

Swiss Society for Early Childhood Research – 7th Annual Meeting 2026

«Growing Up in Challenging Contexts»

Dear Members and Friends of the Swiss Society for Early Childhood Research,

We invite submissions for the 7th Annual Meeting of the Swiss Society for Early Childhood Research (SSECR), an **interdisciplinary conference** that brings together scientists from various disciplines in early childhood research and professionals in the field. Authors are kindly invited to submit their proposals for symposia, workshops, or posters. The language for presentations and posters will be English.

This year's meeting, titled «**Growing Up in Challenging Contexts**», will take place on **2nd and 3rd February, 2026** in **Fribourg**. The conference will be **organised** by the **University of Fribourg**.

From both a global and local perspectives, children's upbringing is characterised by multiple challenges, crises and vulnerabilities. Such challenging contexts always arise against specific socio-political, economic, ecological, social, psychological, and/or medical backgrounds. These contexts hold different meanings for individuals, groups, specific milieus, entire societies or the world as a whole, such as the climate crisis, armed conflicts or massive inequalities. How children, their families, early childhood professionals, and researchers experience, perceive and deal with these challenging contexts is at the centre of this year's annual meeting. Questions such as «What conditions contribute to the vulnerability of children?» or «How can (multiple) burdens on families be alleviated socially, politically, psychologically and economically?» will be discussed taking an interdisciplinary and interprofessional perspective. Besides fostering scientific exchange, the aim of the conference is also to convey insights from research into everyday practice. Therefore, researchers, scholars, students, professionals, and policy makers from all areas of early childhood are particularly invited.

We are delighted to announce two internationally renowned and interdisciplinary researchers as **keynote speakers** for the conference, who will share some aspects of their broad research on children's subjective well-being, inequalities, health risks, poverty, racism, discrimination, and global social justice.

[Prof. Dr. Shazly Savahl](#) | Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Utrecht University, Netherlands | University of the Western Cape, South Africa

[Dr. Stephanie Simon](#) | Institute for Social Pedagogy, Adult Education and Pedagogy in Early Childhood, Dortmund University, Germany

We are pleased that our partner [Alliance Enfance](#) will once again host a session on knowledge transfer between science, practice, and policy.

We would like to invite you to [submit your contributions](#). Detailed information on the speakers and guidelines for abstract submission can be found on our [website](#) or on [Conftool](#).

PRACTICALITIES

Abstract submission deadline: **15th September, 2025**
Acceptance notification: **31st October, 2025**
Registration for the meeting: **from the 1st November, 2025**

Date and Venue

Monday and Tuesday | 2nd and 3rd February, 2026
University of Fribourg | Location: Pérolles PER21
Bd de Pérolles 90 | 1700 Fribourg

Who can submit an abstract?

We invite abstract submissions relating to any aspect or discipline of early childhood research, such as social sciences, education, psychology, healthcare/medicine, and migration studies. Alongside established researchers, we welcome attendance and submissions from early career researchers who wish to engage with other researchers in a welcoming and friendly atmosphere.

Types of presentations

Poster presentations are interactive and open, allowing researchers to visualise their work and providing opportunities for interaction and discussion. Poster sessions are suitable for both early-stage and advanced research.

A symposium involves a panel of speakers presenting in-depth, state-of-the-art research, including the application of new knowledge to practical examples. For symposia, we encourage an interdisciplinary team of presenters. The duration of a symposium is 90 minutes, including 30 minutes for discussion.

This year, we also welcome submissions of workshops. A workshop is an interactive exchange in which the participants engage with a specific topic. The focus is on practical relevance and interactivity; therefore, good planning and structure are important. The duration of a workshop is 90 minutes.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that two Special Interest Group (SIGs) are to be constituted within the framework of the conference.

- One SIG will focus on «Research with families in vulnerable situations». If you are interested, please contact Veronika Magyar-Haas, Professor of Education Sciences with a focus on childhood and youth at the University of Fribourg and member of the SSECR board: veronika.magyar-haas@unifr.ch
- The other SIG will be centered on «Digital Media». If you are interested, please contact Eva Unternaehrer, Senior Researcher at the Child- and Adolescent Research Department of the Psychiatric University Hospitals Basel and member of the SSECR board: eva.unternaehrer@unibas.ch

Abstract details

- Abstracts should not exceed 250 words.
- Abstract title, authors' names, and affiliation are **not** included in the word count.

Submission guidelines

- Language: English
- Title: Each word should begin with a capital letter except transition words. Abbreviations or accented letters should not be used
- Keywords: 3–5 relevant keywords should be provided
- The abstract must include: Abstract title, abstract authors (First name, Last name, Affiliation, State, and/or Country). The details of the presenting author should match the conference registration name. The abstract body should not include tables and attachments, but references are allowed. Abstract formats for poster presentations and symposia must include: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion. Abstract format for workshops must include: Background, Workshop Methods, and Goals.
- Please point out in the abstracts why the contribution could also be relevant for other disciplines.
- When submitting an abstract, the author grants the organisers the right to publish the submission electronically or in printed form.

The same person may serve as presenting author on up to two abstracts. The Scientific Committee of the Conference will review and select the abstracts to be presented.

All presenters (including all speakers considered for a symposium) must register for the conference and pay the respective fees.