

CALL FOR PROPOSALS | Special Issue (2026)

Educational leadership of, for, with, and through academic development

The challenges that higher education has faced in recent decades affect the complexity of the leadership required within university organizations, especially concerning the leadership of educational development (Bolander Laksov, 2019). It is not uncommon that academic development/faculty development/educational development centers engage in activities and projects aiming to support the development of educational leadership (e.g. Crone et al., 2023; Serbati et al., 2024). Educational leadership tends to rotate over time (McGrath et al., 2019), and can be enacted by many different roles--both formal, such as heads of departments, middle managers, professors, deans and academics in senior leadership positions--and informal, such as collegial leaders, program leaders, and academic developers. Recent research points towards the lack of a clear nomenclature as well as research on the area of leadership with an impact on academic development (Fields, Kenny & Mueller, 2019).

This special issue invites research, theory, and reflection on leadership of, for, with, and through academic development. Contributions could be conceptual and critical work about definitional issues or include analyses of how academic development is led from different perspectives and the meanings and outcomes of diverse approaches. Contributions could also empirically explore how different institutional leadership practices enable academic development or how collaborations between academic developers and formal or informal leaders enact leadership. Narratives from academic developers' perspectives on leadership and empirical case studies where leadership significantly impacted (positively or negatively) teaching and learning are also welcome. Examples of contributions could include analysis of empirical qualitative or quantitative studies, discussing how leadership may be evidenced and documented, review studies, as well as analyses of policy work and strategy documents, and where there may be a longitudinal perspective.

Contributions should add value by linking to theoretical perspectives enabling a deeper understanding of how leadership in academia may affect academic development, or how academic development impacts leadership. Emphasis in the papers should link to theoretical frameworks that deepen our understanding of academic leadership, specifically linking to academic development.

This is a call for proposals for an *International Journal for Academic Development* (IJAD) Special Issue on 'Leadership of, for, with, and through academic development,' due for publication in 2026. The extended timeline is intended to give authors opportunity to not only reflect on previous initiatives, but also to design and execute new studies into academic development work on how leadership contributes to academic development while still having time to go through IJAD's regular review process for possible later publication.

At this stage, we are inviting proposals of up to 500 words, outlining the academic development activity under scrutiny, the purpose of the study, and the research approach to be taken. Members of the editorial team will provide brief feedback as an indication of the extent to which your proposed study may fit the parameters of the

Special Issue. Proposals that might be considered outside those parameters may still be appropriate for a regular issue of *IJAD*.

Authors are welcome to submit full manuscripts without going through the proposal process. ALL manuscripts will go through *IJAD*'s review process as normal once they are submitted.

The **editorial team** for this special issue is Professor Klara Bolander Laksov, Stockholm University, Sweden; Associate Professor Cormac McGrath, Stockholm University, Sweden; and Associate Professor Anna Serbati, University of Trento, Italy.

You may submit a full-length scholarly article (up to 6000 words), a reflection on practice (1500 words), a reflection on research (1500 words), a review article (9000 words) or a book review (1500 words). More details about paper types are on the *IJAD* website. We require full manuscripts to be submitted by 1 May 2025 in order to be reviewed and revised for publication in 2026. Ideas for papers, or questions on the topic, or queries about what kinds of submissions might be appropriate can be emailed to the editors for feedback at any point before this.

All manuscripts will go through *IJAD*'s double-blind review process as normal once they are submitted. As with regular *IJAD* articles, we have no prescribed methodologies and invite you to find creative ways to write about these themes.

Proposals due **30 November 2024** | Manuscripts due **1 May 2025** | Anticipated publication **June 2026**

Submitted papers should not have been previously published nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere. A guide for authors, Word template, and other relevant information can be found on *IJAD*'s homepage: www.tandfonline.com/ijad.

Manuscripts must be submitted online via *IJAD*'s ScholarOne site:
<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ijad>

For inquiries about this Special Issue, please contact [Klara Bolander Laksov](#)

References:

Bolander Laksov, K. (2019). Lessons learned: Towards a framework for integration of theory and practice in academic development. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 24(4), 369-380.

Crone, V., Prins, F., Lutz, C., Meijerman, I., Schutjens, V., van der Smagt, M., ... & Kluijtmans, M. (2023). Strengthening educational leadership through a professional development programme in conjunction with a teaching-focused full professor career track: reflections of participants. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 1-13.

Fields, J., Kenny, N. A., & Mueller, R. A. (2019). Conceptualizing educational leadership in an academic development program. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 24(3), 218-231.

McGrath, C., Roxå, T., & Bolander Laksov, K. (2019). Change in a culture of collegiality and consensus-seeking: A double-edged sword. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 38(5), 1001-1014.

Serbati, A., Agostini, D., Maniero, S., Picasso, F., Venuti, P., & Felisatti, E. (2024). Educational Leadership for Academic Development: Practices and Reflections at University of Trento. *INTED PROCEEDINGS*, 2212-2217.