



ONLINE

WORKERS' ACTIVITIES

GLOBAL WORKERS' ACADEMY ON INNOVATIVE WORKERS' EDUCATION

INNOVATING TRADE UNION EDUCATION THROUGH DIGITAL,
INCLUSIVE AND FUTURE-ORIENTED LEARNING

9 MARCH – 3 APRIL 2026

 4 WEEKS, 5-6 HRS/WEEK

Information Note



International
Labour
Organization



International Training Centre



Learn. Experiment. Co-create. Transform workers' education for a changing world of work.



BACKGROUND

Workers' education plays a critical role in strengthening trade unions' capacity to respond strategically to profound transformations in the world of work. Accelerated technological change, artificial intelligence, digitalisation, platform-based labour, climate transition, demographic shifts, and widening inequalities are reshaping labour markets and trade union realities worldwide. These dynamics require educational responses that go beyond traditional training models, both in content and in pedagogical approach.

In this context, workers' education must evolve towards more innovative, flexible, inclusive and digitally enabled approaches, capable of reaching diverse groups of workers and supporting organizing, social dialogue, collective bargaining, and policy influence. Innovation in workers' education is not limited to the adoption of new technologies; it also entails rethinking how learning is designed, facilitated, and sustained over time. Distance and blended learning, when strategically conceived, offer significant opportunities for experimentation, accessibility, and scalability, particularly for global and regional trade union networks.

The Global Workers' Academy on Innovative Workers' Education (2026) is conceived as a fully online global innovation space for trade union educators and practitioners. It is designed as a living laboratory where participants explore, test, and co-create new approaches to workers' education, drawing on their own experiences while engaging with emerging practices from across regions. The Academy positions education as a strategic driver of trade union transformation and revitalisation, fully aligned with ACTRAV's mandate and the ITCILO capacity development strategy.

Consistent with the broader United Nations understanding of innovation, the Academy promotes a culture of experimentation and learning by doing. Innovation is understood not only as the use of digital tools, but as the ability to do things differently: to question established practices, pilot new methods, create safe spaces to experiment, and learn from both successes and failures. The online format of the Academy provides a unique opportunity to model these principles in practice.

A key feature of the Academy is its focus on sustainability and follow-up. Participants will contribute to validate the use of a multiplier guide on innovative workers' education, conceived as a practical tool to support ACTRAV and trade union organizations in replicating, adapting and scaling up the approaches explored during the course. This guide will strengthen institutional learning and support longer-term impact beyond the duration of the Academy.

The Academy also builds on continuity and collective knowledge. Former participants from the 2024 and 2025 editions will be actively involved as resource persons, mentors and facilitators, contributing their experience and reinforcing peer-to-peer learning across cohorts. This approach strengthens an emerging global community of practice on innovative workers' education.

Finally, the Academy is embedded in a strong network of strategic partnerships. It engages regional and international trade union education actors, including TUCA, ITUC Africa, ITUC Asia-Pacific, ITUC Geneva and ETUI, ensuring regional diversity, relevance and ownership. Through these partnerships, the Academy contributes to strengthening trade union education ecosystems and advancing shared objectives related to social dialogue, trade union revitalisation and policy influence.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND THIS ACADEMY?

The Academy is open to new participants and welcomes applications from:

- Trade union trainers, educators and facilitators involved in workers' education;
- Trade union staff and activists engaged in organizing, campaigns, communication or policy work with an educational dimension;
- Representatives of trade union education institutes and schools;
- Practitioners with a strong interest in pedagogical innovation, digital learning and experimentation.

Participants should have basic digital competencies and be supported by their organizations to apply or pilot innovative education approaches following the Academy.

To promote diversity and inclusion, trade union organizations are encouraged to ensure gender balance and the participation of youth.

WHAT WILL THE ACADEMY ACCOMPLISH?

