



**A statement for consideration by the EECERA Electoral College  
for election to the Board of Trustees  
Julia Formosinho, University of Minho, Catholic University of Portugal and  
Childhood Association**

Proposer: Ioanna Palaiologou, University College London Institute of Education, UK  
Secunder: Alma Fleet, Macquarie University, Australia

**My professional career in Early Childhood Education**

I entered the Early Childhood Education (ECE) field in 1988 having initially studied children's sociomoral civic development. In the initial years of my work in ECE I developed a process for the supervision for early childhood student teachers which began my enduring commitment to the professional development of their supervisors. This led me to the question of how to sustain a type of professional development which had visible impact on the ways young children learn. Since then this has been the central concern of my teaching, research, intervention, publication, activities.

I obtained a Ph. Degree at the Institute of Childhood Studies of the University of Minho, Braga, Portugal, having researched the professional development of a group of early childhood teachers. I am currently retired professor. I am also co-founder of Childhood Association, and director of its research centre.

Childhood Association promotes a socio-cultural-constructivist approach to the education of children and teachers, intercultural understanding and advocacy of children's rights in early childhood settings. In this context I developed, in collaboration with Joao Formosinho and other colleagues, an approach for childhood education (*Pedagogy-in-Participation*) as well as a connected approach to professional development (*Participatory Context Based Professional Development*) and praxeological research as the study of transformation.

Since 1996, I have been the editor of a series for the leading educational publishing house in Portugal and African Portuguese speaking countries - Porto Editora - called *Childhood Series* with 22 titles published. From 2010 to 2013 I coordinated a national project, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, on the development of quality in early childhood education settings emphasizing participatory assessment and evaluation through a deep dialogue with Chris Pascal and Tony Bertram.

## **International collaboration**

I have had a long-standing collaboration with Spanish universities and professional associations, namely with the University of Santiago de Compostela. I am a member of ILADEI (a Latin American network for childhood education) and its Journal.

I have also a large interchange with Brazilian universities (São Paulo, Ceará, Rio Grande do Sul) that started with the Faculty of Education of the University of São Paulo. I have co-coordinated four books in Brazil, written chapters in several books and published in Brazilian research journals. The last one is the translation of an updated version of the first book on EECERA book series.

I have had also a long collaboration with the United Kingdom mainly with *Pen Green Research, Development & Training Base & Leadership Centre* (Corby, Northamptonshire) and the *Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC)* in the St Thomas Children's Centre (Birmingham). I have been consultant for the evaluation of the *Early Excellence Centres Evaluation Project* (2000-2003) and international evaluator (with João Formosinho) for the National College for School Leadership and Pen Green center of the *National Professional Qualification for Integrated Centre Leadership (NPQICL)* - 2004-07. I also participated in the International Integration Project *Joining forces – a cross national study of Integrated Early Childhood Education and Care Centres in five countries*, under a grant for the British Council and the DfE - 2001-2003.

The broader aim of all these academic and professional projects has been the promotion of participatory education and intercultural understanding and the development of connected research.

## **My initial contacts with EECERA**

I have been an active participant in EECERA conferences since the early nineties and it became obvious to me from that the EECERA Project was fulfilling a highly needed space at the level of early year's research and its connection to practice and policy development. My first contribution was to disseminate EECERA initiatives and products in countries where I have research connections.

## **Conference in Lisbon in 1996**

My attendance at annual EECERA conferences allowed me to know colleagues that share dreams for quality early childhood services as an indispensable answer to children's rights, with colleagues that think that the impact of services in the fight against poverty requires processes of pedagogical transformation and political engagement.

These sharing processes brought about the possibility of an EECERA conference in Lisbon in 1996 and I was honoured to be invited to be the chair. The conference was run by a partnership between my university (University of Minho at Braga), the Childhood Association and the Lisbon Teacher Education College. I have very good memories of that conference where the core theme of childhood pedagogy – relationships and interactions – was highly debated. It was in the Lisbon conference that the pre-conference workgroups began and were the basis to develop the concept of SIG Groups. It is acknowledged that this conference had a great impact on policy development in Portugal.

## **Participation in the Board of Trustees**

In 1997 the fast growing democratic process of EECERA, conducted mainly by Chris Pascal, Tony Bertram, Christos Frangos, Maelis Lohmander and Ferre Laevers, brought to the table the need for a formal governing board for EECERA. It was then through their initiative that the EECERA Board of Trustees was created.

I have contributed actively by joining the board meetings, the scientific committee of several conferences, by presenting the Association in various countries, in different universities and NGO's. I also contributed with several papers to the EECERA Journal.

I am currently a member of the Board of Trustees, of the Editorial Board of the Journal and the EECERA Editorial Panel.

#### **Coordinator of the SIG Groups from 2000-2004**

From 2000 onwards, I was the coordinator of the SIG Groups, my role being one of motivating members for academic networks and listening to motivated participants and, in connection with the Board, facilitating SIG development on themes such as leadership, professionalism, diversity, children's perspectives, integration of services. Later, in 2004, this role was taken on by Tony Bertram and later by Jóhanna Einarsdóttir.

#### **Coordinator of the Special Issues**

I am the Coordinator of Special Issues of EECERA Journal. The 15 Special Issues which have been published have been highly successful and have had a significant contribution for the metrics and impact of the Journal. There are currently five special issues in preparation.

This work requires me to interact with SIG groups and research teams to encourage and support them towards publication, to support the guest editors of each special edition and ensuring that production requirements are met, and deadlines are fully complied with. This work is intensive and very involving but seeing EECERA authors succeed in getting their work into print gives me enormous satisfaction. It also secures a key aim of the Association which aspires to support the development of high quality scholarship in early childhood.

#### **EECERA book series**

Routledge invited EECERA to launch a book series called *Towards an Ethical Praxis in Early Childhood*. The first book is edited by me and Chris Pascal with the title *Assessment and evaluation for transformation in Early Childhood* and its updated translation was launched in Brazil last year with great success.

In my capacity of special issues coordinator, I am a member of the Editorial Board for the book series.

#### **Future work for EECERA**

I have worked consistently for EECERA and feel I have made a significant contribution to the successful development of the Association. If elected for a further term of office I would like to deepen this on-going work, with a key focus on:

- advocacy for children, families and teachers' rights to participatory quality education, promoting a complex understanding of the connectivity of these three dimensions to fulfil children's and adults' rights;
- development of academic and professional studies and publications in the needed area of the not to three years;
- development and publication of praxiological research as a mean to innovation and transformation;
- the development and publication of EECERA code of ethics (already translated in Brazil by Monica Pinazza) deserves that the sub-committee will analyse the feedback received to ameliorate it.

I believe that I am a trustee who understands the Association's history, achievements, ethos and ethics and who can contribute to processes of scholarship, advocacy, intercultural understanding, children's play and learning and professionals' development.

18 July 2019  
Julia Formosinho