

Annual Report

2021



End



INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL FOR OPEN AND
DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Greetings
from the
ICDE
President



Inspired and humbled are two words that provide a window into how I feel looking back on 2021 for ICDE. As the world tackled repeated waves of COVID-19, communities and regions ebbed and flowed through public health restrictions to support the health, safety, and wellbeing of citizens. Oscillating closures globally has underscored the vulnerability of campus-based in-person learning and, in turn, exposed the vulnerability of equitable and open access points to education. With this backdrop of uncertainty, institutions of higher learning responded by continually creating adaptations of their own to ensure the continuity of studies for millions of learners globally.

Unlike the year prior, 2021 provided an opportunity for institutions to step back and reflect on what they had learned in the early days of the pandemic. This moment of reflection was equally relevant for Open, Flexible, and Distance Learning (OFDL) institutions as it was for those that traditionally relied on in-person learning. Numerous examples can be found of ICDE members quickly adapting to their own changing circumstances and simultaneously reaching out proactively to support and empower colleagues who may have been developing or working with true OFDL practices for the first time. This steadfast commitment of ICDE members to empowering inclusive student access and success globally is awe-inspiring and incredibly humbling.

2021 marked the first full year of ICDE bringing its strategic plan to life. I believe it goes without saying that ICDE members truly embodied and reflected the values of ICDE – especially those of Access, Equity, and Equality along with Collaboration and Connectivity. Several initiatives

“With a continued backdrop of uncertainty, it is humbling to be part of a community that has been building resilient education systems that enable equitable and inclusive access for decades.”

- Neil Fassina, ICDE President

coordinated by ICDE throughout the year enabled strong progress towards achieving the objectives in the strategic plan. For example, the development of the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign. The initiative began through discussion at the ICDE Presidents Forum in 2019, and it has been taken up by several ICDE members to create an advocacy toolkit that can be used as a framework to promote OFDL at the national and regional levels. I hope that members will take the opportunity to engage in the initiatives coordinated through ICDE in continuing to bring the strategic plan to life. As I noted last year, the plan is focused on strengthening the connections among members so that they may optimize their impact in local and regional communities.

Before closing, I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Professor Dato’ Dr. Ansary Ahmed who finished his term on the ICDE Board at the end of 2021. His generosity with his knowledge, insight, and professionalism will have a lasting impact on the ICDE for years to come.

I would like to also extend a thank you to the Norwegian Government for their ongoing support of ICDE. Their trust in our global community to make our vision a reality is greatly appreciated.

Finally, thank you to Torunn and the entire team at the ICDE secretariat. This team continues to outdo themselves in support of ICDE members.

Respectfully,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Neil Fassina. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'N'.

Neil Fassina
President of International Council for Open and Distance Education

Reflections from the Secretary General



“ICDE members play a pivotal role in demonstrating how quality education can be offered through various distance learning modes across countries, languages, cultures and religions.”

Going Beyond the Emergency Education Response

Throughout 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect lives, societies and education systems across the globe.

As in every crisis, it is the already marginalized populations who suffer the most, and sadly, existing inequalities exacerbate. At the same time, thanks to the steep learning curve that many educators have had to face in their struggle to secure continuous education throughout the crisis, we have seen significant developments in the uptake and development of open, flexible, distance and online learning. At the policy level, more and more governments have realized the urgency of designing education systems that are resilient towards crises and hence need to be built with a flexible approach. When all governments acknowledge that appropriate infrastructure, regulatory frameworks and quality assurance systems, pedagogical planning, administrative support and teachers’ competencies are all crucial components of an educational ecosystem of open, flexible and distance learning modes that can be adapted to the individual learner’s needs, and are willing to fund and support this development, we would have come a long way.

The UNESCO International Commission on the Futures of Education states that: “The right to education needs to be broadened to be lifelong and encompass the right to information, culture, science and connectivity.” Their new “social contract for education” also calls for global solidarity and international collaboration in support of education as a common good.

As the leading global membership association of open, flexible and distance learning, and a consultative partner to UNESCO, ICDE is fully committed to this social contract of reimagining our futures of education. ICDE members play a pivotal role in demonstrating how quality education can be offered through various distance learning modes across countries, languages, cultures, and religions.

Our efforts go beyond the emergency education response and is needed more than ever in the post pandemic era. Fortunately, the willingness to share, learn, adapt, and improve have grown during the pandemic, and virtual means of knowledge dissemination and online events have allowed for broader engagement and opportunities for participation at a much lower cost. This gives hope and inspiration to ICDE and the global community of our field to continue our efforts, strengthen our collaboration and continue to learn together.

In this annual report, you can read more about ICDEs many activities and outcomes through another challenging year. I acknowledge, with gratitude, the strong commitment and support from the ICDE Board, the solid contributions from the many ICDE networks and committees, our members and partners, and last but not the least, my Secretariat team members in Oslo, who have been working more or less from home for yet another year, with great enthusiasm for and commitment to ICDEs mission and goals.

Torunn Gjelsvik
Secretary General

This is ICDE



Global community of more than 320 members and partners working to advance inclusive open, flexible and distance education



Non-profit NGO hosted by Norway, in formal consultative partnership with UNESCO



Informing stakeholders and encourage the sharing of good practice and knowledge exchange to reach SDG 4



Further the acceptance of a wider range of learning modes



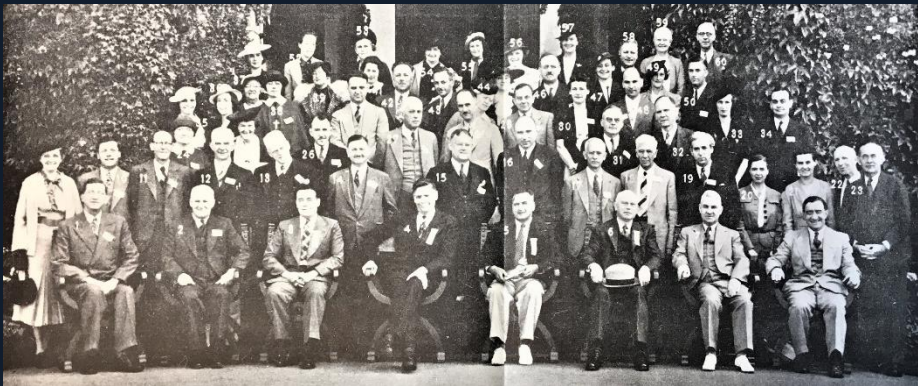
5 employees

ICDE has a staff of 5 employees representing 3 different nationalities.

