global engagement
Letter from the Associate Dean of Global Engagement

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a set of 17 ambitious Sustainable Development Goals for the year 2030. Included among the goals is SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Education is directly referenced in several other SDGs, including health and well-being (SDG 3), gender equality (SDG 5) and climate change mitigation (SDG 13).

Indeed, education is essential for achieving the broader sustainability goals. Successfully addressing the challenges posed by inequality, pandemics, climate crisis and mass migration is going to require humans to be able to learn quickly and well, collaborate across various divides and, in general, act with a great depth of knowledge, wisdom and empathy.

So what does it mean for a college of education? How should we think and act globally? For ASU’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, it means operating on three broad fronts.

First, in alignment with our college’s mission to create knowledge and mobilize people, we are developing collaborative academic networks across geographic, cultural and disciplinary boundaries to facilitate knowledge exchange and innovation.

Second, our faculty, students and staff are working with colleagues internationally to explore how to improve educational access, equity and quality through context- and culture-specific education policies and practices.

Third, we are taking a leadership role in global efforts to redesign the education workforce in order to generate meaningful and more equitable learning outcomes for all. Finally, in conjunction with all our work, we engage in continuous and provocative global conversations about what kind of education is necessary for more sustainable and ecologically just futures.

As you explore our work, we hope you will join these conversations, engage these networks and work to transform education on a global scale and in our local communities.

Education is essential for achieving the broader sustainability goals. Successfully addressing the challenges posed by inequality, pandemics, climate crisis and mass migration is going to require humans to be able to learn quickly and well.”
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University

MLFTC, one of the world’s best colleges of education, is part of ASU, the world’s most innovative university
Innovation powers our success

Arizona State University is a public research university with four campuses and extensive online degree offerings. Dedicated to accessibility and academic excellence, ASU is also ranked #1 in the U.S. for innovation by U.S. News & World Report.

ASU’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College is one of the few colleges of education that excels at both teacher preparation and world-class scholarly research, earning ASU the No. 17 place for education degrees in the Academic Ranking of World Universities. In fall 2020, more than 7,000 students were enrolled in the college’s education degree programs. MLFTC is the only college of education in the nation ranked in the U.S. News & World Report top 15 for both on-campus and online graduate education degrees. For the fiscal years 2019 and 2020, ASU’s expenditures on education research averaged $74.7 million per year, the most of any U.S. university, according to the U.S. News & World Report 2022 survey of graduate colleges of education.

#1
in the U.S. for innovation
ASU ahead of Stanford and MIT
#17
Academic Ranking of World Universities — Education
7,000
Students enrolled in MLFTC education degree programs
Top 15
For both on-campus and online graduate education degrees, according to U.S. News & World Report
$74.7m
Average ASU education research expenditures in 2019 and ’20, the most of any U.S. university
Our global engagement

MLFTC engages with people, institutions and countries around the world to address issues of educational quality and equity.

Through a variety of initiatives, MLFTC strives to develop and sustain collaborative networks across geographic, cultural and disciplinary boundaries.

The college works in partnership with a growing list of nations, education institutions and NGOs to conduct education research, advance education scholarship and influence policies that improve education.
Education with a global focus

Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College is working to internationalize its curriculum to promote global and intercultural learning on campus, as well as in local and global communities. MLFTC designs international experiences that reflect the needs and aspirations of our academic and professional community through meaningful program integration across academic curricula. The college supports student and faculty mobility through MLFTC study abroad programs and student and faculty engagement in international initiatives.

Master of Education in Global Education
MLFTC’s global education master’s degree focuses on higher education studies in international education. This graduate degree engages social science methodologies and approaches within an innovative, interdisciplinary framework. Students learn to bridge theory and practice through real-world challenges in international educational settings and tackle these issues through individual and collaborative projects within and across local and regional contexts.

Master of Arts in Education — China
In this Mandarin-language program, students can earn a master’s degree in education completely online in as few as 16 months. They’ll gain a broad perspective of current educational practices and challenges, along with a deeper understanding of essential educator skills, such as effective communication, collaboration, leadership, advocacy and innovation. Students in the Mandarin-language program take coursework in two high-demand focal areas: early childhood education and global education. MLFTC also offers the program in English, which features additional focal areas like advanced analytics, educating multilingual learners, learning design and technologies and more.

Doctor of Education in Leadership and Innovation — Guyana
This program began in an effort to meet the needs of University of Guyana, in Georgetown, the country’s capital. In partnership with MLFTC faculty and through this online program, the University of Guyana is training, educating and building a deeper intellectual community. The first cohort is made up of 18 university faculty and staff members, all of whom have MLFTC mentors. Students in the program are able to pursue a range of research interests, including self-regulating student teachers, student employability, assessments and information literacy.

