

IDEA Annual Conference 2026

# Education for Liberation

*GCE in an Age of Crisis*

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Wednesday, 24 June 2026

Grand Hotel Malahide

*“The teacher is of course an artist, but being an artist does not mean that he or she can make the profile, can shape the students. What the educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves.” — Paulo Freire*

Time	Activity
10:00	Registration and refreshments
10:30	Welcome remarks and a special message from Brazil (Madza Ednir)
10:50	Keynote address by Zoryana Pshyk
11:30	Water and fruit break
11:45	Address by Niall Tierney (Irish Aid)
11:50	Music by Aziz Abushark
12:00	<i>Voices for Liberation</i> : Panel conversation followed by Q&A
13:00	Lunch with tea and coffee
13:50	Workshops ( <i>various rooms; pre-registration required</i> )
15:30	Comfort and hydration break
15:45	Performance by African Queens
15:50	In Conversation with Sally Hayden - <i>Love and Radical Hope</i>
16:40	Closing Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Blanket for Palestine</li> <li>• Music by Aziz Abushark</li> <li>• Spoken word by Nima Ashour</li> </ul>
17:00	Book signing, raffle, and drinks reception



**Irish Aid**  
 An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha agus Trádála  
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

**Trócaire**

**CONCERN**  
 worldwide

IDEA's work is gratefully supported by Irish Aid, with additional support from Trócaire, Concern Worldwide and contributions from our members. The ideas and perspectives shared throughout this programme are contributed by participants and contributors and are presented in line with IDEA's educational mandate and charitable objectives. They do not necessarily represent the views of IDEA, our funders, members or partners.

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# Keynote Speaker

## Zoryana Pshyk



**Zoryana Pshyk is an adult educator, facilitator, researcher, and community practitioner.**

Zoryana was born in Ukraine and has been living in Ireland for the past twenty years and holds both citizenships. Her work is grounded in the belief that education can become a space where people reclaim their voice, dignity, agency, and the possibility of acting together to change the world. Drawing from her own lived experience of migration and her experience of the Irish direct provision system, alongside years of working with asylum seekers, refugees, and marginalised communities, her practice explores how we as educators can help people to unlearn oppression, and move beyond systems of survival, and towards solidarity and collective transformation.

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## Sally Hayden

*Love and Radical Hope*



**Sally Hayden is an award-winning journalist, photographer and author.**

She has worked with VICE, VICE News, CNN International, the Financial Times Magazine, TIME, the Thomson Reuters Foundation, BBC, the Washington Post, the Irish Times, the Guardian, the New York Times, Magnum Photos, Channel 4 News, Foreign Policy, Al Jazeera, NBC News, Maclean's, the Sunday Times, Newsweek, RTE, ELLE, Marie Claire, Die Zeit, Voice of America, the Independent, the Telegraph, Deutsche Welle, IRIN, the New Statesman, the New Internationalist, the National, the TLS, the Huffington Post and ITV News, and had stories and/or photojournalism republished on six continents by outlets including Pacific Standard, National Geographic, NPR, the Wall Street Journal, the Times of India, Euronews, the Christian Science Monitor, Sky News, Der Spiegel, the Observer, the Globe and Mail, ABC News, Forbes, the Economist and TeleSUR English, among many others.

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# Panel Conversation

## *Voices for Liberation - Perspectives on Education in an Age of Crisis*



### Fahmeda Naheed

Fahmeda Naheed is a multiple-award-winning community development leader, researcher, and intercultural facilitator with over fifteen years of voluntary and civic engagement in Cork and across Ireland. Her work spans community organising, radio broadcasting, intercultural dialogue, anti-racism advocacy, activism, training, and writing. She is the founder of the Irish Pakistani Community of Cork, an initiative that promotes community cohesion, supports underrepresented groups, interfaith dialogue, and builds cultural bridges through shared projects and events, including tutoring and fusion cooking (Irish Pakistani Food Fusion). As a doctoral researcher with DCU, Fahmeda explores anti-racism education through the lens of community education, contributing to national debates on identity, migration, and the shifting landscape of Irish multiculturalism. She believes strongly in the power of community spaces, and often uses community cooking initiatives as a way to connect people, share culture, and spark dialogue. Recognised locally and nationally for her civic impact, Fahmeda embodies courage, compassion, and collective responsibility—amplifying marginalised voices and fostering solidarity across communities. Fahmeda Naheed exemplifies active citizenship and positive social change through her extensive voluntary work, lived experiences, leadership, and advocacy in Cork and across Ireland.