ICDE history

From Correspondence to Distance: In an era of societal advancements ICDE was founded in 1938 in Canada as the International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE). Biannual conferences were consecutively organized by and at member institutions world-wide, which further included hosting a secretariat in between the conferences. In 1982, at the 12th World Conference, *ICCE* changed its name to *ICDE*.

The Permanent Secretariat of ICDE was established in Oslo in 1988 on the invitation of the Norwegian Government. ICDE is today a modern non-profit and non-governmental organisation.



ICDEs founders at the 1st World Conference in Victoria, B.C. Canada, 24 August 1938. / ICDE Archives.



2021
in brief



In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impose travel restrictions globally, and only a few face-to-face activities took place.

Two high-level virtual ICDE Events were undertaken: The ICDE Leadership Summit and Presidents’ Forum in April, as well as the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week in October.

Activities

1 - Norway

The ENCORE + project held its virtual kick off meeting with partners, in addition to hosting several events from Oslo.

The ICDE Secretary General spoke at the opening of Noroff School of Technology and Digital Media’s new campus in Kristiansand.

The ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week was hosted virtually by the ICDE Secretariat.

2 – Romania

The ENCORE + and Francophone OER projects presented at the EDEN Open Education Global Week in March.

3 – New Zealand

The ICDE Leadership Summit and ICDE Presidents’ Forum were hosted virtually by the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand with the theme:

"Leadership for Responsiveness: Are we flexible enough?".

4 – France

A virtual workshop supporting the implementation of the UNESCO OER Recommendation in Francophone Africa as part of the ICDE Francophone OER Project was hosted by ICDE in collaboration with UNESCO and the l’Université Numérique (FR).

5 – Spain

The ENCORE + Project was presented at the EDEN Annual Virtual Conference hosted by UNED in Madrid.

6 – Indonesia

The ICDE Secretary General participated as panellist to the Knowledge Sharing Forum hosted by Universitas Terbuka on the topic *“Quality Student Services during Covid-19 Outbreak”*.

7 – Sri Lanka

ICDE Quality Network hosted two sessions as part of the plenary program of the 34th Annual AAOU Conference. One workshop titled *“Quality assurance of open, flexible and distance education - a global perspective”* and a panel discussion focusing on *“Implementing the UNESCO OER Recommendation - how to amplify capacity building initiatives for various regional contexts?”*.

8 – Philippines

The ICDE Secretary General gave a keynote address at the ICODEL Conference hosted by the University of the Philippines Open University. The topic of the keynote was: *"Artificial Intelligence - Challenges and Future Directions in Online Education"*.

9 – Senegal

A cohort-based instance of the online OER micro course LIDA103 from the OERu course series *"Learning in the Digital Age"* was tutored by the Virtual University of Senegal. The micro course has been translated to French and adapted to Francophone context as part of the ICDE Francophone OER Project.

10 – Hungary

The projects ENCORE + and ICDE Francophone OER were presented during the European Online Distance Learning Week 2021 (EODLW) hosted by EDEN in Hungary.

11 – Thailand

The ICDE Secretary General presented ICDE at the 44th SEAMEO High Officials meeting in November 2021 (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization).

12 – Germany

The ICDE Secretariat attended the OEB Conference, among other presenting the projects ENCORE + and ICDE Francophone OER.

13 – Sweden

The ICDE Secretary participated at "Meeting Place OER" hosted by the Swedish Association of Distance Education and Wikimedia Sweden.

14 – Belgium

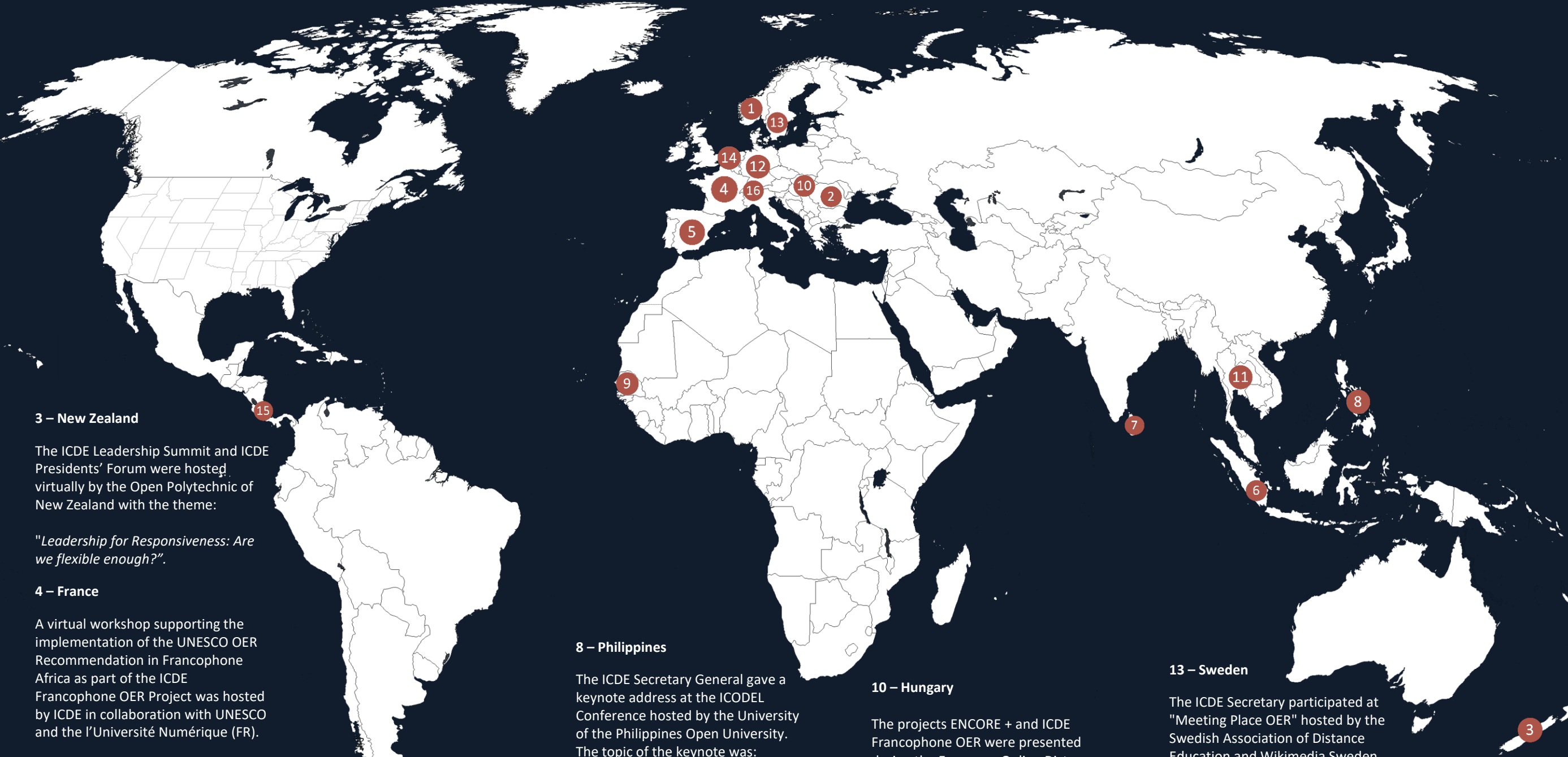
ICDE participated as a panellist on the *"Next Chapter Europe Event on Digital Education"*.

