean, NORRAG Senior Advisor, hughcameronmclean@gmail.com

Thank you for sharing the call with your colleagues, institutions, networks, journals.