View all MLFTC degree programs
Program spotlights

MLFTC initiatives and partnerships lead to context-and culture-specific innovations that advance quality, inclusive education. The college is taking a leadership role in thinking about how to redesign the global education workforce to drive better educational, economic and social outcomes for learners and, ultimately, societies.
Building Leadership for Change Through School Immersion

From February 2018 to July 2020, 105 educators embarked upon a yearlong leadership journey based on a partnership established between MLFTC and the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Educators from KSA attended English language classes designed for educators, professional development workshops and K–12 school immersion experiences. Teachers and principals from KSA collaborated with ASU faculty, staff and local school districts to conduct research that addressed educational challenges in KSA. The foundation of this initiative was Saudi Arabia’s 2030 Vision to transform teaching and learning and drive the education system to meet the needs of an economy that aims to sustain itself without relying on profits from petroleum production. By investing in educational professionals in partnership with successful higher education institutions abroad, KSA aspired to strengthen educators’ leadership capacity to function as agents of change.

Principal Investigators (Cohort 1)
Iveta Silova, Ann Nielsen, Dianna Lippincott

Principal Investigators (Cohort 2)
Silova, Nielsen, Lippincott, Ruhi Khan

Funding Source
Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fahad Alshammari
Principal

During my five weeks being immersed in the practices at Camelback High School, I attended a meeting of the central district managers and discussed the balance between work and life on our leadership trip with our teachers and community. I learned how to become a full-fledged change facilitator able to identify a problem, analyze its essential aspects and find solutions to it. Before coming to the U.S., I had perceived education more as a way of obtaining knowledge. However, during my immersion experience, I realized that an essential point about any education system was changing people's mindsets and perceptions of the surrounding world.

“... My experience of studying in the U.S. has made me more proactive and interested in promoting change...”

Kholoud Aldehbashi
Computer science teacher

I had the chance to be in a school immersion for a while in the United States. In one of the computer sciences classes, the teacher took his students to the Makerspace at the library where they could choose what project they want to work on and start to learn how to program it on their own. I believe that Genius Hour and Makerspace can play an important role at schools to prepare students for the future and support them to be creators and leaders. Implementing this new method back in Saudi Arabia will be a great development for schools' outcome.

“This experience showed me how important it is to give students the chance to direct their own learning...”
During a five-year period, MLFTC is working with Morocco’s Ministry of Education, universities within the kingdom and teacher training institutions, with the aid of experienced technical assistance and private sector agencies, to form the Higher Education Partnership—Morocco.

The Kingdom of Morocco seeks to improve education within its borders to create an internationally competitive education system that, in the words of King Mohammed VI, “responds to the needs of the modern economy, to promote scientific research and innovation and to create a culture of a knowledge economy and communication” — part of the kingdom’s Strategic Vision 2015–2030.

Higher Education Partnership—Morocco partners are supporting Moroccan faculty in enhancing primary teacher preparation through a comprehensive systems approach that bestows an undergraduate degree in primary teaching and associated two-year training to equip teacher candidates with the skills necessary to succeed in a primary classroom. The degree will reference international standards in inclusive education and will pay particular attention to issues of gender equity.
Spotlight

Strengthening Institutional Linkages

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
Carole Basile

FUNDING SOURCE
Mastercard Foundation

FUNDING AMOUNT
$21,918,418

Strengthening Institutional Linkages, an initiative of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program housed at MLFTC, is narrowing critical skill gaps through international university partnerships.

The six-year program provides funding for 156 students from two universities in Ghana to attend ASU and pursue accelerated master’s degrees. The degrees are offered in fields of study selected to address skill gaps in Ghana’s rapidly expanding economy, including mechanical and biomedical engineering and supply chain management. Participants complete three years at their home universities before beginning a two-year program at ASU to complete both their bachelor’s and master’s degrees. A key feature of the program is connecting faculty members at ASU with their peers at the Ghanaian universities to mentor students as they transition to ASU and ultimately back to Ghana after graduation.

Simultaneously, four cohorts of faculty members from the Ghanaian universities receive support to attend faculty development seminars at ASU. Each seminar is followed by a one-day symposium in Ghana at which seminar participants from ASU and Ghana showcase innovative teaching practices and research initiatives they develop through the international collaboration.

Albert Essuman
Mastercard Scholar, Biomedical Engineering

Albert is a transformational leader and a scholar in the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program. He enrolled in biomedical engineering at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and is now a student at ASU. He has the desire and passion to improve the health and financial conditions of his country and the world as a global village. He has hands-on experience in biomedical engineering through various projects, including designing and building an affordable hearing aid. He volunteered with the International Society of Hypertension where he helped in creating hypertension awareness, prevention and control. He is also the founder and president of the Leaders of Change Foundation, a registered organization providing leadership and vocational training to youth, especially the needy. Albert believes in the revolution of the African Continent and hopes to lead various transformations in Africa through hard work, determination, teamwork and his sense of leadership.