15 – Costa Rica

ICDE participated as a panellist and speaker at the AIESAD Regional Meeting.

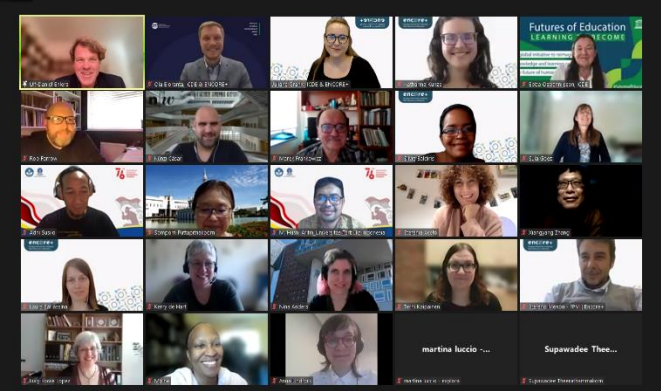
16 – Switzerland

The ICDE Secretary General spoke during the opening session of the Globethics International Conference.



The year 2021 in highlights

The Secretary General spoke at the opening of Noroff School of Technology and Digital Media's new campus in Kristiansand, Norway, in September 2021.



The ICDE coordinated ENCORE+ project conducted four topical "Circle Events" during 2021, here from the event focusing on Quality.

The ICDE Secretariat team was grateful to finally be able to meet for an in-person seminar in December 2021.



The ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week took place during the last week of October as a full academic, virtual conference under the main theme: "Upskilling and Upscaling for Open, Flexible and Distance Learning".



ICDE Secretariat presenting the ENCORE + and ICDE Francophone OER projects at OEB21 in Berlin, Germany.



New ICDE Board for the period 2022 - 2024:



Neil Fassina
President,
Okanagan College,
Canada



Melinda Bandalaria
Chancellor,
University of the
Philippines Open
University (UPOU),
Philippines



Som Naidu
Formerly at the
University of the
South Pacific (USP),
Fiji



Mark Nichols
Executive Director,
Open Polytechnic of
New Zealand,
New Zealand



Ebba Ossiannilsson
Vice-President,
Swedish Association for
Distance Education
(SADE),
Sweden



**Carlos Alberto
P. de Oliveira**
State University
of Rio de Janeiro
(UERJ),
Brazil

The incoming ICDE Board was announced during the closing session of the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week.



Screenshot from a session at the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week.



The ICDE Francophone OER Project organized a virtual workshop with participants from 15 different countries.



ICDE Secretary General Torunn Gjelsvik participates virtually at an event hosted by the Swedish Association of Distance Education.

The ICDE Leadership Summit and Presidents’ Forum 2021



Caroline Seville,
Manager Communication, Events
and Partnerships, ICDE

The ICDE Leadership Summit 2021: a great step towards more flexibility in education!

The notion of flexibility and resilience was one of the most important lessons that individuals, businesses, employers, and educational providers took away from 2020. Education had to become more adaptable right away. So, the first event of 2021 was fittingly themed: "Are we flexible enough?"

The ICDE Leadership Summit 2021, a two-day virtual event, was successfully co-hosted by Open Polytechnic of New Zealand and the ICDE Secretariat. It was held on the 8th and 9th of April and aimed to practice what it preached by live broadcasting sessions across three time zones to offer accessibility and flexibility for ICDEs international stakeholders.

A high level of international in-depth engagement and debate

Active involvement and debate were encouraged during the event. Over 90 delegates were challenged with key questions to engage with during debates by a diverse group of ten presenters, which included internationally recognized innovators in the area of flexibility and discussions were greatly contributed and enlivened by the insights and much valued perspectives of six students.

The discussions among international educational thought leaders and innovators in open, flexible and distance learning resulted in a conference report that addressed the issues surrounding a global response to educational difficulties focused on flexibility, as well as the importance of resilience and flexibility for open and distance education providers.

ICDE Presidents’ Forum 2021: Engaging ICDE leaders

On April 12th, ICDE also hosted its second virtual Presidents' Forum, which brought together Presidents, Rectors, and Vice Chancellors from ICDE members in three regional sessions that were customized to different time zones.

The forum sessions were led by the ICDE President, Board members, and the Secretary General, with discussion topics based on the ICDE Presidents' Forum in November 2020: *Recalibrating educational leadership for resilient education*, as well as the recent ICDE Leadership Summit 2021: *Are we flexible enough in our leadership for responsiveness?*



“This event was a landmark one. It is very clear that the trajectory of higher education is toward more flexibility and that we have much to learn from those already exemplifying good practice.”

– Dr. Mark Nichols, Executive Director of Learning Design & Development at Open Polytechnic (NZ) and member of the ICDE Board

The three sessions, which were all held in a highly interactive manner, drew over 40 ICDE leaders. This was the first step toward ICDEs strategic goal number 1, which is to: *Increase the global impact of ICDEs advocacy regarding OFDL (Open, Flexible and Distance Learning) and enable greater regional and national influence through members and partners.*

The discussion focused on key indicators of quality, such as proper infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, teacher competencies, institutional leadership, a culture of sharing and OER, and Inclusive access/Universal design, which were identified by ICDE members during the previous year's Presidents’ Forum as impediments to the implementation of OFDL. Participants contributed their suggestions and ideas to requirements, solutions, important stakeholders to address, and appropriate advocacy messages matching to the respective quality indicators through group work.

