

GCE Learning Academy

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Knowledge Exchange and Learning Lead



GCE Learning
Academy

Building political consciousness for education justice

1. Background

The **Global Campaign for Education (GCE)** has established the **GCE Learning Academy** as a structured platform for political education, critical learning, and knowledge exchange within the global education movement. The Academy aims to institutionalize learning within the GCE network by creating a formalized space where civil society actors, researchers, and education advocates can engage in deeper analysis of global education governance, political economy and how it relates to education and the current landscape and policy debates.

The initiative responds to a growing need within the movement for **collective political learning** that goes beyond technical and thematic training and focuses on understanding the broader

systems shaping education policy and reform. Through the Academy, GCE seeks to strengthen the analytical capacity of its members and partners to navigate complex policy environments, advocate for equitable education systems, and critically engage with global governance structures.

The **GCE Learning Academy** will be implemented in collaboration with **research institutions, universities, and academic experts**, building bridges between academia and civil society. This partnership model will ensure that learning is grounded in rigorous research while remaining accessible and relevant to advocacy practitioners working at national, regional, and global levels.

As a membership-based organization, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) defines its success by its ability to achieve strategic goals and create sustainable impact across all areas of education advocacy. This success is fundamentally driven by the collective effect of the GCE movement's members.

To sustain and accelerate this impact, GCE's priority is to strengthen the movement by ensuring that all members have the necessary individual and collective knowledge, skills, and capacity to collaborate effectively to advance education advocacy.

The GCE Learning Academy will serve as a platform to professionalize and systematize learning across the movement in a politically conscious manner.

This approach is designed to:

- Deepen member's understanding of the GCE fundamental values, principles, and political beliefs of a social movement.
- Deepen member engagement and technical skills, capacities, and knowledge on education governance.
- Strengthen its members' advocacy and policy engagement capacity at national, regional, and global levels.
- Support movement-wide cohesion around GCE's vision, foundations, and principles.

2. Purpose and Objectives of Learning Academy

Purpose

The GCE Learning Academy aims to strengthen the movement's political consciousness and technical capacity by providing a structured, member-focused learning programme that builds ideological alignment, professional skills, and intergenerational leadership for effective education advocacy in a changing global landscape.

The long-term vision is for the **GCE Learning Academy to become a flagship capacity-building platform** within the global education movement supporting ongoing political education, strengthening advocacy strategies, and fostering collaboration between civil society

The first cohort of the GCE Learning Academy is being delivered in collaboration with The Alternatives Project (TAP), reflecting a shared commitment to GCE's transformative agenda and Political Learning Framework. The partnership enables Academy participants to critically engage with alternative approaches to education policy, decolonial knowledge systems, and transformative educational practices. Through TAP's network of leading education researchers, academics, trade unions, civil society organisations, and social movements, the Academy strengthens political learning by fostering critical analysis, knowledge exchange, and collective action. This collaboration complements GCE's objective of building members' capacity to advocate for equitable, rights-based, and transformative education systems while advancing TAP's vision of reimagining education and society through alternative, justice-oriented perspectives.

3. Learning Focus & Thematic areas for foundational learning phase 1

The Academy will prioritize topics that deepen political and structural understanding of education systems and global governance. A key focus will be the **politics of education**, examining how power, economic interests, and institutional arrangements shape education policies and reforms.

Core thematic areas may include:

- **Political Economy of Education** – exploring how economic structures, public financing, and power relations influence education systems.
- **Global Education Governance** – understanding the roles of international institutions, donors, and global partnerships in shaping education agendas.
- **Multilateralism vs. Multistakeholderism** – analyzing shifts in global governance, including the rise of multistakeholder platforms and their implications for democratic accountability.
- **Education Financing and Debt** – examining how global financial systems and debt pressures affect governments' ability to fund public education.
- **Privatization and Marketization of Education** – critically engaging with trends in private sector involvement and commercialization in education.
- **Civil Society Advocacy and Movement Building** – strengthening strategies for collective action, accountability, and policy influence.

These topics will be approached through **critical dialogue, research-based presentations, and participatory discussions**, encouraging participants to reflect on their own national contexts and advocacy work.

