



ICCGC-WFB 2026

Interfaith Coalition Conference for Global Citizens (ICCGC)
World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB)

ICCGC 2026

Global Spirituality and Higher Education in the Polycrisis: Cultivating Minds and Ethical Practice for Planetary Citizenship

18-21 August 2026

Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, Thailand

Zoom Webinar ID: **TBD**

Hosted by
Won Buddhism
Srinakharinwirot University
World Fellowship of Buddhists

Background

Contemporary global society is increasingly entering an era of polycrisis, a term recognized by international institutions such as the United Nations to describe the convergence of environmental, economic, social, technological, and geopolitical crises. These interconnected challenges do not occur in isolation; rather, they amplify and reinforce one another, placing unprecedented pressure on established institutions and demanding innovative forms of cooperation, ethical leadership, and collective responsibility. As highlighted by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in Our Common Agenda, “We are at a pivotal moment for collective action,” emphasizing the urgent need for integrated approaches that uphold human dignity, peace, and sustainable development.

Rapid advances in artificial intelligence and digital technologies are reshaping the global information environment, affecting how people communicate, access knowledge, engage in governance, and participate in public life. The UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence notes both the potential of AI for education,

innovation, and social development, and the associated risks, including algorithmic bias, online hate speech, misinformation, and the spread of deepfakes. These developments raise urgent questions about human dignity, ethical standards, accountability, and responsible participation in digital spaces, particularly in ways that cross borders and generations.

Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires cultivating digital global citizenship, a concept emphasized in the UN's Global Digital Compact as a framework for promoting inclusive, rights-based participation in digital spaces. Strengthening digital citizenship involves ethical literacy, critical thinking, and a shared commitment to human rights and social inclusion. Education, civil society, and international cooperation are essential to counter digital hostility, advance ethical norms, and ensure that technological progress supports democratic engagement, social cohesion, and public well-being.

In this context, higher education and spiritual traditions hold a unique role in shaping ethical awareness, reflective consciousness, and a sense of planetary responsibility. Universities and learning institutions provide spaces for moral reflection, interdisciplinary inquiry, and civic engagement, equipping individuals to act with empathy, integrity, and social responsibility. As underscored in the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development framework, such education enables learners to understand the interconnected systems shaping the world while cultivating the capacity to drive positive societal change.

The theme of this conference emphasizes the urgent need to cultivate minds and ethical practices for planetary citizenship, preparing humanity to navigate the polycrisis with collective responsibility, global solidarity, and respect for life on Earth. It calls upon educational institutions, civil society, and international actors to foster shared values and practical strategies that enable ethical action, sustainable decision-making, and the preservation of human dignity across generations and borders

Session Description

Dialogue among University Presidents

"Happy Workplace in Higher Education"

Description (TBC)

Dialogue for Peace with Keynote Speakers

"Can Spiritual Education Lead Us from Polycrisis to Peace?"

This dialogue brings together two keynote speakers and a high level religious leader to reflect on a central question of our time: whether spiritual education can guide humanity from an era of polycrisis toward a more peaceful and sustainable future. As interconnected global challenges continue to intensify, there is a growing recognition that lasting solutions require not only structural change but also a deeper transformation of human awareness and values.

Framed within the broader theme of Global Spirituality and Higher Education in the Polycrisis, the discussion will explore how spiritual traditions and higher education can contribute to cultivating ethical consciousness, compassion, and a sense of planetary responsibility. Drawing on the key themes of the conference, the session invites a holistic dialogue on how education and spirituality together might enable a meaningful transition from crisis to peace.

Panel Session 1: Global Crisis

"Religious and Civil Society Responses to the Polycrisis"

Contemporary global society is increasingly described as entering an era of polycrisis, where environmental, economic, geopolitical, technological, and social disruptions interact and reinforce one another. These interconnected crises challenge established institutions and demand innovative forms of cooperation, ethical leadership, and collective responsibility. In the face of such uncertainty, religious communities and civil society organizations have historically played vital roles in nurturing solidarity, moral reflection, and coordinated social action.

This session explores how religious traditions and civil society initiatives can contribute to addressing the complex challenges of the polycrisis. Participants will examine strategies for fostering global solidarity, promoting ethical collaboration, and advancing planetary responsibility, highlighting the unique contributions of faith-based and civic organizations in responding to global crises.

