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Beyond Openness

Transdisciplinary Collaboration as the Heart of Open Education in the Age of AI

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Overview

This presentation draws on an **open project** that culminated in the recently published volume ***AI in Higher Education Innovation Exchange (2025)***, a **transdisciplinary collection of case studies** showcasing how educators are experimenting with **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** across diverse teaching and learning contexts.



We explore what openness might mean in a postdigital age—for both education and educators—highlighting the ethical considerations and practical tensions that arise in this evolving landscape.

We Are

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AI in Higher Education Innovation Exchange



Abegglen, S., Brown, B., Hanlon, P., Morrow, L., Neuhaus, F., Sabbaghan, S., Poppendorf, A., Zanzanian, M., & Crabbe, B. (Eds.) (2025). AI in higher education innovation exchange. Pressbooks.

<https://pressbooks.openeducationalberta.ca/aiexchange/>

AI in Higher Education Innovation Exchange: Project Origins & Collaborative Approach

A **transdisciplinary innovation event** (June 2025) at the University of Calgary that:

- Brought together **educators, learning designers, technologists, administrators, and students**
- Explored how **AI is reshaping higher education**
- Developed through **lightning talks, dialogue sessions, AI mediated writing and iterative peer feedback**

Collaboration was both the method and the message.

AI in Higher Education Innovation Exchange: Outcomes & Contributions

- Produced an open-access volume that **documents emerging practices** in AI and education
- Features **case studies** highlighting:
 - Bold and experimental ideas
 - Ethical tensions and critical questions
 - Foregrounds **human creativity and responsible innovation** in AI-mediated education

**Models the open collaborative, values-driven
ethos it seeks to promote.**



Transdisciplinarity & Openness

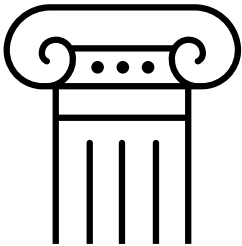


transdisciplinary : involving or relating to two or more different areas of study [REF]

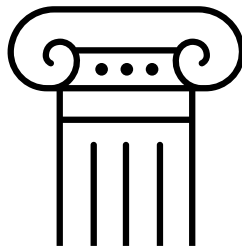


Transdisciplinary scholarship is directed towards a complex social issue or problem... [often addressed] by teams of researchers from multiple disciplines, incorporat[ing] knowledges through theoretical or creative approaches to societal issues, and ideally by including societal actors who are implicated in the issue or problem in question. [REF]

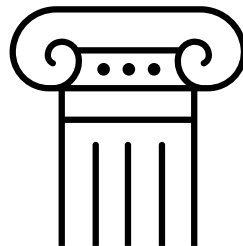
community
collaboration



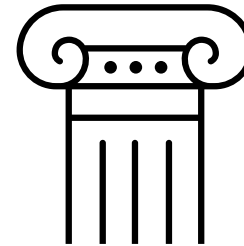
reflexivity



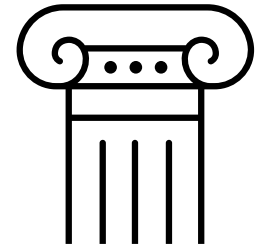
epistemological
humility



social
accountability



commitment to
common good



OPENNESS

AI in Higher Education Innovation Exchange: Transdisciplinary Collaboration



Transdisciplinary (AI) Research



Complex Problems Need Holistic Solutions

No single discipline can address the societal, technical, or ethical challenges of AI. Transdisciplinary work brings together diverse forms of knowledge to create holistic, context-sensitive solutions.



AI Raises Deep Ethical and Social Questions

Addressing issues like bias, surveillance, environmental impacts, and data privacy requires insights from philosophy, law, sociology, psychology, and beyond—not just computer science. Transdisciplinary collaboration helps us harness AI's potential while navigating its deep ethical and moral complexities.



Learning and Teaching Must Evolve

AI is reshaping knowledge production and what it means to learn. Transdisciplinary scholarship is crucial in redesigning curricula, pedagogies, and assessment to prepare students not just to use AI, but to question, shape, and reimagine it.



Innovation Emerges at the Boundaries

Breakthroughs often emerge where disciplines meet. AI can transform education but only when experts from multiple fields co-create, critique, and guide its development. Transdisciplinary work fosters the creativity and critical thinking needed to develop AI responsibly and innovatively, generating new tools, frameworks, and policies.

Transdisciplinary scholarship ensures that AI is not just technologically advanced, but also socially grounded, ethically informed, and human-centered.



Core Argument

- Therefore, **boundary-crossing dialogue is not optional but essential** if higher education is to be reimagined for a more equitable, innovative AI use
- Beyond AI, this transdisciplinary model is highly transferable, offering a robust way to address complex educational and societal challenges through inclusive, context-responsive solutions

The argument: meaningful educational change emerges when innovation is collective, reflective, and open.

Conclusion: From Disruption to Joined Responsibility

- **AI is rapidly reshaping higher education**, yet responses are often fragmented or technocentric
- **Sustainable and ethical innovation requires transdisciplinary collaboration**, not isolated expertise
- Therefore, **boundary-crossing dialogue is not optional but essential** if AI use in higher education is to be reimagined
- The *AI in Higher Education Innovation Exchange* project demonstrates that **working with educators, students, and technologists** leads to richer, more responsible approaches

We close with a critical provocation:

Can AI ever be considered truly “open” when it remains entangled with environmental costs, algorithmic bias, and broader social inequities?

Rather than accepting simplified narratives of digital openness, we argue that transdisciplinary collaboration offers a responsible and reflexive path forward—one that brings together diverse forms of expertise, lived experience, and critical perspectives to surface, interrogate, and meaningfully address these harms.

References

- Abegglen, S., Brown, B., Hanlon, P., Morrow, L., Neuhaus, F., Sabbaghan, S., Poppendorf, A., Zanzanian, M., & Crabbe, B. (Eds.) (2025). AI in higher education innovation exchange. Pressbooks.
<https://pressbooks.openeducationalberta.ca/aiexchange/>
- Further Resources
 - CAIELI: <https://library.ucalgary.ca/services/caieli>
 - TALON: <https://taloncloud.ca/>
 - Playful Hybrid Higher Education: <https://playhybrid.education/>
 - 101 Creative Ideas to us AI in Education: 10.5281/zenodo.8072949
 - NextCalgary: <https://nextcalgary.ca/>

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- **Event Volunteers**
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- For more information on the project go to
 - <https://pressbooks.openeducationalberta.ca/aiexchange/>





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Thank you for listening!

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