“I want to ensure the development of my community by developing and empowering the youth with skills and businesses.”
Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for International Teachers

**Principal Investigators**
Leanna Archambault, Ann Nielsen, Alejandra Enriquez Gates

**Funding Source**
International Research and Exchanges Board

**Funding Amount**
$217,248

**Participating Countries**
Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Finland, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, New Zealand, Philippines, Senegal, Singapore, Taiwan, Uganda, United Kingdom

Fulbright DAI brings international primary and secondary teachers to the U.S. for a semester-long program to observe, pursue individual or group inquiry projects, take courses for professional development at a host university and share their expertise with U.S. colleagues. Fulbright Distinguished Fellows benefit from school field experiences in the Phoenix Union High School and Balsz Elementary School districts, where they are given opportunities to observe, co-teach, build connections with their mentor teachers and students, and share their expertise.

Urmimala Das
FDAl Fellow, 2019

Urmimala Das had been in the teaching profession for 18 years when she was selected as a Fulbright Fellow from India to join 17 educators from eight countries to come to ASU. She expressed feeling fortunate to be placed at the most innovative university in the U.S. and described her experience as “life-changing.” During her residency, Urmimala designed and developed an inquiry project titled “Elements of Dance can improve Emotional Intelligence in the English Language Teaching” Classroom. Her study proposes a model for increasing emotional intelligence in students in an ELT classroom in Jammu, India, who are refugees. Urmimala researched the interconnectedness of the brain with evolving emotion while at ASU, and how people’s behavior is organized and influenced by cultural factors, which at the same time influence learning. Upon returning to her home country, Urmimala implemented the strategies based on elements of Indian dance created to bring holistic changes. For this project, she was awarded the 2019 Global Teacher Grant sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, with funding provided by the U.S. government and administered by IREX. In addition, the United States-India Educational Foundation, India, awarded Urmimala the USIEF Teacher Alumni Award 2020 for formulating a project on bullying in schools. Since then, she has coordinated a series of interactive activities, workshops and training sessions dedicated to improving the emotional intelligence of students in Assam, India. The main purpose of her project is to encourage student engagement and boost their understanding of emotional intelligence through simple strategies centered around dance and mindfulness practice.

“My journey in ASU has broadened my mind to work for the betterment of students, no matter what the obstacles are. It is our responsibility as teachers to find a way to enrich and motivate them.”
The Strengthening Higher Education Access in Malawi Activity – SHEAMA – is an ASU-led partnership with five Malawian public universities, positioned to achieve three major objectives. The first is to increase equitable access to higher education, especially for vulnerable populations, including adolescent girls and young women and persons with disabilities.

It also strives to strengthen the capacity of Malawian universities to design, deliver and support educational programs including degrees, diplomas and short-term training at a distance.

Last, it seeks to improve bridging to employment by linking education and training to labor market needs, and to improve the entrepreneurship and business skills of youth so that they are better able to contribute to the economic growth of the country.

Through a collaborative model for open and distance learning, Malawian university partners are able to co-design and offer joint academic programs across a range of instructional and communication modalities, extending access to higher education throughout the country. SHEAMA establishes a network of comprehensive, continuous support to ensure student success.

Targeted financial assistance provides long- and short-term tuition scholarships for students otherwise unable to attend a university. Targeted financial assistance provides long- and short-term tuition scholarships for students otherwise unable to attend a university. Targeted financial assistance provides long- and short-term tuition scholarships for students otherwise unable to attend a university.

Now that I have a job, I can support myself and my siblings to finish school. But this is not where my journey ends. I plan to save some of the money I earn from work to rent a field and harvest soya in the next season. I will sell the soya harvests and raise enough capital of about 200,000 Malawian Kwacha, or about $270, to start my own mushroom production.”

Susan Banda
SHEAMA participant

Adolescent girls and women in Malawi, as well as vulnerable young men, can face many barriers to higher education and safe employment despite being qualified. Forty-five percent of this nation’s 19.1 million people are under the age of 15, making Malawi one of the world’s youngest and fastest-growing countries. This demand leaves over 80,000 secondary school graduates each year without access to higher education.