Panel Session 2: Ethics and Justice

“Ethics, Justice, and Civic Responsibility in the Age of Polycrisis”

The age of polycrisis has intensified social inequalities, political polarization, and conflicts within and across societies. Economic instability, geopolitical tensions, and rapid social transformations have deepened societal divisions, raising urgent questions about justice, moral responsibility, and the conditions necessary for peaceful coexistence. Ethical reflection and civic engagement have become central to addressing social fragmentation and advancing reconciliation.

This session examines how ethical frameworks, religious teachings, and civic initiatives can strengthen social responsibility and promote justice in contemporary society. Participants will explore approaches that foster inclusive social structures, enhance community resilience, and cultivate a shared sense of moral accountability in the face of complex global challenges.

Panel Session 3: Planetary Responsibility

“Climate Crisis, Ecological Responsibility, and the Economy of Life”

The global community faces escalating climate and environmental crises that threaten ecosystems, livelihoods, and long-term human well-being. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation demand a fundamental rethinking of humanity’s relationship with nature and prevailing economic practices. Increasingly, discussions on sustainability emphasize the need for an economy of life—an economic vision that prioritizes ecological balance, social well-being, and respect for all forms of life.

This session explores how ecological responsibility, ethical economic practices, and global cooperation can contribute to building a sustainable, life-centered future. Participants will examine strategies for fostering environmental stewardship, promoting ethical decision-making in economic and policy choices, and encouraging planetary solidarity to protect the Earth’s ecosystems and support human well-being.

Panel Session 4: Business, AI and Digital Ethics

“Business, Digital Ethics, and Global Digital Citizenship in the AI Era”

Rapid advances in artificial intelligence and digital technologies are reshaping the global information environment, transforming how people communicate, access knowledge, and engage in public life. As businesses increasingly develop and deploy these technologies, their influence on digital ecosystems has grown significantly. While these innovations create new opportunities for learning, connectivity, and economic growth, they also pose challenges such as online hate speech, misinformation, algorithmic bias, and deepfakes—raising critical questions about corporate responsibility, human dignity, and ethical standards in digital spaces.

This session will examine the ethical, civic, and business implications of AI-driven environments. Participants will discuss how businesses, education, civil society, religious communities, and international cooperation can foster global digital citizenship, promote responsible innovation, and strengthen ethical norms—ensuring that technological progress supports human dignity, trust, and inclusive digital communities.

Panel Session 5: Human Transformation

“Cultivating Ethical Awareness and Planetary Citizenship through Education”

In an era of polycrisis and rapid global transformation, education must move beyond the transmission of knowledge to cultivate ethical awareness, reflective consciousness, and a sense of planetary responsibility. Spiritual traditions emphasize inner cultivation, compassion, and moral reflection, while educational institutions provide frameworks to translate these values into concrete social practice.

This session examines how spirituality and education can work together to advance Planetary Citizenship Education. Participants will explore strategies for nurturing individuals capable of ethical action, peaceful coexistence, and ecological responsibility, equipping the next generation to uphold the shared future of humanity and the Earth. The session will also encourage dialogue across cultures and disciplines to deepen mutual understanding and shared values. It aims to highlight the importance of collaboration in building a more just, peaceful, and sustainable global society.

Global Citizenship Summit

“Towards ‘We the Peoples of the Earth’: Global Solidarity and Planetary Citizenship in the Age of Polycrisis”

In an era defined by interlinked environmental, social, technological, and geopolitical challenges, the Global Citizenship Summit serves as a concluding dialogue that brings together diverse actors—including representatives from international organizations, religious communities, civil society, academia, and youth leadership—to reflect on the key themes of the preceding sessions.

This summit emphasizes the necessity of collective responsibility and global solidarity in addressing the complex challenges of the polycrisis. Building on discussions of global crises (Session 1), ethics and justice (Session 2), planetary responsibility (Session 3), AI and digital ethics (Session 4), and human transformation through education (Session 5), the dialogue explores how multi-sectoral collaboration can foster planetary citizenship, strengthen ethical governance, and cultivate a shared commitment to human dignity, sustainability, and social cohesion.

