

# 21st Century Popular Education in the Americas

Cultures, Traditions and Indigenous Wisdoms

**EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES FOR TRANSFORMING OUR PLANET**

February 25, 2008  
Universidad de Oriente  
Valladolid, Yucatán



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## CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

...And the people follow their path  
According to their sacred mission  
Like stars in the cosmos.  
In diversity is found their richness,  
Their harmony, their hope.  
(Mayáon)

The technological advances of the last twenty years have made our lives broader and more "international" than ever before. The foods we eat, the music we listen to, the news we read, and the people we meet on the street all provide evidence of a rich and fertile cultural interchange. Monolingual English-speaking teenagers in U.S. suburbs dance to reggaeton music sung in Spanish, while the notebooks and backpacks of schoolchildren in remote villages of rural Latin America are adorned with images of Spiderman and Barbie. The picture isn't all rosy, however; issues of immigration and national security underscore national boundaries while at the same time, cultural elements cross them with increasingly greater ease. Cuisine and movies are easily shared regardless of the traditions or indigenous cultures that originate them, but genuine intercultural communication is as difficult to achieve as it is vitally important. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must learn to create and sustain peaceful, economically viable, and mutually dependent systems. Therefore,

- Considering that humanity has always been composed of a diversity of people and cultures, and that wisdom and culture have been the fundamental pillars for identity and permanence;
- Being certain that only an education based on people's cultures, designed and applied by and with them will guarantee their full development and,
- Being convinced that this educational task is everybody's responsibility:

From Yucatan Mexico, the historic site of Maya civilization, we issue a call to the people of the Americas and the world at large to a conference that will bring together leaders and educators from public and private sectors and community-based organizations to engage in multiple dialogues about themes, tendencies and practices on the political economy of today's knowledge.

## Objectives

The conference brings together leaders and educators from among the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors from all corners of the Americas to address issues, trends, and practices in today's knowledge economy. The objectives of the congress are:

- Exchange best practices in liberatory/popular education across levels and settings
- Highlight the learning preferences of those grounded in oral tradition
- Address social issues around local and global intercultural communication
- Explore the linguistic dimensions of popular and intercultural education
- Focus on the value and practices of indigenous wisdoms in program development
- Seek educational approaches that are broadly applicable and responsive to local needs and conditions.

## Target audience

Educators, community leaders, business leaders, and administrators in a variety of public, private, and not-for-profit settings and areas of interest, including health, education, language/linguistics/indigenous languages and cultural studies and teaching, anthropology, community development, popular education, public radio/TV, lifelong learning/training, among others.

## Themes

The conference will identify and analyze issues, trends, and practices in the lifelong context of today's knowledge economy through the lens of popular education. Sub-themes, therefore, are broad and range from literacy instruction in non-formal education settings to HIV/AIDS education in community settings, to workforce training, to intercultural education, to social and linguistic issues at the university level, to program development that values local wisdom, to community development, to self-help initiatives design.

## Proposals

Presentation on conference themes may be any of the following: academic papers, performances, narratives, visual/multimedia presentations, project reports, etc. There will be two types of presentations: a) individual and b) panels/groups of 3-5 presenters; these may be given in Spanish, Maya, English, French, or Portuguese (simultaneous translations planned for these languages). Submissions should contain the following:

- a) Individual presentations
  - Title of the presentation
  - Presenter's name

- Institutional affiliation of presenter
- Telephone and email of presenter
- Abstract of the presentation (200 words maximum); any images included in the proposal should be sent in JPG or PDF format

b) Panel/Group presentations

- Title of the presentation
- Panel/Group coordinator's name
- Institutional affiliation of coordinator
- Telephone and e-mail of coordinator
- Name of all the participants
- Institutional affiliation of participants
- Abstract of the presentation (500 words maximum); any images included in the proposal should be sent in JPG or PDF format

Proposals should be sent via e-mail by **August 31, 2008** to:

**[ed.popular@universidadoriente.edu.mx](mailto:ed.popular@universidadoriente.edu.mx)**

People responsible for presentations accepted will be notified via e-mail starting **September 30, 2008**. There will also be a list of all accepted presentations on our web page starting October 1. For more information about the conference please visit our web page:

**[www.universidadoriente.edu.mx](http://www.universidadoriente.edu.mx)**