By the end of the Academy, participants will have strengthened their capacity to design, implement and sustain innovative workers' education initiatives aligned with contemporary trade union priorities. In particular, participants will be able to:

1. **Design and prototype innovative online and distance learning solutions** tailored to diverse trade union contexts, using a structured, experimentation-oriented approach and building on the progressive development of a concrete educational product.
2. **Translate emerging global challenges**—including artificial intelligence, digitalisation, platform work, demographic change, just transition and inclusion—into practical workers' education responses that support organizing, social dialogue, collective bargaining and policy influence.
3. **Apply innovative, inclusive and learner-centred pedagogical approaches**, such as micro-learning, mobile learning, digital storytelling and interactive online methods, with particular attention to accessibility, participation and relevance for different groups of workers.
4. **Test, assess and iteratively improve workers' education initiatives**, using appropriate learning and impact indicators, peer feedback and reflective practice to strengthen quality, effectiveness and sustainability.
5. **Strengthen the strategic link between workers' education and trade union action**, ensuring that educational initiatives are clearly connected to broader organizational strategies, campaigns and institutional priorities.
6. **Act as multipliers of innovation in workers' education**, contributing to the development and use of shared tools (such as the multiplier guide) and supporting the adaptation and scaling of innovative practices within their organizations and networks.
7. **Engage actively in a global community of practice**, contributing to the Global Network of Trade Union Training Facilitators as a space for ongoing peer learning, collaboration and innovation beyond the duration of the Academy.

The combined achievement of these outcomes will contribute to strengthening trade unions' institutional and organizational capacities, enhancing their ability to innovate, adapt and exercise influence in a rapidly changing world of work, and ultimately to advance social justice and decent work.

HOW WILL THE ACADEMY BE DELIVERED?

The Academy is delivered entirely online over a four-week period, combining synchronous and asynchronous learning activities through the ITCILO eCampus platform. Online design ensures global accessibility while creating a structured and interactive learning environment that supports collaboration across regions and time zones.

The programme follows a learning-by-doing and experimentation-oriented approach. Rather than focusing on isolated theoretical inputs or stand-alone assignments, participants are engaged from the outset in a coherent learning journey centered on the progressive development of a single final product. Each module represents a building block that contributes to this product, allowing participants to apply concepts immediately, test ideas, and refine their work throughout the Academy.

This design encourages participants to “build while learning”. From the first week, participants begin working on a practical tool for innovative workers’ education—such as a multiplier passport to travel learning—which is developed step by step across the modules. Each learning block adds a new dimension (e.g. purpose, target groups, pedagogical approach, digital and inclusive methods), ensuring continuity, depth and practical relevance. This approach avoids fragmentation and reinforces the strategic coherence of the learning process.

Peer learning is a central pillar of the delivery model. Participants regularly exchange feedback, share experiences and collectively reflect on challenges and innovations in their respective contexts. Facilitated live sessions provide opportunities for dialogue, collective sense-making and cross-regional learning, while asynchronous activities allow for reflection, experimentation and adaptation to local realities.

The Academy also integrates guided facilitation and curated learning resources, combining short expert inputs, practical examples and interactive tools. Former participants and partner organizations contribute as resource persons, enriching the learning experience with real-world perspectives and tested practices.

By the end of the four weeks, participants will have co-created a concrete, adaptable product that can be used and further developed within their organizations and networks. In this way, the delivery model itself reflects the Academy’s core objective: to model innovative, inclusive and future-oriented approaches to workers’ education that can be replicated and scaled beyond the course.

WEEKLY MODULES

Module 1 – Workers’ Education in Times of Transformation

This module sets the strategic foundation of the Academy by analysing the major global transformations reshaping the world of work and trade unions, and by examining their implications for workers’ education. It positions education as a core strategic function for trade union renewal, rather than as a purely technical or operational activity.

Participants critically explore how technological change, digitalisation, platform work, climate transition, demographic shifts and growing inequalities affect workers’ realities and learning needs. The module emphasises the importance of contextual analysis as the starting point for meaningful educational innovation.

Key topics:

- Transformations in the world of work and their impact on trade unions
- Digitalisation, artificial intelligence and platform work as structural changes
- New worker profiles, inequalities and evolving learning needs in diverse demographic contexts
- Workers’ education as a strategic lever for trade union transformation, organizing and influence

Learning activities:

- Live interactive webinar introducing key trends and analytical frameworks
- Contextual mapping exercise linking global transformations to participants' own trade union realities
- Facilitated online peer discussions to compare contexts and priorities

Module output:

Contextual and strategic analysis identifying priority challenges, target groups and opportunities for innovation in workers' education, serving as the foundation for the final product.