4. Participant Cohort and Learning Format

The Academy will initially engage **60–70 participants drawn from the GCE network**, including representatives from national education coalitions, regional networks, youth and student groups, and allied partners.

To ensure meaningful engagement and manageable learning environments, participants will be asked to **select a maximum of two thematic tracks**. This approach is intended to encourage deeper participation and sustained engagement across sessions.

Each thematic seminar will include **12–15 participants**, allowing for interactive discussions, peer learning, and stronger relationships among participants.

The GCE Learning Academy will be delivered through a series of online seminars designed to promote interactive learning, critical discussion, and exchange of experiences among participants from across the GCE network.

Key elements of the learning format include:

- **Online Seminars:** All sessions will be hosted via Zoom. The number of seminars within each thematic track will be determined by the facilitator leading that theme
- **Session Duration:** Each seminar will run between 1.5 and 2 hours. The duration may vary depending on the course content and facilitator. A detailed course outline, including the duration of each session, will be shared with participants in advance to support planning and ensure focused engagement while accommodating participants across multiple time zones.
- **Language Interpretation:** Interpretation will be provided in Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, and French, depending on the language needs of participants in each seminar.
- **Expert-Led Sessions:** Each thematic track will be facilitated by academic experts and policy specialists, who will guide discussions and provide analytical insights on the topic.
- **Interactive Discussions:** Sessions will encourage active participation, dialogue, and reflection, enabling participants to connect theoretical insights with their advocacy experiences.
- **Pre-reading Materials and Follow-up Resources:** Participants will receive curated readings and learning resources in advance, along with follow-up materials to support continued learning beyond the seminars.

Recognizing the global nature of the GCE network, the Academy will provide **simultaneous interpretation in GCE's five official languages** to ensure accessibility and inclusive participation.

3. Alignment with the Alternatives Project (TAP)

The Alternatives Project ([TAP](#)) aligns closely with the vision of the GCE Learning Academy. TAP's emphasis on "non-reformist reforms" changes that challenge and transform existing systems rather than simply adjusting them resonates with the Academy's goal of fostering critical and political analysis within the education movement.

Through this alignment, the Academy will contribute to building a shared political understanding of current global education norms, including the limitations of dominant policy frameworks and the possibilities for transformative alternatives. By connecting advocacy practice with critical theory and research, the Academy aims to strengthen the movement's ability to articulate and advance alternative visions for equitable and democratic education systems.

4. Implementation Outline integration of Learning academy into GCE Learning hub

The GCE Learning Academy will intentionally connect political consciousness with professional development in education governance and advocacy. The programme is specifically designed for GCE members, ensuring that learning is grounded in the movement's political positions, values, and principles. In doing so, the Academy seeks to foster intergenerational learning, strengthen leadership development, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the GCE movement.

The GCE Learning Academy will be fully integrated into the existing GCE Learning Hub, which will serve as the Academy's central digital platform for delivering, managing, and preserving all learning activities and resources. The Learning Hub will host the full Academy programme, providing a single, accessible space where participants can register for seminars, access course materials, view session recordings, download presentations, reading materials, and toolkits, and engage with supplementary learning resources before and after each seminar.

To maintain exclusivity and ensure alignment with the Academy's objectives, the Learning Academy section of the Hub will be accessible only to GCE members through a secure login system. Members will have personalised access to Academy content, allowing them to revisit seminar recordings, access curated resource libraries, complete self-paced learning activities where applicable, and continue engaging with learning beyond the live sessions. This integrated approach will ensure that knowledge generated through the Academy is systematically documented, easily accessible, and retained as an institutional learning resource that supports continuous capacity strengthening across the GCE membership.

5. Thematic Approach & Focus

This learning stream strengthens ideological grounding, critical political consciousness, and structural analysis of global education systems. It will be delivered in partnership with academic experts and facilitators and prioritized for GCE coalition members, youth activists, and advocacy campaign coordinators.

Each course integrates theory, movement practice, and applied advocacy reflection. [Sign up](#)

Seminar to select up to 3 per participant, each seminar will be capped at 15 participants per session and a first time first basis will apply for allocation. Once enrollment has been completed, registration links will be shared directly with enrolled participants and the course outline that includes readings for the session.

