

QCAP-ROC Roundtable:

Towards a Collaborative Agenda for Engaged Education Research

This event will be hosted by [Queen's Communities and Place](#), in partnership with the [Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change](#) at the University of Glasgow. The existing relationship between QCAP and ROC has developed through the ESRC funded [CLIP](#) study and associated collaboration focusing on children and young people, education, place and community. Building on its success, we want to further our relationship by drawing upon our collective expertise in education. This meeting will provide an opportunity to explore a collaborative research agenda related to the challenge of addressing educational inequality through place-based approaches. The programme for the meeting will explore concepts of equity in education, socio-spatial educational landscapes, and engaged research with the schools working with children from underserved communities.

Rationale

Educational outcomes in NI and Scotland are mediated by social factors, with certain groups of young people more at risk than others of leaving school with low qualifications, poor educational experiences, and constrained opportunities. Existing research suggests that the mediating variables—particularly wealth, class, ethnicity, gender, and parental qualifications—show a clear relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and low educational attainment (Chapman, 2005; Gallagher & Smith, 2000; Harris et al, 2021; Early et al, 2022). However, there is an additional spatial dimension to this in which less favourable education outcomes tend to be concentrated in urban, working-class communities (Kerr & Dyson, 2017; McAvinue, 2022). Through complex and powerful processes, the conditions of place translate into distinctive patterns of both advantages and disadvantages that mediate student educational outcomes (Kerr et al, 2014). The policy preference for addressing unfavourable conditions has involved area-based interventions, but in many cases, these have been top-down and 'place-blind', with limited success. As a consequence, responses to locally identified needs are often left to community organisations and schools, despite the complexity and scale of the task. Our aim is to develop a collaborative research agenda between QCAP and ROC to add depth to our understanding of this spatial phenomenon with a particular focus on supporting local communities to develop their educational landscapes.

Event Details

Date: Thursday 22nd June 2023

Time: 10am-3:30pm

Location: QCAP, 2-8 Fitzwilliam Street, Queen's University Belfast.

Format

This event will be by invitation and hosted in Belfast. It will involve a collaborative roundtable format, and a series of short 10-15min presentations relevant to the theme of addressing educational inequality with(-in) underserved communities, using place-based approaches. Prof. Daniel Mujis (SSESW Head of School) will act as discussant, tasked to identify common themes and challenges to explore further.

Due to the nature of QCAP—as a partnership between academia, communities, and policymakers—this event will include representatives from local authorities, the Market Development Association (MDA), and the Greater Shankill Partnership Board (GSPB). The evidence on area-based interventions

suggests that it's more effective to work simultaneously at macro and micro levels, so involvement of policy/local authorities and communities in planning research activity is preferable (Kerr et al, 2022).

The event will also involve colleagues visiting QUB from UCLA, *Centre for the Transformation of Schools* [<https://transformschoools.ucla.edu>], with expertise on community schools, educational equity, and social justice. The provisional list of invited participants includes:

- Prof Tony Gallagher (QUB)
- Prof Daniel Mujis (QUB)
- Prof Kathy Higgins (QCAP)
- Dr Gavin Duffy (QUB)
- Dr Gareth Robinson (QCAP)
- Prof Chris Chapman (ROC)
- Dr Michalis Constantinides (ROC)
- Dr Tom Cowhitt (ROC)
- Dr Joe Bishop (UCLA)
- Dr Brian Huff (UCLA)
- Dr Angela James (UCLA)
- Prof Victoria Graf (LMU)
- Dr Nancy Hunt (CSULA)
- Alison Drever (WEST Partnership & Past-Director Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland)
- Ollie Bray (Strategic Director, Education Scotland)
- Claire McClelland (DENI)
- Dale Heaney (DENI)
- Áine Brady (MDA/QCAP)
- Fionntán Hargey (MDA)
- Siobhán McDonnell (MDA)
- Sarah Jane Waite (GSPB)
- Jackie Redpath (GSPB)
- Seamus Bradley (EANI)
- John Unsworth (EANI)

Draft Programme

Time	Title	Presenter
9.45am	<i>Arrival</i>	
10am	Welcome and Introductions	Prof Tony Gallagher
10.15am	Presentation 1: <i>Critical educational landscapes and our partner communities</i>	Dr Gareth Robinson
10.30am	Presentation 2: <i>Putting poverty in its place: Drawing out the lessons from Research Practice Partnerships in Scotland</i>	Prof Chris Chapman
10.45am	Presentation 3: <i>Community schools and perspectives from U.S.</i>	Dr Joe Bishop
11am	<i>Break – Tea/Coffee</i>	
11.15am	Community Perspective 1: The Market	Áine Brady
11.30am	Community Perspective 2: The Shankill	SarahJane Waite
11.45am	Discussant perspective	Prof. Daniel Mujis
12noon	Group discussion – ‘What do we know, what have we learnt?’	
1pm	<i>Lunch</i>	
2pm	Development of a Collaborative research agenda – ‘Where do we want to go next, what are the challenges, what can we plan?’	
3.30pm	<i>Close</i>	