Members take ownership of implementation

Participants were then asked to suggest and discuss how regional and local Task Forces could be established and structured for the global advocacy of open, flexible and distance learning. Several delegates recommended that ICDE work more closely with regional and national groups in relevant sectors to adapt and contextualize a global advocacy framework to local and regional requirements. Both top-down and bottom-up techniques were explored, and both will need to be researched and developed further as ICDE now will work to engage more ICDE members and stakeholders in the continuing development.



ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week 2021

ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week: Upskilling for all involved

The ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week 2021 was the first entirely virtual international academic conference in the organization's history, and it took place during the last week of October 2021. The ICDE Secretariat was the primary organizer of the event. This was a fantastic chance for the ICDE Secretariat to upskill its personnel, who learned about every facet of putting on a high-quality academic event, from using new tools to organizing multiple stakeholders to put on a solid and interesting academic program. During the conference week, ICDE used a conference administrative system, its own website, and Zoom to manage all submissions and program preparation, as well as to manage all delegate registrations, management, and technical facilitation.

An adaptable, accessible program for all for our contributors and delegates

Over 135 delegates from 53 countries attended the conference to learn about and discuss the major conference theme: *Upskilling and Upscaling for Quality Open, Flexible, and Distance Learning*. The conference was held on a flexible schedule to accommodate different time zones. Best Paper Awards, ICDE Prizes of Excellence, and announcements were among the highlights of the conference.

The ICDE Secretary General, Torunn Gjelsvik, expressed her gratitude to all contributors during the closing session of the event: "I am still too overwhelmed to be able to summarise what this conference has been like over the past week. We have had 4 strong, enlightening and very different keynotes, multiple academic papers sessions, concise impact talks sessions, digital poster sessions with short video pitches, Labs, workshops, and panels, all in various time zones and sometimes at extremely uncomfortable hours for many of you. ICDE is grateful to all who contributed to the program of this conference, we could not have done it without you."

Members Lab Workshops: The launch of Pilot Task Forces for the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign

During the one-week conference, two Members Lab Workshops were held in different time zones to bring thoughts and suggestions to the table and present them on the next steps in bringing the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign to life (GAC).

The work to conceptualize the GAC began earlier this year by ICDE members in April 2021 during the virtual ICDE Presidents' Forum and the discussions that took place during this in turn came off the back of the outputs from the previous year's Presidents' Forum in 2020 "Recalibrating educational leadership for resilient education". The Advocacy Messages were excellent outcomes collaboratively developed from these meetings, and together with a draft Advocacy Toolkit they provided a foundation for the Task Forces to contribute their own regional perspectives and future recommendations for next steps.

A strong international connection very much remains

Interestingly, and not surprisingly, each regional taskforce introduced their own distinct approaches tailored to their own circumstances. The ICDE members' combined efforts to work cross-border and cross-culturally and offer such outstanding outputs to the campaign, even during times of pandemic when face-to-face activities were not possible, demonstrated the strong bonds and interest that remain between the ICDE members' networks.



Visit www.icde.org and follow ICDE on social media!

Communication and Social Media in 2021



Ola Eloranta,
Communication and
Administration Officer

Increasing ICDEs Footprint and Visibility

The various communication campaigns throughout 2021 contributed to increasing ICDEs visibility within the open, flexible and distance learning community, and engaged both members and non-members alike. In 2021, ICDE strengthened its global footprint and increased its engagement level in social media. The special ICDE COVID-19 resource page icde.org/corona, launched in March 2020, has been maintained and populated with relevant resources and news for distance and online learning also during 2021.

Extending ICDEs Network

Building on the momentum from the ICDE Presidents' Forum 2020, ICDE continued to engage and grow its global community through its communication channels for the virtual ICDE Leadership Summit and ICDE Presidents' Forum in April 2021. By producing promotional materials and developing social media campaigns to market the events, ICDE was able to engage new audiences beyond the current membership. For the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week in October, ICDEs communications channels were again key and were able to engage people from 53 different countries and welcome several new members to the global ICDE community.

Building ICDEs Online Presence

ICDE worked strategically to build its audiences on social media in order to be more visible and reach new potential followers and members/partners. The work has proven successful and resulted in an increased number of followers across all social media platforms. It is likely that number of unique visits to the ICDE website was especially high in 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the launch of the #learningtogether campaign, whereas for 2021, it is back to more normal levels.

Building on Improving the Website Platform

ICDE has furthermore engaged an external consultant to analyze the ICDE website with regards to performance and user experience. The findings will contribute to a new website improvement project to be implemented in the years 2022 to 2024, and which is a prioritized activity for ICDE.

2021 Statistics

Facebook:

2020: 3,553
2021: 3,864 (+8.7%)

Twitter:

2020: 5,127
2021: 5,477 (+6.8%)

LinkedIn:

2020: 1,406
2021: 1,829 (+6.8%)

Newsletter:

2020: 13,281
2021: 12,154 (-8.4%)

Website unique visits:

2020: 106,300
2021: 65,831 (-38%)



Caroline Seville,
Manager Communication, Events
and Partnerships, ICDE

ICDE Collaborations and Partnerships in 2021

ICDE Partners with a new Consortium initiated by HBMSU in Dubai

In the year 2021, the Consortium for the Benchmarking Framework for Online, Open, Smart, and Technology Enhanced Higher Education, initiated by Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University (HBMSU) in Dubai, welcomed ICDE as an official partner. This was crucial in advancing the ICDE Strategic Plan because it addressed two of the organisation's goals:

Strategic Objective 1: Increase the impact of ICDE's advocacy regarding Open, Flexible and Distance Learning (OFDL) globally and enable greater regional and national influence through members and partners

Strategic Objective 3: Maximize the relevance and value of ICDE to its members through the prioritized areas of quality, OER, and innovation in education.

Why is it Critical for ICDE to Collaborate with and Support this Network?

The consortium brings together specialists from online and open universities, quality assurance agencies, and higher education associations from all over the world. Together they are developing a benchmarking framework that will help to establish and promote a common understanding and quality criteria for technology-enhanced higher education through self-assessment tool for online and open universities. The consortium and is open and free to join for all interested parties through the [Benchmarking Framework home page](#).

"A new partnership with ICDE – a leading international organization in online and distance education is an important milestone for the initiative considering its wealth of expertise and support for education-related projects to all through online, open, and distance learning,"

- His Excellency Dr. Mansoor Al Awar, Chancellor of HBMSU



H.E. Dr. Mansoor Al Awar,
Chancellor of HBMSU, UAE

ENCORE + Project



Juliane Granly,
Project & Development
Manager

2021 marked the official launch of the ENCORE+ project - European Network for Catalysing Open Resources in Education. It is a three-year ERASMUS + Knowledge Alliance project, co-funded by the European Commission and coordinated by ICDE. The project connects European academic and business partners with the main purpose of supporting the uptake and innovation of Open Education Resources (OER) for both education and business.