Module 2 – Innovative Pedagogies for Distance Workers' Education

Building on the strategic analysis developed in Module 1, this module focuses on pedagogical innovation suited to online and distance learning environments. It reinforces the idea that innovation in workers' education is primarily pedagogical and methodological, with technology acting as an enabler rather than a driver.

Participants explore learner-centred, inclusive and flexible pedagogical approaches that respond to diverse worker realities, including time constraints, digital divides and different learning cultures. The module supports participants in translating strategic priorities into a coherent educational concept.

Key topics:

- Pedagogical principles for innovative and inclusive distance workers' education
- Micro-learning, mobile-friendly formats and modular learning pathways
- Digital storytelling, narrative-based and experience-based learning
- Gamification, scenario-based learning and active learner engagement
- Designing inclusive online learning experiences for diverse groups of workers

Learning activities:

- Demonstrations of pedagogical techniques applied in online environments
- Analysis of innovative workers' education practices from different regions
- Guided design exercise using an innovation or learning design canvas

Module output:

Pedagogical concept note for an innovative workers' education initiative, clearly linked to a concrete trade union need and aligned with the strategic analysis developed in Module 1.

Module 3 – Digital Tools and Artificial Intelligence in Workers' Education

This module deepens the pedagogical concept developed in Module 2 by examining how digital tools and artificial intelligence can be strategically and critically integrated into workers' education. The focus is on purposeful use, ethical considerations and trade union values, rather than on technology adoption per se.

Participants explore how digital and AI-supported tools can enhance content development, facilitation, collaboration and learner engagement, while also addressing issues of data protection, knowledge governance, power asymmetries and workers' rights. The module situates workers' education as a tool to counter disinformation, polarisation and the effects of geopolitical instability.

Key topics:

- Digital tools as pedagogical enablers within workers' education strategies
- AI-assisted content creation, facilitation support and learning analytics
- Online collaboration platforms and distributed learning ecosystems for trade unions
- Ethical and political dimensions of AI: data protection, transparency, bias and governance
- Workers' education as a response to disinformation and polarisation in a changing geopolitical context

Learning activities:

- Live demonstrations of selected digital and AI-supported tools linked to concrete pedagogical uses
- Guided experimentation adapting tools to participants' own education concepts
- Structured peer feedback on emerging education prototypes

Module output:

Draft online workers' education prototype integrating selected digital and/or AI-supported elements in a pedagogically sound, inclusive and values-based manner.

Module 4 – Evaluation and Scaling of Innovative Distance Learning Solutions

The final module focuses on consolidation, quality and long-term impact. It supports participants in strengthening, adapting and institutionalising their education prototypes within trade union structures and strategies, recognising that innovation is a continuous and collective process.

The module places strong emphasis on evaluation, post-training follow-up and the role of participants as multipliers who sustain learning over time. It also addresses the challenges of scaling innovation across different organizational and regional contexts.

Key topics:

- Evaluating workers' education innovation: learning outcomes, organizational impact and strategic relevance
- Indicators for inclusion, participation and transformative potential
- Adapting education innovations to different union contexts, capacities and resources
- Scaling and sustaining distance and online learning initiatives
- Designing post-training follow-up mechanisms and continuous learning pathways

Learning activities:

- Interactive webinar on evaluation, impact and sustainability frameworks
- Peer review and collective refinement of education prototypes
- Development of a realistic pilot, implementation or scaling plan, including follow-up actions

Module output:

A refined and context-adapted workers' education innovation prototype, accompanied by a concrete plan for piloting, scaling and sustaining it within a trade union organization or network.

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

Training methods include blended online learning approaches; experimentation and problem-solving; peer-to-peer learning; scenario-based activities; digital storytelling; design thinking tools; collaborative group work; and reflective practice.

KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT AND COURSE EVALUATION

Assessment is continuous and formative, based on active participation in online activities, completion of module outputs, and development of a final innovation prototype. The standard ITCILO end-of-course evaluation will be conducted.

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

Participants who fulfil the course requirements will receive an ITCILO digital certificate of participation.

INFO

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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