All course materials and seminar videos will be hosted on the learning hub for everyone's access.

Session Title	Facilitator	Core Focus	Learning Outcomes	Date Confirmed	Seminar max 15 participants
Social Movements and Education: Global Perspectives	Rebecca Tarlau	Role of education in social movements across regions	Ability to connect education struggles with broader justice movements	17 June 2026	Closed
				24 June 2026	

Course 1: Education for All in Africa: A Distant Dream Session 1: Education in Africa: Setting the Pace, not Catching Up Session 2: Education for All: Not Yet, Not Soon	Joel Samoff	This course will focus on education in Africa and the Education for All campaign, which has not achieved education for all in Africa. It will address the misconception that African countries cannot fund educating their children.	Course participants will develop a critical understanding of education in Africa, including changes since the end of direct European rule.	20 August 2026 27 August 2026	Sign up here
Economics and Education	Steven Klees	The debates about the political economy of education and development	Understanding how education intersects and is related to political economy and development.	13 August 2026 3 September 2026	Sign up here
Course 2: Foreign Aid and Education in Africa	Joel Samoff	This course will begin with the role of foreign aid in education in Africa, the widespread assumption that African countries cannot fund education. The course will	Course participants will develop a critical understanding of foreign aid and its consequences for Africa.		Sign up here

Session 1: Education for All: Foreign Aid to the Rescue?	address foreign aid to Africa more generally, persisting dependence, and challenges to dependence.	14 September 2026
Session 2: Fixing Foreign Aid		17 September 2026

Understanding Student Movements in Neoliberal Education	Giuseppe Lipari	Resistance by student movements against the privatization of education, with a specific focus on third-level education.	Ability to analyze student movement strategies	29 September 2026	Sign up here
Fostering Black Solidarities in a Time of Global Anti-Blackness	Rhoda Nanre Nafziger	Liberatory education, African Diaspora studies, Black resistance movements	Strengthened racial justice analysis and solidarity frameworks	20 October 29 October	Sign up here
The Neoliberal/global influence of the global north in International Education	Deepa Srikantiah	Neoliberal influence on global education policy, aid architecture, and institutional power	Participants critically analyze the Global North development institutions (IMF, World Bank) regarding foreign	5 November 17 November.	Sign up here

and
Development

aid and their
impact on
education
systems.

**Three
Decades of
Neoliberal
Policies and
How They
Changed Our
Worlds**

**Sangeet
a Kamat**

Global neoliberal
restructuring and
education systems

Ability to identify
“actually existing
neoliberalism” in
education

December
Sessions
TBD

[Sign up
here](#)

Expected Outcomes

1. Strengthened Political Cohesion within GCE

GCE Members demonstrate a stronger shared understanding of GCE principles, positions, and advocacy ethos. There is continuity of ideology across generations of leaders.

2. Enhanced Technical Capacity for Advocacy

GCE Members gain practical expertise in education governance, policy analysis, financing, and multilateral engagement, which improves their ability to influence national, regional, and global policy agendas.

3. Professionalised Learning Pathway

Structured, professional learning programmes move beyond ad hoc training and webinars to sustained capacity building. Accredited or certified training programmes are gradually introduced through academic partnerships.

4. Institutional Strengthening of GCE

Improved internal knowledge management and documentation of GCE's history, principles, and achievements. Enhanced credibility with external partners, donors, and academic institutions for evidence-based advocacy.

Challenges and Considerations

1. **Resource & Funding Constraints**
Balancing the ambition of a professionalised academy with the current budget and human capacity. Under-resourcing content development can be a challenge.
2. **Content Development & Quality Control**
It is important to ensure that political learning materials accurately reflect GCE's positions, remain relevant in a changing global context, and avoid duplicating existing training within the movement.
3. **Sustaining Engagement**
Risk of low participation if the academy is not engaging, accessible, or relevant to members' immediate work. There is a need for a balance between online and face-to-face engagement to keep momentum.
4. **Accreditation & Academic Partnerships**
The Accreditation processes are lengthy and resource-intensive. Partnerships with academic institutions need careful vetting to align with GCE values and maintain independence.
5. **Technological Access & Equity and Language Constraints**
Digital access and language disparities among GCE members may limit full participation in online learning.