ENCORE+ is a concept, which in its entirety is to build an OER ecosystem in Europe. This is the proposed solution to a number of challenges found in the OER space in Europe today – such as the de-fragmentated, however active, OER community.

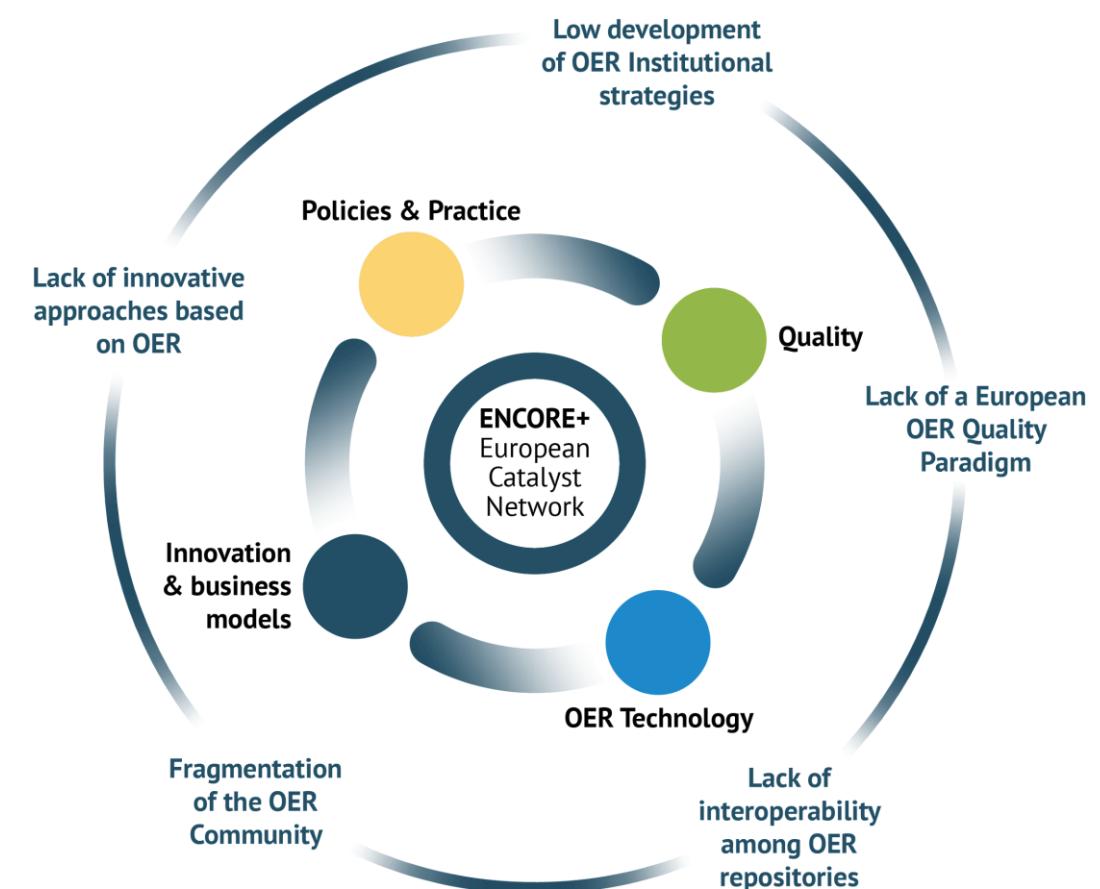
As is shown in the illustration, ENCORE+ has identified five major challenges, of which four are thematically focused.

-  **Challenge 1:** Fragmentation of the OER stakeholder communities in Europe
-  **Challenge 2:** Lack of collaboration and interoperability among European OER Repositories
-  **Challenge 3:** Low development of OER institutional strategies in European businesses and academia
-  **Challenge 4:** Lack of an integrated European OER quality paradigm and quality assurance mechanism
-  **Challenge 5:** Lack of entrepreneurial innovative approaches and business models based on OER

The ENCORE+ Project has in 2021 been building up the OER Ecosystem in Europe focused on the 4 identified main themes: Policies&Practice, Quality, OER Technology, Innovation&Business models. This is done through the ENCORE+ Circle Communities, where stakeholders from both academia and business come together to discuss various ways to further implement and improve the European and global efforts for OER.

The thematic Circles Communities are open for anyone to join. They were officially launched in four respective circle events during September and October 2021, two of them as open side events to the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week. The ENCORE + Project has also been presented in various external conferences, such as the Lillehammer Lifelong Learning Conference in Norway, the EDEN Open Education Week, EDEN Annual Conference, Open Education Global Conference and OEB in Berlin.

Learn more about ENCORE+ [here](#), and sign up to get updates from the project [here](#).



ENCORE + project partners:



Francophone Africa Project – 2021 Activities



Anaïs Malbrand,
Senior Adviser

The Francophone Africa Project is an ICDE coordinated project involving the Francophone OER working group and focusing on the first two action areas of the UNESCO OER recommendation, namely capacity building and policy development. The project completed its pilot phase and successfully delivered two main outcomes in 2021:

- (i) a virtual Workshop on Open Educational Resources in Francophone Africa and
- (ii) the adaptation to the French speaking world of the OER micro course LIDA103

Workshop

The virtual Workshop on Open Educational Resources in Francophone Africa took place 9 June 2021 and focused on Francophone African countries, in particular Senegal, Mali, Republic of Congo, Burkina Faso, Benin, Burundi, Gabon and Ivory Coast.

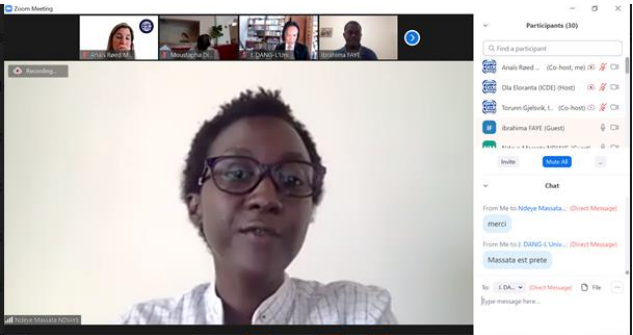
The format, agenda, target groups and objectives of the workshop were based on findings from an analysis that ICDE had undertaken of institutional, national and regional needs, policies and ongoing actions in targeted countries. The report highlighted the importance of awareness raising and advocacy for OER through a trans-sectoral approach, and a strong need to align regional efforts and identify priority actions to implement the UNESCO OER recommendation in the targeted region.