### John Magee

John Magee has worked in post-primary education since 1993. He has taught in England and spent twelve months teaching in Uganda. Since 2003, he has served as Chaplain at Millstreet Community School, Co. Cork. Providing opportunities for students to engage with global justice issues has always been central to his work. John first connected with WorldWise Global Schools (WWGS) in 2014, and its support has been integral to the school's Global Citizenship Education (GCE) initiatives ever since. One of the highlights of this work has been the annual Language and Culture Week. Drawing on Paulo Freire's concept of praxis, John believes that students should not only learn about global issues but also think critically about them and be empowered to take meaningful action.

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# Panel Conversation

## *Voices for Liberation - Perspectives on Education in an Age of Crisis*



### Macarena Montero

Macarena serves as GCE Officer at Educate Together, where she leads work on embedding student-led activism across primary schools. Originally from Chile, she brings decolonial thinking, a background in community development, and experience in popular education. Her practice is grounded in collective action and a firm belief in education as a transformational force for justice.



### Talha AIAli

Talha AIAli, MSc, MA, is a Palestinian psychotherapist, author, human rights activist, educator and the founder of Decolonised Minds, a platform dedicated to culturally grounded and politically conscious approaches to mental health. Based in Ireland, he currently maintains a private practice while also serving as a psychotherapist with the Irish Red Cross, supporting Arabic-speaking survivors of torture and war trauma. Talha integrates trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and justice-oriented practice into his work. His book, *Decolonised Minds: When Radical Becomes Rational*, offers a framework for reimagining psychotherapy through decolonial and liberation psychology perspectives. A member of the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) and a member of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP), Talha brings nearly two decades of clinical and humanitarian experience to his work. Prior to his current roles, he worked extensively with Doctors Without Borders (MSF) across several missions.

# Speakers and Artists

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## Niall Tierney

Niall Tierney has been the Director of the Global Programmes Unit within Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade since September 2023. That Unit supports Ireland's cooperation programming in S/E Asia, Central America, Colombia, SIDS, Palestine and Jordan, as well as the Ireland Fellowship Programme and the Global Citizenship Education programme. Previously, Niall was seconded to the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Mozambique in support of the national responses to the Covid19 pandemic and conflict in northern Mozambique. He also served as Head of Ireland's Cooperation in Mozambique; Deputy Head of Cooperation in Ethiopia and was Ireland's negotiator to the SDGs 2013-2015. Prior to joining the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2013, Niall served as Country Director and in other roles for Concern Worldwide in West and Southern African Countries for 13 years.

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## Nima Ashour

Nima Ashour is a teacher from Gaza, where she worked with UNRWA. She recently evacuated to Ireland, where she is now an adult educator with the City of Dublin's YES Project. Nima is also an MSc student in Equality Studies at UCD, and a previous Student Partner in Teaching and Learning Unit at UCD. Her academic work centres on gender equality, decolonial feminism, education, and Palestinian women's experiences.

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## Niamhie Bonner - Craftivism For Palestine

Niamhie Bonner founded Craftivism for Palestine in November 2023 as a way to protest the atrocities being carried out on the people of Palestine, using a medium that was accessible to people who might not be able to protest or attend vigils. Initially, people were asked to send squares, and they put together blankets to raffle. On May 25 they decided to make one big blanket as a visual representation of the children that had been murdered since October 2023. The blanket now has 3,000 squares, representing the thousands of Palestinian children who have been killed.

