

Invitation to the NeHle University Learning Workshop 2026: “First Visit, Many Questions: How Engaging Spaces Can Transform Teaching and Learning”

Hosted by Universidad de Las Américas (UDLA) & Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC) Santiago, Chile | March 17, 18 & 19, 2026

1. Welcome & Introduction

We are delighted to invite you to the 2026 NeHle University Learning Workshop in Santiago, Chile: “First Visit, Many Questions: How Engaging Spaces Can Transform Teaching and Learning”. Hosted jointly by the Universidad de Las Américas (UDLA) and the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC), this three-day event marks the first visit of the NeHle network to our country. We look forward to welcoming you and your valuable **contributions** to explore how we can collectively transform teaching and learning through the power of engaging spaces.

Our goal is to create a space for dialogue between the rich tradition of *Lernwerkstätten* and the evolving educational landscape in Chile. This is an invitation to share, connect, and reflect with us. To ensure an inclusive exchange, the workshop will be conducted in **English, Spanish, and German**, with language support available. But why is this conversation so vital, especially now and in our region? The following background provides the foundation for our shared inquiry.

2. Abstract

Brüning (2017) states that there is limited research on the impact of Teaching-Learning Laboratories. In our case, we will refer to them as Engaging Spaces for Teaching and Learning (ESTL). In Chile, the situation is even less favorable, as in many places there are not even specialized spaces where learning and research can be carried out simultaneously on teaching and learning processes or practice in initial teacher training. Furthermore, in some institutions, there are underutilized, abandoned, or misappropriated spaces that have ended up being used for other purposes—troubling trends considering the profound significance of these educational environments. Understanding that interactions in a laboratory extend far beyond mere disciplinary learning, as Kihm (2023) emphasizes, these spaces foster complex social dynamics where education participants interact within frameworks shaped by spatial arrangements, temporal dimensions, available resources, and broader sociocultural contexts. The neglect of such valuable environments is particularly concerning since ESTLs contribute significantly to developing competencies that transcend traditional pedagogical boundaries—enabling students in training to not only conceive, organize, adjust, and structure learning environments more effectively, but also to accompany, observe, analyze, and reflect deeply on inclusive and socially responsive learning processes (Wedekind, 2023).

3. References

Brüning, A.-K. (2017). Lehr-Lern-Labore in der Lehramtsausbildung – Definition, Profilbildung und Effekte für Studierende. In U. Kortenkamp & A. Kuzle (Hrsg.), *Beiträge zum Mathematikunterricht 2017*. WTM-Verlag.

Kihm, P. (2023). Tiefenstrukturen von Interaktions und Kommunikationsprozessen in Hochschullernwerkstätten. In P. Kihm, M. Kelkel & M. Peschel (Eds), *Interaktionen und Kommunikationen in Hochschullernwerkstätten. Theorien, Praktiken, Utopien*. Verlag Julius Klinkhardt, pp. 25-45.

Wedekind, H. (2023). Hochschullernwerkstätten – Verortung in hochschulpädagogischen Exkursen. In P. Kihm, M. Kelkel & M. Peschel (Eds), *Interaktionen und Kommunikationen in Hochschullernwerkstätten. Theorien, Praktiken, Utopien*. Verlag Julius Klinkhardt, pp. 305-325.

4. Call for Contributions

To foster a truly participative and dynamic workshop, we invite you to share your work with us. We are especially interested in research, projects, or practical experiences related to Engaging Spaces for Teaching and Learning (ESTL), **particularly within university-level mathematics and other sciences, as well as in the initial training of future teachers for these same disciplines**. We encourage you to submit a proposal.

We are seeking practice-oriented contributions that spark dialogue and connect diverse perspectives. Your proposal should ideally engage with one or more of the following questions that will guide our collaborative exploration:

- How does the autonomous and exploratory approach of ESTLs adapt to an educational culture that has historically been more structured and direct?
- What elements of our university culture could facilitate or hinder the implementation of an ESTL?
- What role could ESTLs play in promoting a culture of innovation and experimentation in Chilean higher education?
- How do ESTLs serve as a bridge to reduce the gaps between theory and teaching practice?
- What transformations would be necessary in initial teacher training to promote autonomous practices in ESTLs?

Contribution Formats We welcome proposals for two types of presentation:

- **Impulse Presentation:** A 15-minute presentation followed by a 15-minute discussion, designed to introduce a key idea and generate conversation.
- **In-depth Talk:** A 30-minute presentation for a more detailed exploration of a topic.

Submission Guidelines

- **Abstract:** Please submit a 500-word abstract in English, German, or Spanish. Your abstract should clearly state how your contribution relates to our guiding questions and, crucially, how your work in your own institutional context drives the dialogue on these topics forward.
- **Submission Deadline:** November 15, 2025
- **Notification of Acceptance:** no later than November 30, 2025
- **Submission Link:** <https://forms.gle/KnfZMTSDwM9y79MF6>

Selected contributions will be invited for publication in a post-workshop proceedings book, which will be published in both English and Spanish. Further details on the publication process will be sent to the authors of accepted proposals. The proceedings will be coordinated and reviewed by Carlos Rojas, Pamela Reyes, and Pascal Kihm.

5. A Glimpse into Our Program

We have designed a diverse program that combines presentations, dialogues, and visits to innovative spaces across two university campuses to explore these questions.

- **Day 1 (at Universidad de Las Américas): Setting the Context.** We will begin by exploring the current state of teaching and learning in Chile. The day will feature presentations, dialogues with faculty, and an exploration of the campus to ground our conversations.
- **Day 2 (at Pontificia Universidad Católica): Exploring Educational Innovation.** We will visit pioneering centers like the **UC Innovation Center** and the **EduLab**. The focus will be on environments designed for educational innovation, collaborative work, and active learning methodologies.
- **Day 3 (at Pontificia Universidad Católica): Technology, Reflection & Applied Science.** Our final day will delve into the role of technology and interdisciplinarity. We will visit unique spaces like an immersive engineering museum, the **MediaLab**, and the **VirtuaLab**, concluding with a meeting with the Center for Teaching Development.

7. Participation & Registration

- **Participation Fee: None.** Thanks to the support of our host institutions, there is **no fee** to participate in this workshop. This includes access to all sessions, materials, coffee breaks, and lunches.

8. Travel & Accommodation

Please note that all participants are responsible for arranging and funding their own travel and accommodation in Santiago. We will provide a list of recommended hotels to registered participants.

9. Contact & Organizers

For specific questions about the workshop program, please contact the organizers. For general or institutional inquiries, please use the official workshop contact.

Workshop Organizers

- **Pamela Reyes**, Universidad de Las Américas (UDLA)
 - preyess@udla.cl
- **Carlos Rojas**, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC)
 - carojasb@uc.cl

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