

ENCATC CONGRESS 2025
Barcelona, 15–17 September 2025

The Future Is Cultural: Policy, Practice, and Education

Theme & Background

While culture is not officially designated as a standalone UN Sustainable Development Goal, it is directly referenced in Target 11.4, which urges strengthened efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage - an acknowledgment of culture's essential role in advancing the broader sustainability agenda. Since the 2022 UNESCO Conference on Culture Policies and Sustainable Development – also known as MONDIACULT - was held in Mexico, global conversations about the relationship between culture and development have intensified. As Barcelona prepares to host the third edition of MONDIACULT in September, just two weeks after the ENCATC Congress, the ENCATC community is actively shaping the global cultural agenda.

ENCATC is a leading international network committed to advancing education in cultural management and policy, fostering inclusive learning environments grounded in dialogue, critical thinking, and diverse perspectives. The 2025 Congress will explore the vital role of **culture as the backbone of quality of life of individuals and communities** and its contribution to sustainable and regenerative futures for both people and the planet. The Congress will also identify both local and systemic solutions to challenges, and champion cultural policy, management, and education as foundational pillars for sustainable and regenerative futures. Set in Barcelona—a city renowned for its vibrant culture and educational innovation—the Congress offers fertile ground for exchange, experimentation, and vision-building. Bring your voice to the debate and help shape the future of cultural policy and management.

Congress Format

The ENCATC Congress 2025 will feature keynote lectures, panel discussions, academic paper presentations, project showcases, workshops, and networking events. Each format is designed to stimulate cross-sectoral dialogue and interdisciplinary collaboration. Participants will engage in thought-provoking exchanges that connect theory and practice in the field of cultural management and policy education.

As in previous editions, the 2025 ENCATC Congress will feature the presentation of two prestigious awards: the ENCATC Award for Outstanding Contribution, which honours transformational leadership in cultural institutions and ground-breaking initiatives in cultural management and policy research; and the ENCATC Research Award on Cultural Policy and Cultural Management, which recognizes exceptional doctoral research that advances knowledge in cultural policy, management, and education. The Congress will provide a distinctive forum for building international connections among educators and researchers, while facilitating critical dialogue on addressing contemporary educational challenges through innovative and future-oriented strategies.

The Congress will provide a platform for advancing ENCATC's contributions to the MONDIACULT dialogue. From May to July, the six ENCATC Working Groups will convene online, and in September, will hold in-person sessions during the Congress to finalize recommendations. Additionally, the ENCATC Think Tank Focus Groups will have their in-person annual meeting during the Congress.

Why Participate?

The Congress offers an unparalleled opportunity for professionals, researchers, educators, students, and policymakers to engage with cutting-edge ideas and innovative practices at the intersection of culture, management, policy, and education. Attendees will gain valuable insights, build meaningful collaborations, and contribute to shaping the future of cultural policy and management education and leadership.

Designed to balance academic rigor with practical relevance, the curated programme fosters intellectual exchange and professional development through structured sessions and open dialogue. With its global reach, the Congress fosters a unique ecosystem that bridges disciplines, sectors, and geographies – connecting established experts with emerging voices.

Whether you are leading a university programme, developing cultural policy, managing an arts organisation, training professionals or conducting research, this is your opportunity to join a vibrant international community committed to enhancing practice and shaping culture's evolving role in society.
