The 15th eSTEeM Annual Conference: Stepping Back and Stepping Up – 15 Years of eSTEeM

Conference dates: 29-30 April 2026, Walton Hall and via MS Teams

Call for abstracts guidelines

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The 15th eSTEeM Annual Conference invites the submission of abstracts for the following session types:

- Poster presentations
- Interactive oral presentations
- Workshops/demonstrations

Submissions relating to the following themes are invited:

- Continuation and completion
- Access, Participation and Success
- Assessment and feedback
- Student support
- Employability
- Innovations in STEM teaching and learning
- International collaborations in STEM teaching and learning
- Sustainability in the STEM curriculum
- Other (please specify)

The conference will be hybrid with attendance welcomed in person or online. However, we would like all presenters to attend and deliver their presentation in person. If this is not possible, please contact esteem@open.ac.uk to discuss your needs/requirements.

Key dates for your diary

Submission of abstracts

w/c 1 December 2025	Call for abstracts opens.
17.00 on 30 January 2026	Submission deadline for abstracts.
20 February 2026	Authors notified of outcome of abstract submissions.

Registration for conference

w/c 9 March 2026	Registration opens.
10 April 2026	Registration closes.
29-30 April 2026	The 15th eSTEeM Annual Conference: Stepping Back and Stepping Up – 15 Years of eSTEeM

Submissions of posters and presentations

10 April 2026	Deadline for submission of pre-recorded poster presentations and PowerPoint poster.
24 April 2026	Deadline for submission of presentations (e.g., PowerPoint) for interactive orals and workshops/demonstrations, if applicable.

Guidance on each session type

Poster presentations (Abstract 150 – 300 words)

As this year's conference will again be hybrid, we are inviting poster presenters to pre-record a voiceover to accompany their poster which should be a single PowerPoint slide suitable for viewing onscreen. You can be as creative/imaginative as you like, but the recording should be a maximum of 2 minutes. Recordings will be available to view prior to the conference allowing those delegates who are attending the conference online to watch poster presentations.

Posters will also be printed and displayed throughout the conference. A poster presentation session will take place for those delegates attending the conference in person.

For those in the early stages of their projects, posters should include a brief description of your project, what you're intending to do, how you are going to do it and what you're expecting to find/achieve/develop at the end of it. Alternatively, your poster can be an update on your progress so far or the outcomes of your project. Your poster may be accompanied by handouts.

All delegates will be invited to vote for the best poster presentation. The votes from in person delegates and those from online participants will be collated to determine the winning poster.

Interactive oral presentations (Abstract 250 – 500 words)

We anticipate that sessions will be 60 minutes in length consisting of three 20-minute interactive talks on a similar theme. We would like to build on the success of last year's conference and the very positive feedback that we received regarding the engaging and immersive nature of the sessions. Therefore, we would strongly encourage presenters to limit the number of PowerPoint slides used and to present their content within 5 minutes for their interactive oral presentations. This will then leave 15 minutes for immersive activities, questions, discussions and audience engagement. If there are other project teams that you would like to combine with for a whole session, then please indicate this in the abstract submission form.

These sessions will be chaired, but the choice is yours! Remember that it should be an immersive and engaging session for the audience. For example,

- A live demonstration of a student intervention you have designed.
- A discussion between project teams working on similar issues/themes incorporating a Q&A component from the audience.
- A quiz show designed to challenge and inform the participants.

As this conference is hybrid, please also remember to design your session accordingly for both in person and online participation.

If you are struggling to think of a different way to communicate your work, please submit your abstract and we will work with you to design a suitable session.

Workshops/demonstrations (Abstract 250 – 500 words)
Workshop or demonstration sessions are up to 1 hour. These sessions should provide participants with an opportunity to actively participate in practical activities. You may wish to allow time for debriefing with participants to discuss their experiences of the activity.

Abstracts should provide a brief description emphasising the hands-on elements of the activity/session.

As this conference is hybrid, please remember to design your session accordingly for both in person and online participation. Therefore, please ensure that you have enough project team members to engage with the online participants.

Conference delegates will be invited to vote for the most engaging and immersive session of each day.

Guidelines for abstract submissions

Please use the online [abstract submission form](#).

Your abstract should be an accurate summary of the planned presentation/session. All accepted abstracts will be published in the conference booklet.

The deadline for submissions is **17.00 Friday 30th January 2026.**

Further information

We will provide you with a poster template and arrange for the printing of your poster which will be displayed on poster boards and printed to A1 size. Recorded poster presentations will be made available via the [eSTEeM YouTube channel](#).

Interactive oral presentations will be in groups of 3 or 4. PC/laptop and projection facilities will be available.

Author(s) of abstracts for the workshops/demonstrations will be contacted to discuss their requirements.

Please note: Presentations could be scheduled on either day of the conference so presenters should keep both dates available until notified of whether their abstract has been accepted.

<u>Queries</u>

If you have any queries, please contact esteem@open.ac.uk.