Participants will consider concrete pathways for cross-sector and intergenerational cooperation, examining how international institutions, faith communities, educational initiatives, civil society movements, and youth leadership can contribute to building a more just, peaceful, and sustainable global future. The summit will highlight actionable strategies that translate ethical reflection into collective action, ensuring that humanity navigates the polycrisis with shared responsibility and a commitment to “We the Peoples of the Earth.”

Parallel Session for Youth

Description (TBC)

Parallel Session for Women

“Women’s Voices in a Polycrisis: Narrative, Spirituality, and the Ethics of Hope”

This women-led session explores the transformative power of women’s narratives within the broader theme of *Global Spirituality and Higher Education in the Polycrisis*. In a time of overlapping global crises, women’s voices and lived experiences offer essential perspectives for reimagining healing, justice, and a sustainable future. It examines how storytelling—through personal narratives, media, and collective memory—can challenge dominant discourses and foster resilience, solidarity, and social transformation.

In connection with higher education’s role in cultivating planetary citizenship, the session highlights how women’s perspectives nurture ethical leadership, critical consciousness, and a deeper sense of global responsibility. Through reflection and dialogue, participants will explore how narrative can serve as a powerful force for hope, connection, and meaningful change.

Program Agenda

Day 1: August 18

- 13:00-14:00 **Registration**
- 14:00-14:15 **Pre-event Performance (15 min)**
Thai Performance
- 14:15-15:40 **Opening Ceremony –**
Moment of Silence (2 min)
Opening Video (3 min)
Welcome Speech (5-7 min)
Opening Remarks (5 min each, total 10 min)
Congratulatory Address (5 min each, total 10 min)
Interfaith Prayer for Peace (20 min)
Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Won-Buddhism
Peace Message (10 min each, total 20 min)
- 14:00-14: **Cultural Performance for Peace (10-15 min)**
Group Photos
- 15:40-16:00 **Networking Break**
- 16:00-17:00 **University President Forum**
Topic: “Happy Workplace in Higher Education” -
Moderator:
Panelists:
- 17:00-19:00 **Welcome Reception**
Welcome Remarks
Dinner Cultural Performance -

Day 2: August 19

- 09:00-10:00 **Registration at the University**
- 10:00-11:30 **Opening Session**
Keynote Speech (15-20 min each, total 30-40 min)
Dialogue for Peace
Moderator:
Panelists
- 11:30-13:15 **Lunch (105 min)**
- 13:15-14:30 **Panel Session 1. Religions & Society**
Topic: “Religion and Civil Society Responses to Global Polycrisis”
Moderator:
Panelists:
- 14:30-14:45 **Networking Break**
- 14:45-16:00 **Panel Session 2. Ethics & Justice**
Topic: “Ethics, Justice, and Civic Responsibility in the Age of Polycrisis”
Moderator
Panelists
- 16:00-16:15 **Networking Break**
- 16:15-17:30 **Panel Session 3. Climate & Ecology**
Topic: “Climate Crisis, Ecological Responsibility, and the Economy of Life”
Moderator
Panelists:

17:30-19:00 **Networking Dinner**

Day 3: August 20

09:00-10:15 **Panel Session 4. Business, AI & Ethics**

Topic: “Business, Digital Ethics, and Global Digital Citizenship in the AI Era”

Moderator

Panelists:

10:15-10:30 **Networking Break**

10:30-11:45 **Panel Session 5. Human Transformation**

Topic: “Cultivating Ethical Awareness and Planetary Citizenship through Higher Education”

Moderator

Panelists

09:45-11:45 **Parallel Session for Youth-**

Youth Workshop

11:45-13:30 **Lunch**

13:30-15:00 **Youth SDGs Summit –**

Topic: “Youth Voice in Action: Spirituality, Education, and Sustainable Development” (TBD)

13:30-15:00 **Parallel Session for Women**

Topic: “The Power of Narrative: Changing Stories, Shaping a Hopeful Future”

Moderator:

Panelists

15:00-15:20 **Networking Break**

15:20-17:00 **Global Citizens Summit –**

Topic: “Towards ‘We the Peoples of the Earth’: Global Solidarity and Planetary Citizenship in the Age of Polycrisis”

Moderator:

Panelists

17:00-17:30 **Closing Session**

Reading of the ICCGC 2026 Declaration

Closing Remarks

17:30-19:30 **Gala Dinner**

Day 4: August 21

09:00-14:00 **Cultural Tour Program (Optional Program)**