

Terms of Reference: Network of Researchers on Youth and Scouting Education

The TENT Collective (Thinkers, Educators, Navigators of Tomorrow)

I. Introduction

World Scouting seeks to strengthen its education and youth development work by establishing a Web of Knowledge. The Web of Knowledge will consist of four key pillars: (1) Network of researchers; (2) Articles database; (3) Think tank; and (4) Observatory of trends.

The Network of Researchers, as a core pillar of the Web of Knowledge, will bring together individuals who actively produce research, have published relevant work, or show a strong interest in applying research to Scouting and non-formal education.

The network aims to serve as a collaborative space for sharing findings, co-developing research, building evidence for policy, and improving educational practice in Scouting.

II. Structure and Coordination

This Network of Researchers consists of active researchers, scholars, and practitioners who produce or engage with research related to youth education and Scouting.

The network will be coordinated by the World Scout Bureau (WSB) staff with support from a team of volunteers responsible for overall coordination, communication, and support. The structure is designed to be lightweight and flexible, enabling regular contributions without unnecessary bureaucracy.

The Network Coordination Team will ensure coordination through:

- Organizing regular meetings or consultations
- Managing a shared digital workspace and resource database
- Coordinating the production of outputs and ensuring relevance to Scouting priorities
- Encouraging feedback loops between layers to guide future research direction
- Support the dissemination of the research products.

III. Objectives

The network will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Foster collaboration between academics, practitioners, and data specialists
- Support evidence-informed educational practice and policy in Scouting
- Build shared understanding and common research priorities
- Promote the use and application of research in non-formal education
- Contribute a repository of relevant research, tools, and findings (Article database)
- Inform particular pieces of work being developed in the context of the Strategy for Scouting and its implementation.

IV. Activities and deliverables

The network will conduct the following activities and deliverables:

- Share and co-create research and insights based on predetermined themes in coordination with the WSB
- Engage in collaborative projects or provide feedback on project deliverables within World Scouting
- Participate in quarterly meetings where members can share their latest findings or discuss emerging research areas.

The network will be flexible enough to operate as a full group, sub-teams, or other forms of collaboration, depending on the need.

V. Membership and eligibility

The Network of Researchers is intended to be an open, inclusive, and interdisciplinary platform. Its strength lies in the diversity of its members, who range from academic scholars and educational practitioners to data

analysts and institutional partners. This diverse membership is expected to provide varied perspectives on how Scouting and non-formal education contribute to youth development.

5.1 Eligibility criteria

The following profiles are eligible to become part of the Network of Researchers:

- **Active researchers and Academics:**
Individuals currently conducting or supervising research (e.g., doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers, university faculty, independent scholars) on topics related to youth development, non-formal education, Scouting, education policy, youth organisations, or related social sciences.
- **Published contributors:**
Individuals who have authored or co-authored articles, studies, case studies, books, or other publications—academic or practitioner-oriented—that explore youth education, Scouting, or non-formal learning methodologies.
- **Research-informed practitioners:**
Individuals working in or with Scouting (e.g. programme developers, training facilitators, educational method specialists, NSO staff/volunteers) who actively apply research findings or evidence-based approaches to their work and seek to engage in further evidence gathering or analysis.
- **Institutional representatives:**
Representatives from research institutions, universities, civil society, youth development organizations, or think tanks that have an existing or emerging interest in collaborating with World Scouting to advance the field of non-formal education.
- **Emerging researchers and students:**
Graduate or postgraduate students, interns, or early-career researchers who demonstrate a clear interest and potential to contribute meaningfully to the Network and are willing to collaborate with others in exploring Scouting-related topics.
- **Data and Evaluation Specialists:**
Individuals with experience in monitoring, evaluation, data analytics, or learning impact assessment, particularly as they relate to youth programmes, education outcomes, or organisational learning.

5.2 Membership Principles

All members are expected to:

- Uphold the principles of collaboration, transparency, mutual respect, and the World Scouting Safe from Harm principles
- Contribute constructively to discussions, projects, or shared outputs
- Respect the confidentiality of any unpublished or sensitive material
- Represent themselves (not their institutions) unless otherwise agreed
- Acknowledge the voluntary nature of the Network and communicate availability.

5.3 Diversity and Inclusion

WOSM is committed to ensuring that the Network reflects:

- Geographical diversity, with representation from all Regions
- Disciplinary diversity, encouraging perspectives from education, psychology, sociology, youth work, or policy
- Gender and generational diversity, including youth researchers and underrepresented voices

Efforts will be made to ensure the Network is not dominated by any single geographic, institutional, or disciplinary background.

5.4 Membership Process

The process for joining the Network will include:

- Identifying current contributors from WOSM's own pool of volunteers and existing research collaborators (by 15 May 2025)
- Open call for applicants:
- Inviting new expressions of interest from researchers and institutions around the world (by 13 June 2025)
- Selection of a Network Coordination Team: A smaller working group will be formed to test the model, structure collaboration, and define future directions (by 1 August 2025)

WSB staff will review expressions of interest and ensure a balanced and purpose-aligned composition for the pilot group before expanding the Network further.

5.5 Appointment

All network members will be appointed for a fixed term not exceeding three years or until the end of the Triennium 2024-2027, whichever comes first. The membership in the network can be renewed.

VI. Next steps and timeline

15 May 2025: Map researchers within the Our Future volunteers' pool

13 June 2025: Launch open call for applicants

15 July 2025: Deadline to submit applications

1 August 2025: Launch a pilot group or working group with regular online meetings

30 September 2025: Define common research priorities and sub-teams aligned with World Scouting needs

Ongoing: Provide basic coordination support and quarterly meetings for updates and exchange