

## «THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROJECT (ITEP)»

### INVITATION TO COLLABORATE

What are actually the essential characteristics of an education that prepares one for the profession of a «Waldorf teacher»? Surely this is even more difficult to formulate than essential characteristics of a Waldorf kindergarten or a Waldorf school. One could talk about many people who were simply trained through life, or through very individually designed courses or paths of development. Even the two-week course Rudolf Steiner was responsible for before the opening of the first Waldorf school was very original and deeply influenced by the particularities of the people involved. Since then, there have been a variety of different forms: from individual practical guidance by a few experienced colleagues to bachelor's or master's degrees in Waldorf education.

A group of Waldorf educators (Aina Bergsma (NO), Neil Boland (NZ), Marcel de Leuw (NL), Jon McAlice (USA), Trevor Mepham (UK), Vanessa Pohl (CH) and Carlo Willmann (A)), in collaboration with the Pedagogical Section and Florian Osswald, has embarked on a new way of working on the above question. Since a meeting of lecturers and students in Johannesburg/ South Africa in 2017, they have repeatedly asked this question at colloquia in different countries and continents, compiled the answers and finally crystallized a text from these contributions. The text is relatively short but dense (about 12'000 words); it is entitled: *Towards Pedagogical Creativity: Formative Guidelines for Steiner Teacher Education*. They have given the name ITEP – International Teacher Education Project – to the collaboration on this topic. Since 2021, Melanie Guerra (BR), Susan Howard (USA) and Philipp Reubke (Pedagogical Section) have joined the carrying group.

The text was sent to all Waldorf training centers a year ago and all lecturers and Waldorf educators interested in training were invited to participate in a monthly video conference to discuss and comment on the individual chapters of the text. Thus, in 2021/22, the following chapters were presented through short presentations and discussed in subsequent small groups: Knowledge practices, Artistic practice, Self-development, Inquiry, Basic knowledge, Teaching and learning, Expanded understanding of the human being, Education and societal change, and Legal responsibilities, finance, regulations.

Beginning in September 2022, the second part of the text will be worked on in monthly 90-minute sessions, focusing on the qualities and skills of educators. The topics will be the following: Teaching adults, Anthroposophy, The contemporary child, Context sensitivity, Research, and Collaborative governance and professionalism.

Anyone interested in Waldorf education is welcome to attend, even if they have not participated before. English, German and Spanish can be spoken at the sessions, and translation from and into these languages will be provided.

Although many topics could not be discussed in sufficient detail at the meetings, one thing has become very clear: The quality of a training can hardly be guaranteed by formal quality management, but above all by the fact that the participants are continuously willing to learn, to question their own practice, to develop further. And an important step in this process is the regular exchange, also and especially, with colleagues who do not work in the same institution. The ITEP Zoom meetings are intended to contribute to this.

The ITEP activity has also inspired other people to take the initiative: a group of Waldorf educators is meeting for additional Zoom conferences and is preparing a trainers' conference for the nursery and kindergarten sector, which will take place in Vilnius/Lithuania 9-12 October 2022. The World Teachers Conference, 10-15 April 2023, will be an opportunity for educators to exchange ideas. And from 18-21 April 2024 the Pedagogical Section would like to invite to a worldwide conference of educators at the Goetheanum.

*Philipp Reubke on behalf of the ITEP carrying group*

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Here are details about next year's ITEP meetings:

**Dates of the ITEP zoom meetings for Europe, Africa, North and South America (English, German, Spanish):**

21 September 2022, 18 October 2022, 23 November 2022,

24 January 2023, 15 February 2023, and 22 March 2023

Time: 18:00 MET

**Dates of ITEP zoom meetings for Asia and Australasia (English):**

22 September 2022, 20 October 2022, 24 November 2022,

25 January 2023, 16 February 2023, and 23 March 2023

Time: 09:00 AM Taipei/Manila time.

If you would like to receive regular invitations to the meetings, or the text *Towards Pedagogical Creativity*, please write to: philipp.reubke@goetheanum.ch.