

ACTION RESEARCH SIG



The focus of this Special Interest Group is the development of action research as a paradigm, a methodology and a practice-changing practice. In this turbulent and fast-changing world, we are increasingly faced with complex problems that impact on, and have implications for, education. Action research provides us with a culturally and socially responsible way to generate knowledge that will help us to negotiate these 'wicked' problems. We concur with Freire, who said that education is not about training people to adapt to the world: we should be enabling them to change it. We position action research as a paradigm, grounded in definite, life-enhancing values and principles that underpin an inclusive and dynamic worldview. It is based on constructivist and critical theories that acknowledge that there can never be a final solution to any problem; that there are many equally valid ways to envisage what is perceived as reality; and that ongoing improvement is attained through critical reflection of the *status quo*, which understanding is followed by action to improve the situation. The Action Research SIG aims to create a space where action researchers of all genres who aim to bring about contextually and culturally relevant and sustainable educational change can learn from and with each other.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact the convener:
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We need you to make this SIG a success!

SIG Activities

We have an **annual symposium** at the SAERA conference, where we interact on a topic related to the conference theme and invite interested members to present.

We aim to run **workshops** or other events at least once during the year.

We can produce a **special issue** for the Journal of Education or other journals.

In **2016 Action Research SIG Symposium** at the University of the Free State, with Prof Melanie Walker of UFS as keynote speaker on, **“Participatory/Action Research: Reflections, Experiences, Capabilities”**, followed by small group work around the topic.

In **2017** we held a workshop on **Decolonizing teacher education and educational research** at North-West University, Potchefstroom attended by 56 delegates from various universities in the country. y Prof Aslam Fataar, Stellenbosch University, presented six points in his keynote address to stimulate delegate thinking around the topic before exploring relevant questions in a World Cafe.

In 2018, we had a workshop with Dr Maria Elena Torre from City University of New York on **Engaging in critical participatory action research: theory, methods and ethics**, attended by 24 researchers from UFS, NMU, UJ, UKZN and NWU to strengthen our capacity to do community-based research and to build up the network of PAR researchers.