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## Aziz Abushark

Aziz Abushark is a Palestinian musician who blends traditional Palestinian influences with contemporary sounds, using music as a form of storytelling inspired by his father, Asad Abushark. He has been playing his instrument for over 17 years and has performed both locally and internationally. A Computer Science graduate of Trinity College Dublin and currently pursuing an MSc in Cybersecurity at University College Dublin, Aziz also co-founded Young Minds, an educational coding academy, which equips students aged 7-18 with coding, and cyber safety skills through engaging, project-based learning, helping them build confidence and future-ready digital skills.

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# Workshops



## Emotion and Motivation: Capturing Energy – The Genius of Freire (*Venue: Marconi*)

This interactive workshop introduces participants to some of Paulo Freire's most influential ideas, including listening, generative themes, coding and facilitating reflection that leads to action. Drawing on approaches from Training for Transformation, participants will experience practical tools for fostering dialogue, collective learning and grassroots leadership in educational and community settings.

**Facilitator:** Peter Dorman has worked in community development and education for over 40 years and has been involved with Partners Training for Transformation for four decades.

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## Using Drama Methodologies to Facilitate Liberating GCE (*Venue: Edison*)

Inspired by the work of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal, this participatory workshop introduces drama-based methods for exploring power, privilege and social change. Through movement, discussion and active learning, participants will experience practical tools that encourage critical thinking, meaningful dialogue and action for a more just world.

**Facilitator 1:** Ellen Corby, GCE Coordinator, LYCS

**Facilitator 2:** Mica O'Dwyer, GCE Worker, LYCS



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## Nurturing Educator Reflexivity through Gestalt Theatre (*Location: Berners Lee*)

Paulo Freire's writings remind us that alongside tools and session plans, what counts is how we show up as educators - the presence we bring, our self-knowledge, our regard for others and the extent of our own learning disposition. This experiential workshop offers participants a chance to explore these threads through a sequence of activities drawn from Gestalt Theatre. Inviting curiosity over judgment, presence over perfection. For this workshop, be ready for some movement and self-inquiry.

**Facilitator:** Sive Bresnihan, A trainer and facilitator in Global Citizenship Education.



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# Workshops



## From Conscientisation to Collective Action - Freirean Dialogues Across Africa and the Diaspora (Venue: Baird)

Drawing on Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and traditions of African liberation thought, this participatory workshop explores how education can foster critical consciousness and collective action. Through dialogue, reflection and social critique cartoons, participants will examine issues of exclusion, power and belonging while identifying practical ways to promote justice and social transformation in their communities.

**Facilitator:** Daniela Jiménez-Montero, a feminist economist from Costa Rica and Community Engagement and Legal Information Officer with Africa Solidarity Centre Ireland.



## African Queens - Music, Storytelling and Education for Liberation (Venue: Tara Suite)

Drawing on African musical traditions rooted in resistance, community and storytelling, this interactive workshop explores how music can be a powerful tool for Education for Liberation. Through song, movement and dialogue, participants will learn how music has challenged injustice, built solidarity and amplified marginalised voices, while reflecting on its role in fostering critical consciousness and collective action.

**Facilitator 1:** Nomalanga Zulu, artist and member of African Queens

**Facilitator 2:** Neo Florence Gilson, artist and member of African Queens.



## Who in this world has access to pleasure? (Venue: O'Carolan)

Pleasure Activism creates the conditions for dialogue, connection and collective learning that are essential to Education for Liberation. Through creative print-making, discussion and reflection, participants will explore barriers to pleasure, belonging and participation while considering how joy and creativity can support community building and social change. The workshop offers a playful and accessible space to reflect on activism, wellbeing and collective liberation.

**Facilitator 1:** Aleesha Wiegandt, a creative facilitator, community organiser and multidisciplinary artist based in Cork.

**Facilitator 2:** Zoë McKenna, a pleasure activist, artist, musician, and Global Citizenship Educator based in Cork.

