



# CALL FOR PAPERS

## Youth Work and Social Pedagogy Special Issue

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**For publication from Autumn 2025**

**Expressions of interest accepted until:** 31 December, 2024

**Deadline for draft papers:** 30 June, 2025

The *International Journal of Social Pedagogy* is inviting authors to publish academic and practice papers as part of a special issue offering contributions that can help develop greater understanding of the multi-faceted relationship between social pedagogy and youth work in creating the emancipation, empowerment and political rights of young people as espoused in the holistic and value-based approaches common to both fields.

### **Thematic context for this special issue:**

The relatively recent establishing of social pedagogy as a recognised professional body in the UK (see <https://sppa-uk.org/>) has largely been applied within the field of social work but is potentially applicable to aspects of youth work. This special issue seeks to interrogate, from an international perspective, what the benefits and difficulties might be with such an approach, particularly in view of tensions that have emerged around the nature of youth work and social pedagogy relationships with young people.

In the UK, the increasing language and practices of managerialism, customer and client services are claimed to limit the quality of relationships being established with young people (Davies 2016; Cameron 2013; Charfe & Gardner 2020). Following such claims, we have seen calls for more substantive ethical practices being asserted. Indeed, through the lens of social pedagogy, Cameron (2013; 14) states the need to ‘address the “serious and long-standing” deficiency of the English child welfare system to facilitate high quality relationships’

We situate this series at this juncture of both policy and increasing social concerns. We consider the current and continuing devolution of central control over youth work activities an opportunity to evaluate synergies between youth work and social pedagogy as a potent framework for social change.

Youth work has often encountered difficulties in having a common pedagogical conceptualization across the globe (Sercombe, 2010; Cooper, 2018). Social pedagogy has faced similar challenges in establishing a universally accepted understanding (Petrie, 2002). Both fields of practice have traditionally shared a values-based methodology that promotes a focus on positive relationships, civic engagement (participation), and non-formal education and learning to provide the foundations of effective social change for young people (Corney et al, 2023). Both fields additionally claim to promote equity, social justice and a ‘coming to voice’ for young people (hooks, 1989)

Yet, in order to effect social change and avoid appropriating marginalized voices, hooks (1989) argues, a ‘paradigm shift’ must occur, one that changes how socio-educationalists talk, how they listen, and how they hear.

We ask therefore, what might be required from social pedagogy and youth work to facilitate this shift to take place? What would be the benefits and disadvantages of such an alignment? As relationships and practices are being re-imagined in response to COVID-19, is there potential within practitioner training and education to rekindle the sort of social action that historically gave rise to interventions such as The Settlement Movement and civil rights campaigns which soon spread and became known internationally? Could a type of ‘hybrid’ model of social pedagogy and youth work, such as that suggested by Conroy & Williamson (2020), emerge to effect the kind of social change required to address the intergenerational unfairness that we see across the globe?

The *International Journal of Social Pedagogy (IJSP)* is a peer-reviewed, open-access diamond journal (meaning we do not charge authors for publishing with us and also grant readers free access to all journal articles), publishing articles on social pedagogy in the broadest sense. You can read about our journal vision in [this editorial](#).

## Submission to this special issue

Please send early expressions of interest to the IJSP Editorial Office ([editors@internationaljournalofsocialpedagogy.com](mailto:editors@internationaljournalofsocialpedagogy.com)) by 31/12/2024 in the form of an abstract of 300-500 words, up to six references, and a 50-word biographical statement.

Successful authors will be invited by 15/01/2025 to submit a **full draft for editorial review** by 30/06/2025 through the journals online submission system. Please consult the notes for authors on the journal’s webpage at <https://uclpress.co.uk/ijsp>.

For enquiries about your ideas please email the special issue editors at [editors@internationaljournalofsocialpedagogy.com](mailto:editors@internationaljournalofsocialpedagogy.com), and we will be happy to provide further guidance. The journal is keen to encourage new and existing writers and as such we can offer support in a variety of ways, e.g. for new writers, or for writers who are less confident about writing in English.

## References:

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