

SLIDE From STEM to St[A+]ge: Artful Adventures in Teacher Training: STE[A+]M, Aesthetic Education, Engagement/Service-Learning & Drama Pedagogy

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Abstract

The Laboratory for Aesthetic Education (LAeB) at the University of Education Vienna stands as a pioneering research hub dedicated to advancing the theory and practice of aesthetic education within the realm of teacher training. Our work is driven by the belief that art and cultural diversity serve as powerful tools for enriching educational experiences and fostering innovative teaching methodologies. In this context, LAeB is committed to exploring the intersection of arts, pedagogy, and cross-disciplinary approaches to education, with the aim of empowering educators to create dynamic, inclusive, and inspiring learning environments.

Central to LAeB's mission is the artistic design of teaching sequences. By integrating aesthetic education into various aspects of the curriculum, we seek to deepen the learning experience, making it more engaging and meaningful for both teachers and students. Aesthetic education, as conceptualized at LAeB, goes beyond mere appreciation of art; it is an active process that involves the creation, interpretation, and critical reflection of artistic and cultural expressions. This approach not only enhances cognitive development but also nurtures emotional intelligence, creativity, and social awareness.

Currently, LAeB is at the forefront of two significant European research initiatives: the SLIDE project and the ACIIS project. SLIDE (Service-Learning in Diversity Education) investigates the role of service-learning in promoting cultural diversity and inclusion in educational settings. Through this project, we explore how service-learning can be used as a pedagogical strategy to bridge cultural gaps, enhance social cohesion, and foster a sense of community among students from diverse backgrounds.

The ACIIS (Aesthetic-Cultural Interventions in Schools) project, on the other hand, focuses on the transformative potential of drama pedagogy in education. Drama pedagogy, with its emphasis on storytelling, role-play, and creative expression, provides a powerful medium for exploring complex social issues, enhancing communication skills, and fostering empathy. By integrating drama into the curriculum, ACIIS aims to create a more dynamic and participatory learning environment that encourages students to actively engage with the content and with each other.

In addition to these projects, LAeB is also involved in the STE[A+]M doctoral consortium, which seeks to bridge the gap between the arts and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) disciplines. The STE[A+]M initiative recognizes the importance of creativity and artistic thinking in STEM education and aims to foster a more holistic approach to learning that integrates these seemingly disparate fields. By promoting the collaboration between arts and STEM, we seek to develop new pedagogical frameworks that harness the strengths of both

areas, ultimately enriching the educational experience and better preparing students for the challenges of the 21st century.

The insights and outcomes from these projects are systematically incorporated into teacher training programs, where they are translated into innovative teaching methods and strategies. Our goal is to equip future educators with the tools and knowledge they need to inspire their students and to cultivate a lifelong passion for learning. By embracing aesthetic education, service-learning, and drama pedagogy, we believe that we can open up new, motivating pathways into the teaching profession, ultimately leading to a more inclusive, creative, and effective education system.

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Bio

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