

ESRC Centre for Global Higher Education (CGHE) Conference

“Shaping student funding worldwide: insights from research and policy”

Roundtable – 16:30-18:00 on 3 April 2025, Kellogg College Hub

Building on research led by Professor Claire Callender and Dr Ariane de Gayardon in its previous phase of work, CGHE has established an International Student Funding Network. The network brings together a global community of researchers from wide-ranging disciplines and at different stages of their careers to engage with the complex issues involved in student funding. Its activities are focused on debating ideas, sharing research and developing new research agendas and partnerships, and also influencing policymaking by deploying research to shape how student funding systems develop.

[Members](#) of the network have been meeting monthly since October, enabling presentation on and discussion of student funding concepts and discourses globally, data and methods for cross-country comparison of student funding, how student funding policies are developed in different national settings and the capabilities needed for future research. This has been informed by case studies on Chile, Hungary, South Africa, UK and USA, as well as international insights from the OECD and European Commission.

In the first part of this session on day 1 of the 2025 CGHE Conference, the network’s co-ordinators will share its initial findings based around three questions arising from its work:

- What are the dimensions of student funding systems - extending across students, funding, courses and institutions - that need to be captured to understand the character and effects of student funding systems, and how are researchers worldwide addressing this? (**Professor Claire Callender**, University College London, and **Dr Ariane de Gayardon**, University of Twente)
- How are researchers and research findings deployed within the development, implementation and evaluation of student funding policies worldwide, and what capabilities are needed for impactful future research? (**Professor Thandi Lewin**, University of Johannesburg)
- What patterns have researchers identified within student funding developments worldwide during the last five years and what changes are they anticipating by 2030? (**Professor Chris Millward**, University of Birmingham)

In the second part of the session, Dr James Robson, Director of the Centre for Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE) at the University of Oxford, will chair a roundtable, within which two public officials – **Jo Johnson** (Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation in England from 2015 to 2019) and **Victor Ollerana Calderon** (Undersecretary of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Chile) – who have been responsible for student funding policy will respond to the findings and debate their implications with conference participants.