

Panels SANORD 2025, Aarhus University

1. Learning from Africa-Europe partnerships in research and education.

What can be learned from long-term research collaborations between African and European universities? In recent years, European and African governments have developed strategies for engaging with each other, emphasizing the importance of 'equal partnerships.' While this ideal is frequently invoked, less attention has been given to the wealth of existing partnerships in research and education that have successfully operated on principles of equality and mutual benefit. At the same time, these partnerships are not without their challenges.

This panel explores critical questions about the dynamics of partnerships in research and education:

- Does the source of funding and the identity of the funder influence the trajectory and outcomes of partnerships?
- How do the structures and designs of partnerships impact their perceived and actual equality?
- What role does mutual learning and capacity building play in fostering sustainable and equitable collaborations?

We invite contributions from individuals and teams with experience in building and sustaining partnerships, particularly in research and education. However, we also welcome perspectives on other types of partnerships that may shed light on these issues. We encourage submissions that critically examine these themes through case studies, theoretical reflections, or comparative analyses.

2. Decolonial technology design.

This panel addresses how technological development relates to the formation of decolonial futures through critical engagement with core concerns of: What are state-of-the-art examples of decolonizing practices and epistemologies in and for contemporary technology design? How are theoretical discourses of decoloniality and responsibility integrated into concrete practices, policies, methodologies, and modes of knowledge production in research and technology design in and across global south(s) and global north(s)?

Developments of technology design (AI, wireless networks, crypto currencies, and much more), are typically understood and studied as a Western/Northern phenomenon – designed, through particular perceptions of 'intelligence', 'smartness', 'openness', 'usability', and 'growth'. Little attention has been given to how advanced digital technologies and systems are developed, perceived, used, infrastructured, designed, regulated, critiqued, or in other ways practiced the global south(s).

The promotion of Western epistemologies, one-size-fits-all technologies, and the transferability of design methods to diverse contexts, continues to suggest the idea of universality of design. Yet, contemporary challenges of social injustice, economic inequality, political instability, and ecological crisis pertaining to worldwide concerns, urge the design and tech communities to address aspects of power, equity, inclusion,

and decoloniality in technology design research and practices. Through two hybrid and interactive sessions, the panel will offer critical theoretical and methodological reflections on the position of social, participatory research and cases in diverse global contexts, to advance decolonising design practices for digital emerging technologies.

3. Building a Resilient and Functional Future for Nature and People.

This session delves into strategies for fostering resilient ecosystems that harmonize ecological integrity and biodiversity with human well-being and socioeconomic development in a rapidly transforming world. Emphasizing the need for integrated approaches, we will focus on key themes such as cross-sectoral landscape management, adaptation to novel ecological futures, and urban resilience through green infrastructure that integrates nature-based solutions. The session will also examine strategies to enhance biodiversity connectivity through conflict-free corridors, addressing the challenges of habitat fragmentation and species migration in the face of climate change.

Discussions will also include the integration of "One Health" principles to tackle interconnected challenges of environmental degradation, zoonotic disease risks, and food security. Furthermore, it will evaluate innovative policy frameworks and financial incentives to promote sustainable land use, equitable resource distribution, and inclusive development. By addressing the complex interplay of conservation and restoration, socioeconomic development, and climate adaptation, the session aims to explore actionable pathways for fostering coexistence between biodiversity and people. We invite contributions that provide practical insights, case studies, or theoretical advancements to inspire solutions for functional ecosystems and resilient societies in the Anthropocene.

4. Creative Economies in Africa: Platforms, Frameworks and Impacts.

Despite the rapid growth of Africa's creative economy over the past two decades, reliable data and academic research on the continent's creative economy remain scarce. To address this gap, the Cluster of Research Excellence (CoRE) on Creative Economies in Africa invites original theoretical or empirical submissions that examine the evolving roles of creative economies in Africa.

This panel welcomes submissions that explore any of the following topics within a specific creative sector or region in Africa: Trends and market structures in traditional sectors (e.g., theatre, music, fine art, crafts) and emerging industries (e.g., online gaming, fashion, graphic design).

- The impact of digital platforms and technologies, including AI, on Africa's creative economy.
- Funding, investment, innovation, and collaboration patterns within Africa's creative economy.
- Working conditions and gender dynamics in Africa's creative industries.
- Legal and regulatory challenges facing Africa's creative economy.
- The role of the creative economy in shaping Africa's global cultural influence.
- The contribution of higher education to the growth of Africa's creative economy.

- The creative economy's role in advancing Africa's Sustainable Development Goals.

5. Securing futures through sustainable water management.

This panel will ask whether current research and advocacy in water resources adequately meets the challenges of our changing climate and economic growth. It will aim to address competing demands of water for nature, food, and energy. Water quality management with respect to environmental, animal, and human health will also be included. We aim to discuss successful examples and identify key needs for future investment in research, policy advocacy, and infrastructure.

6. Bridging Research and Practice: Community-Oriented Solutions for Global Health Challenges

Global public health systems face rising challenges from non-communicable diseases (NCDs), infectious diseases, and emerging cross-cutting challenges like anti microbial resistance, climate change and demographical and socio-political developments. Operational research has become a critical tool for translating global health goals into practical, community-driven solutions.

This panel seeks to highlight innovative models and equitable collaborations that from a community-oriented perspective can improve access to and quality of healthcare. It explores strategies to bridge research and implementation, from acute emergencies inflicted by conflict or disasters through models to solidify health care service delivery to all advancing resilient and equitable healthcare systems globally. Focus will be given to diagonal approaches, where disease-specific “vertical” service delivery models are integrated into “horizontal” models, deliberately crafting priority disease-specific programs to drive improvement in the wider health system.

In line with the overarching theme of the conference, models for decolonizing prioritization, knowledge generation and dissemination as well as education and capacity-building of the workforce within health systems will be discussed. Universal health coverage through sustainable communities of practice.

7. Decolonising Education, Disrupting Global Hierarchies: Towards a new moral knowledge economy?

Over the past decade, efforts to decolonise education have gained renewed impetus in countries across the world. With the aim of addressing persistent inequalities connected to colonial histories, a growing number of students and scholars are questioning existing rationales for education and knowledge production, calling for changes in the curriculum, pedagogical approaches, and the assessment of legitimate and relevant knowledge.

This panel aims to explore the role and meaning of such efforts to decolonise education within and across different contexts (institutional, national, regional). In doing so, it also explores how these efforts work to change the value of education, conjure new forms of morally embedded knowledge economies and potentially disrupt existing global hierarchies. This has the potential of contributing to the reshaping of academic institutions and the wider social fabric in which they are embedded.

In order to foster an inclusive dialogue informed by the multiple scholarly and lived experiences of the participants, the panel will be organised in the form of short presentations, group-based reflections and roundtable discussions. This panel aims to explore the role and meaning of such efforts to decolonise education within and across different contexts (institutional, national, regional). In doing so, it also explores how these efforts work to change the value of education, conjure new forms of morally embedded knowledge economies and potentially disrupt existing global hierarchies.

Please submit your abstract of no more than 250 words here: [Abstract submission form](#)
At the latest by **March 1st, 2025**

For all questions, please write to sanord2025@cas.au.dk