The workshop aimed at introducing the UNESCO Recommendation on OER, highlighting the value and potential of OER for quality, innovation, and access to education in the context of COVID-19. It also sought to raise awareness on the use of existing Francophone OER, the development of new OER and the sharing and reuse of these. Sharing of experience and knowledge on the uptake and development of OER in the region was another key objective. The main outcome was a proposed Action plan for the operationalization of the implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation on OER in the region focusing on its first 2 action areas.

The target audience for the workshop were rectors and presidents of universities, representatives of Ministries of Education, Higher Education, Ministries in charge of Youth, Employment and Digital Economy and representatives from UNESCO headquarters and country offices, local International Organizations and Civil Society. It welcomed more than 60 participants from 15 different countries.



Presentation of the LIDA 103fr course adaptation at OEB21.



Screenshot from the virtual workshop in June 2021.

The LIDA 103fr Course

The adaptation of the open OERu micro course: Open Education, Copyright and open licensing in a Digital World (LIDA103) into French started in 2020 and built on an already existing partnership between OERu, ICDE, UNESCO and the French Digital University. The objective of the French version of the course is to contribute to capacity building within the framework of the implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Educational Resources in francophone countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The course was launched at the ICDE Global Virtual Conference Week in October. It was also promoted and presented at a series of events in 2021, and a Cohort-based instance taking place from 17 to 30 November was organized and promoted by the partners to push registrations. For this instance, the Tutor, selected by ICDE and the French Digital University within the francophone OER expert group, was the head for the Internal Quality assurance department of the Virtual University of Senegal.

Results, Recognitions, and Expression of Interest for Continuing Collaboration in 2022-2023

The French adaptation of the LIDA103 course has been selected among the projects that will appear as international best practices of OER in a case study that is being coordinated by the international OER experts Network for Open Organizations. In addition, OERu and Wayne Mackintosh were selected as Finalist for the Falling Walls Science Breakthroughs of the Year 2021 in the category Future Learning, and Nominated to the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy, partly for the work realized within the adaption of the LIDA103fr course. Besides, all partners and several participants of the workshop have expressed their interest in building on the pilot phase of the project to develop it further in 2022-2023.

ICDE Quality Network 2021



Prof. Emeritus Alan Tait,
Quality Network Chair

The ICDE Quality Network was first established in November 2016 through the appointment of regional Focal Points on Quality by the ICDE Board. The quality network gives advice and collects knowledge on the latest developments of quality work related to open, flexible and distance education within their institutions and regions, and represents institutional members of ICDE. Prof. Emeritus Alan Tait from the Open University UK has held the position as Chair for the Quality Network since its beginning. The mandate for the Quality Network for the period 2021-2022 has been developed in collaboration with the Chair and is aligned with the ICDE Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and ICDE Activity Plan 2021-2022.

2021 has been another productive year for the ICDE Quality Network. A workshop was held during the 34th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities – AAOU in June titled: “Quality Assurance of Open, Flexible and Distance Education – a global perspective”, focusing on how ICDE through its members supports educators in developing and delivering quality open, flexible and distance education especially in the context of crises and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ICDE Quality Network also hosted two panel sessions during the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week in October. The scope of the discussion was “Innovation in Quality for Open, Flexible and Distance Learning”, where the Focal Points presented perspectives on the topic from their respective regions. Outputs and reflections from these presentations are also made available through the ICDE Quality Network’s latest Report: [Global Quality Perspectives on Open, Flexible and Distance Learning 2021](#). The report includes an analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in accelerating the inclusion of online elements in Higher Education in all parts of the world, together with the need for revised understandings of quality assurance to support this transition.

The 7 Regional Focal Points of the Quality Network in 2021 were:

African Region - **Professor Nebath Tanglang**, Director Academic Planning, National Open University of Nigeria, Nigeria

Arab Region - **Prof. Moustafa Hassan**, Vice Chancellor for International Cooperation, Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University Dubai, UAE

Asian Region - **Prof. Ojat Darajat**, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Latin American Region - **Mary Morocho Quezada**, AIESAD (Iberoamerican Association of Higher Distance Education) and CALED (Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Quality in Higher Distance Education), Ecuador

European Region - **George Ubachs**, Managing Director, EADTU (European Association of Distance Teaching Universities), Netherlands

North American Region - **Yaping Gao**, EDD, Senior Academic Director, Member Services and Partnerships, Quality Matters USA

Oceania Region - **Dr Rajni Chand**, Director Centre for Flexible Learning, University of the South Pacific, Fiji



Prof. Dr. Ebba
Ossiannilsson, OERAC
Chair

ICDE OER Advocacy Committee

The ICDE OER Advocacy Committee (OERAC) was first established at the 27th ICDE World Conference in Toronto, October 2017 with the objective to increase global recognition of OER; and to provide policy support for the uptake, use and reuse of OER. In 2021, the OERAC was decided to be renewed for a period of 4 years from 2021 to 2024 by the ICDE Board. The 2021-2022 OERAC mandate is based on the ICDE Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and ICDE Activity Plan 2021-2022, the UNESCO Recommendation on OER from 2019 and ICDEs role as a partner in the UNESCO OER Dynamic Coalition.

Major activities for the OERAC in 2021 can be summarized as:

- Consultation on the UNESCO OER Recommendation at national/regional and international level
- Contribution to the ICDE blog and webpage
- Participating and presenting OERAC work at national/regional/international level
- Attendance at conferences, expert and key ICDE project meetings
- Participating and presenting OERAC work at ICDE and key partners events such as the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week (VGCW), the EDEN EODLW 2021, OE Global 2021, OER camp Global 2021 and OEB 2021,
- Consultations by ICDE
- Individual consultations at local, regional, national and international level

The OERAC members and Chair contributed significantly to the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week 2021 as part of the Scientific Committee, speakers, panelists and session Chairs. They also contributed to the event with the organization of a workshop on Open Science and Open Educational Resources. One representative of the OERAC participated in the global consultation on the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, on behalf of ICDE.

The renewed Committee consists of representatives from 6 different world regions and include the following Ambassadors:

(Chair) Ebba Ossiannilsson, Professor, Dr. Consultant and VP, Swedish Association of Distance Education (SADE), Sweden, member of the ICDE Board.

