

High-Level Pre-Summit of the Future Event

**Reimagining Education for Peaceful and Sustainable Futures:
Featuring the launch of the worldwide course,
Ages of Globalization**

20 SEPTEMBER 2024
11.15-12.15am EST

Columbia University's Faculty House
64 Morningside Dr, New York, United States
& Livestreaming.



Center for Sustainable Development
EARTH INSTITUTE | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



Background

Our world is at a turning point. Today, high living standards coexist with gaping inequalities. More and more people are engaged in public life, but the fabric of civil society and democracy is fraying in many places around the world. Rapid technological changes are transforming many aspects of our lives. Yet, these innovations are not adequately directed at equity, inclusion, and democratic participation. Wars and conflicts are causing massive destruction and mass migrations in many parts of the world. And the planetary crisis associated with climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution threatens the very survival of all species on our planet.

Everyone has a weighty obligation to both current and future generations – to ensure that our world is one of abundance, not scarcity, and that everyone enjoys the same human rights to the fullest.

Education has long played a foundational role in the transformation of human societies. It connects us with the world and to each other, exposes us to new possibilities, and strengthens our capacities for dialogue and action. But education is not yet fulfilling its promise to help us shape peaceful, just, and sustainable futures, as we are reminded by [UNESCO's International Commission on the Futures of Education](#), and we must reimagine why, how, what, where, and when we learn. [UNESCO's ESD for 2030](#) education programme aims to bring about the personal and societal transformation that is necessary to change course.

In support of UNESCO's ESD for 2030, [UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network \(SDSN\)](#), the [Centre for Sustainable Development at Columbia University](#), [Mission 4.7, SDGs Today](#) and the [Global Schools Program](#) are launching the [Ages of Globalization](#), a free, multidisciplinary, interactive course designed to prepare learners from around the world to tackle today's sustainable development challenges.

Inspired by [Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs' groundbreaking book](#), this course propels students through place and time, merging world history, science, geography, and technology into an immersive educational adventure. UNESCO World Heritage Sites enable storytelling and exploration to bring history to life. Through video-based contents, interactive maps and global classroom connections, students will become explorers on a mission to understand humanity's interconnectedness, including vital lessons on sustainable development and the pressing challenges of the 21st century, including ending poverty, saving the environment, and living peacefully.

Ages of Globalization will provide students aged 14 and up with the opportunity to

- Develop their understanding of sustainability challenges and their complex interlinkages, exploring disruptive ideas and alternative solutions
- Build core values and attitudes for sustainability, cultivate empathy and compassion for other people and the planet, and motivate to lead the change
- Take practical action for sustainable transformations in the personal, societal and political sphere

Context

From 22-23 September 2024, the Summit of the Future will convene in New York, serving as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to enhance cooperation on critical challenges, address gaps in global governance, and reaffirm existing commitments, including the SDGs and the United Nations Charter.

Ahead of the Summit, the [UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network](#) will host a high-level, two-day, **Pre-Summit of the Future Conference** on 20-21 September 2024 at Columbia University focused on “**Solutions for the Future**” as part of its annual International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD).

With an audience of over two hundred sustainable development leaders, activists, and researchers attending in-person, with hundreds more joining online, the event will include rich discussions on the five core topics of the Summit of the Future with keynotes and panels featuring Heads of State, senior UN officials, government representatives, and high-level experts from around the world.

At this conference, a special session is dedicated to Education for Sustainable Development and to launching [Ages of Globalization](#), a new worldwide course contributing to [UNESCO’s ESD for 2030](#) and towards achieving [Sustainable Development Goal 4 Target 7](#).

Agenda

- 5min **WELCOME by Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs**, President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), University Professor at Columbia University
- 5min **OPENING REMARKS (video message) by Stefania Giannini**, UNESCO Assistant-Director General for Education
- 5min **SPECIAL GUEST REMARKS by Beverley Smith**, Head of International Organizations and Partnerships, Sustainable Tourism Global Centre
- 35min **PANEL DISCUSSION on Education for Sustainable Development as an enabling force to build more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable futures**
 - **Charles Hopkins & Katrin Kohl**, UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability, York University, Canada
 - **Ligia Cravo**, Hearst Foundations
 - **Chaewon Ida Joung**, Student at Shanghai American School, China
 - **Nene Onyedi Ibezim**, Teacher & Founder of the Leading Kids Program, Teach For Nigeria alumna, and Global Schools Program Advocate and Project Officer, Nigeria
- 5min **LAUNCH of the Ages of Globalization, Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs & Dr Radhika Iyengar**, Director of Education at the Center for Sustainable Development, Columbia University
- 5min **CLOSING by Amanda Abrom**, Senior Manager, SDSN and Director, Global Schools Program

With the support of