Jane-Frances Obiageli Agbu, Associate Professor, National Open University of Nigeria, Nigeria **Cengiz Hakan Aydin**, Professor, Anadolu University, Turkey.

Melinda de la Pena Bandalaria, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Open University.

Daniel Burgos, Vice-Rector for International Research, Universidad Inter. de La Rioja, Spain.

Xiangyang Zhang, Emeritus Professor, Open University of Jiangsu, China.

Rosa Leonor Ulloa Cazarez, Professor, Universidad de Guadalajara, Mexico.

Mpine Makoe, Professor, University of South Africa (UNISA), South Africa.

Cristine Gusmao, Associate Professor, Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil.

Yi Yang, Professor, Franklin University, USA.

Constance Blomgren, Associate Professor, Athabasca University, Canada.

Membership in 2021



Anaïs Malbrand
Senior Adviser, ICDE

At the end of the year 2021 ICDE had 306 members.

At the end of the year ICDE had 306 members divided into 187 institutional members, 71 individual members, 8 honorary members and 40 student members.

In 2021, ICDE faced a decrease in membership numbers in comparison with the previous year, except from the category of student members. The high number of virtual events and relevant projects and activities that ICDE has been involved in has not resulted in more members, although the broader network has been extended.

2021 was also the first complete year under the COVID-19 pandemic. We acknowledge that the pandemic has affected many members strongly in a negative way and caused significant constraints in terms of both finances and time management. The need for international collaboration in our field is stronger than ever, and many members have contributed significantly with sharing of their expertise, resources and practices. In spite of the high activity level, very few meetings have been possible to organize face to face, and many planned events were canceled or postponed.

The ICDE Secretariat has nevertheless managed to remain in close contact with the ICDE membership through regular virtual meetings and events throughout the year. The cancellation of the 2021 ICDE World Conference that was planned to take place in Brazil resulted in a smaller, virtual event, the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week, organized by the ICDE Secretariat. ICDE members elected 3 Board members during the 2021 elections, where two of the members were re-elected for a second period.

The ICDE Prizes of Excellence were awarded during the ICDE Virtual Global Conference Week in the following categories:

Institutional Prize: Awarded to EDEN and University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU)

Individual Prize: Awarded to Melinda Bandalaria, Chancellor Philippines Open University (UPOU)

Lifelong Contribution to the Field: Awarded to Professor Emeritus Grace Javier Alfonso (UPOU) and Professor Andy Lane, Open University U.K.

2021 Membership Statistics

Institutional:

2020: 199
2021: 187

Individual:

2020: 84
2021: 71

Students:

2020: 34
2021: 54

Cancelled/Expired:

2020: 60
2021: 54

New Members:

2020: 59
2021: 42



Jan-Atle Toska
Chair, ICDE Control Committee

Financial Briefing

Provided by the ICDE Control Committee

ICDEs main sponsor is the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills. Membership fees, conference fees and project funding are however also important additional sources of income. ICDEs total income in 2021 was NOK 5,9 million of which contributions from the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills constituted NOK 2.95 million. ICDEs expenses in 2021 was NOK 5.4 million, hereunder NOK 4 million tied directly to personnel costs. The result of operations for 2021 was NOK 429 453. Comparably, in 2020 the result was negative NOK 664 425. At the end of year 2021, ICDE had NOK 1.9 million in equity and NOK 3.6 million in total equity and liabilities.

Public statement for the Annual Report by ICDEs Control Committee

According to the ICDE Constitution, the ICDE Control Committee shall ensure that ICDEs funds are used in accordance with applicable law, decisions, grants and financial frameworks, and that the financial dispositions made are in accordance with the Constitution and relevant Board resolutions. The Control Committee shall further ensure that the internal financial control of the Secretary General is appropriate and justifiable. The Control Committee has tasks that go beyond what an external auditor is concerned and must therefore carry out its own information gathering and checks in addition to the auditor's work. The Control Committee shall ensure that the accounting is reliable and that the annual accounts and interim reports give a correct expression of ICDE's operations and financial position. When reviewing the accounts, the control committee shall assess the financial position, management and operation of ICDE.

Comments of the Control Committee to the 2021 Accounts of ICDE

The Control Committee has reviewed the minutes of the Board, as well as other documents the Committee has found necessary to review. The Control Committee has received all the information that it has requested from the Secretary General and from ICDEs dedicated auditor Grant Thornton. The Annual Accounts for 2021 was also reviewed.

The material presented to the Committee does not give rise to comments other than what is already stated in the notes of the accounts, and the Control Committee recommended that the Annual Accounts for 2021 was approved by the Board.

Bodø/Jakarta/New York/Oslo, 22 February 2022,

*Jan-Atle Toska, Tian Belawati, Meg Benke and Snorre Qveim-Leikanger,
ICDE Control Committee*



“The challenge that we face is that there is no role model. We are the role model. We are literally building the future of higher education.”

Dr. Neil Fassina, ICDE President, on the future of distance education.

ICDE
governance
activities
2021



Anaïs Malbrand
Senior Adviser, ICDE

2021 was the first year where the new Constitution and an updated and modernized governance structure of ICDE entered into force. The amended constitution introduced member referendums as the highest authority of ICDE and reshaped main ICDE business bodies to the ICDE Board, the ICDE Control Committee and the ICDE Nomination Committee.

Entry into force ICDE Constitution and governance structure

The appointed candidates to the new ICDE Control Committee and Nomination Committee that were approved by the ICDE Board at the end of 2020, took office from 1 January 2021, according to the newly adopted revised ICDE Constitution which entered into force on the same date.

2021 ICDE Board Election

The ICDE Board Election process took place from June to October 2021. The ICDE Nomination Committee approved eleven (11) nominations for the new ICDE Board for the period 2022 – 2024 among which 3 candidates were elected by ICDE institutional members. The announcement of the election results took place during the closing session of the ICDE Virtual Global Conference week.


ICDE Special Advisers to the Board

In 2021, the ICDE Board approved to appoint 3 special advisers to complement under-represented regional knowledge and/or specific expertise among current Board members for the year 2021. The advisory board members are to be consulted on an ad-hoc basis and have no voting rights at the ICDE Board.

Formal Governance Meetings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, all Board meetings have been held virtually in 2021. Four virtual Board meetings were successively held in January, April, August, and October. 11 Board decisions were made by written procedure.

The ICDE President, on behalf of the ICDE Board, held the annual appraisal of the Secretary General in December 2021.



INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL FOR OPEN AND
DISTANCE EDUCATION

Constitution of the International Council for Open and Distance Education of 2020

Declared voting period	20.04.2020 h. 12:00 - 20.06.2020 h. 12:00
Issued by	ICDE Executive Committee
Recommended by	ICDE Board of Trustees, ICDE Secretariat
Approved by	ICDE Membership
Entry into force	30.06.2020
Replaces	Constitution of The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) of 2013
Pursuant to	Constitution of The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) of 2013, Article 11.
Originally issued	14.04.2020 h. 14:00
Abbreviated title	ICDE Constitution

ORIGINAL ISSUED VERSION

§ 1 Name of the Association

The name of the association is the International Council for Open and Distance Education, employing the acronym "ICDE".

§ 2 Organization

The association is an independent self-governing non-profit non-governmental legal entity. Self-governing means that nobody, including its members and others, are entitled to the association's assets, or is responsible for its liabilities or obligations. The association shall have its permanent secretariat in Norway.

§ 3 Mission

As the global community of Leaders and Professionals in the field of Open, Flexible, and Distance Learning (OFDL) at all levels, ICDE supports and enables its members to achieve their goals by:

(a) empowering them to continuously improve, innovate, and remain locally relevant by building relationships, collaborating, learning, and promoting OFDL at national, regional, and global levels,

(b) leveraging their collective knowledge, expertise, and thought leadership to inform, influence, advocate, and guide policies and the decisions being made by global and regional stakeholders in support of OFDL, and

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Facsimile of the ICDE Constitution entering into force on 1 January 2021.



Torunn Gjelsvik,
Secretary General

ICDEs Main Partners and Stakeholders


Collaborating with UNESCO at the Global Policy Level

Since 1967, ICDE as a global non-governmental organisation, has been in a formal consultative partnership with UNESCO. As the only worldwide organisation specializing in open, flexible and distance education, ICDE has become an important partner for UNESCO in developing educational policies as these learning modalities have become more and more prevalent. During the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has only accentuated this trend and increased the attention to open, flexible and distance learning modes as a prerequisite for resilient and sustainable education. A common goal, as stated in the Sustainable Development Goal number 4, is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Over the past few years, ICDE has been collaborating with UNESCO and other key global stakeholders and associations on leadership for digital transformation in education, as well as on opening up education through more open educational resources and practices. The adoption of the UNESCO OER Recommendation by all UN member states in 2019 was in 2021 followed by the adoption of a new UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, and a Recommendation on the ethics of Artificial Intelligence. ICDE, through its partnership with the UNESCO OER Dynamic Coalition, and the activities undertaken by the ICDE OER Advocacy Committee, has again contributed with consultations prior to the adoption of the new recommendations and in disseminating knowledge from the latest policy developments.

During 2021, ICDE has collaborated closely with UNESCO on the implementation of the UNESCO OER Recommendation in Francophone Africa through the dedicated ICDE Francophone OER Project. The project focuses on capacity building and supportive policies (the two first action areas of the Recommendation) and connects Francophone African and French partners and stakeholders.

UNITED NATIONS



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

SPAIN



ICDEs Scholarly Journal

Open Praxis is a peer-reviewed open access scholarly journal focusing on research and innovation in open, flexible and distance education, published by ICDE. The editor is Inés Gil-Jaurena, hosted at Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) in Spain in agreement with ICDE. Open Praxis welcomes contributions which demonstrate creative and innovative research, and which highlight challenges, lessons, and achievements in the practice of distance and e-learning from all over the world. An article may present research or surveys of recent work, describe original work, or discuss new technology and its possibilities, implications and/or other related issues.

In 2021, three volumes of the journal were published, whereas volume 4 will be published in 2022. In October, the Open Praxis logo and visual identity were updated and ICDE entered into an agreement with Ubiquity Press, an open access publisher of peer-reviewed academic journals, books and data. Their service provides the new website for the journal as well as the technical infrastructure to facilitate submissions, peer review and online publishing. Read more at openpraxis.org.

NORWAY



Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills

Every year since 1988, the Norwegian Government has provided ICDE with a generous grant to support its operations related to furthering the international development of open, flexible and distance learning.

The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills administers the grant ICDE receives annually on behalf of the Norwegian Government. The directorate is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research within the higher education and higher vocational education sectors and is responsible for the national skills policy.

According to the grant, ICDE is expected to bridge the access between Norwegian institutions and the international community and expertise within distance and flexible learning. ICDE has several active institutional members in Norway and two of them, the University of Bergen and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, contributed to a keynote session given by the ICDE Secretary General on Artificial Intelligence and online education at the International Conference on Open and Distance e-Learning (ICODEL 2021), organized by the University of the Philippines Open University in October 2021.

The staff



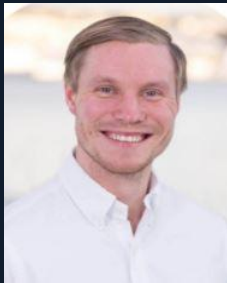
Torunn Gjelsvik,
Secretary General



Anaïs Malbrand,
Senior Adviser



Caroline Seville,
Manager Communications,
Events and Partnerships



Ola Eloranta,
Communication and
Administration Officer



Juliane Granly,
Project and
Development Manager

Organisation

ICDE is an independent self-governing, non-profit and non-governmental legal entity. The association is governed by the following business bodies: (i) Member Referendums, (ii) the Board (headed by the President) and (iii) the Permanent Secretariat (headed by the Secretary General). In addition, the Board is supported by the Control and Nomination Committees.

ICDE Board:

Neil Fassina, President of
Okanagan College, Canada

Ansary Ahmed, President and
CEO of Asia-e-University,
Malaysia

Carlos Alberto P. de Oliveira,
State University of Rio de
Janeiro, Brazil

Mark Nichols, Executive
Director at Open Polytechnic
New Zealand

Som Naidu, Former Pro-Vice
Chancellor Flexible Learning and
Director for Center for Flexible
Learning University of the South
Pacific, Fiji

Ebba Ossiannilsson, Vice
President SADE, Sweden

Secretary General:

Torunn Gjelsvik, Norway

ICDE Nomination Committee:

Jens Uwe Korten (Norway)
Asha Singh Kanwar (Canada)
Mandla Stanley Makhanya (South Africa)

ICDE Control Committee:

Chair: Jan-Atle Toska, Nord
University, Norway

Tian Belawati, Universitas Terbuka,
Indonesia

Meg Benke, Empire State College,
United States of America

Snorre Qveim-Leikanger, Selmer
Law Firm, Norway

Auditor:

Grant Thornton Revisjon AS



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