SHEAMA supported a local university’s design and delivery of a two-week mushroom production course. Among the students attending this course was Susan Banda, a 24-year-old woman from the rural Dowa district. Susan received a SHEAMA scholarship and learned from local entrepreneurs how to cultivate mushrooms and gained valuable business skills. After completing the course, Banda got a job at the refugee camp in the Dzaleka district of Malawi. There she was able to identify several shortfalls in the camp’s mushroom production project, and is hard at work revamping the program. Susan’s opportunity to participate in higher education through SHEAMA has not only improved her future opportunities in employment but has allowed her to have a significant impact on her local community.
Next Education Workforce

Education systems face the challenge of attracting and retaining an effective education workforce, while meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse student population and keeping up with global trends, including rapidly advancing technological innovations. Unfortunately, the design of the education workforce in many countries stems from the industrial age of mass production and has been hard-wired for delivering basic services and infrastructure to promote economic growth. Now systems are charged with delivering quality education that is committed to inclusion and strives for constant improvement. This requires different core capabilities and changes to workforce practices and behaviors.

MLFTC faculty and staff collaborated with the Education Commission (the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity) on its global initiative dedicated to attaining the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 — ensuring inclusive and quality education and promoting lifelong learning for all.

MLFTC Dean Carole Basile served on the steering committee of the Education Commission’s Education Workforce Initiative, and MLFTC scholars Ivetta Silova, Yeukai Mlambo and Ann Nielsen contributed to the report, “Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation.” The commission’s September 2019 publication draws on evidence and innovations from education and other sectors to rethink the education workforce, and puts forward approaches for addressing immediate needs while also creating collaborative teams and systems for the future.

Visit the website
Background report
Ghana country report
Vietnam country report

An estimated 69 million teachers — 24.4 million in primary and 44.4 million in secondary — must be recruited by 2030 in order to meet SDG 4, with Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia accounting for over 76 percent of this need.

MLFTC hosted the symposium, Innovations in Global Learning Metrics: A Focused Debate Among Users, Producers and Researchers. Funded by the Spencer Foundation and Open Society Foundation and held in Tempe, Arizona, in November 2018, the event brought together a small group of stakeholders, test developers, researchers, and political and social leaders to advance a policy dialogue about a more effective and meaningful use of global learning metrics for education policymaking at both national and international levels. During the symposium, participants discussed strategies for linking education global learning metrics to other relevant social global metrics (health, economic, demographic) in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4. An exploration of display technologies for data visualization, modeling, and simulation to assist in the processes of evidence-informed decision-making related to global learning metrics allowed participants to theorize on new opportunities for understanding educational outcomes.

One of the findings of the symposium was that measures of education quality need to follow a new path forward that includes environmental awareness and education for sustainability, as summarized in the video below.

Video: Why Measure Un-Sustainable Education? by Janna Goebel, Gustavo E. Fischman and Iveta Silova. Animation by Bernardo Medeiros
MLFTC Office of Global Engagement
About the Office of Global Engagement

Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College’s Office of Global Engagement supports the college’s international development and global academic initiatives. The office builds upon the work of the former Center for Advanced Studies in Global Education, founded at MLFTC in 2014 to advance college-wide internationalization efforts. The office serves as a hub for moving the college toward achieving ASU Design Aspiration #8 — to engage globally by pursuing an integrated and strategic approach to internationalization.

In support of the college’s mission, the office:

- **Advances research** and mobilizes knowledge to address education equity and global sustainability challenges.

- **Internationalizes curriculum** to promote global and intercultural learning on campus, as well as in local and global communities.

- **Supports student and faculty mobility** through MLFTC signature study abroad programs and student/faculty engagement in international initiatives in the cross-cutting areas of research, teaching and international development.

- **Develops and implements** international initiatives, through responsible partnerships, to pursue context- and culture-specific education innovations.

- **Convenes public forums** for critical inquiry and debate concerning the pedagogies and principles of global engagement, access and equity in education.
Meet the team

**Iveta Silova**
ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Professor Iveta Silova is Associate Dean of the Office of Global Engagement. She teaches graduate courses in comparative and international education, education policy and evaluation, research design, and post/decolonial approaches to education research. She supervises PhD students undertaking research in the areas of globalization and education borrowing; post-socialist transformations; post-colonialism, decolonial studies and border-thinking; artificial intelligence and education; nature-culture interactions in the anthropocene; as well as ecofeminism and environmental sustainability.

Bridging different cultures and disciplinary boundaries, working in several languages, Silova's research has evolved in the following directions:

- Globalization, knowledge transfer and education policy borrowing
- Post-socialist transformations and education alternatives beyond the Western horizon
- Memories of childhood and schooling during socialism and the Cold War
- Scientific and philosophical study of human nature interactions and relations
- Education, ecofeminism and environmental sustainability

Silova has extensive experience in the area of international aid and development, having experienced different sides of the development industry's operations — both as a recipient of international aid working in the post-socialist contexts, a program officer overseeing the implementation of international development projects globally, and as a researcher engaged in studying the politics and policies of international development dynamics. She was born, raised and educated in Soviet Latvia and spent seven years living and working in various countries of the former Soviet Union, including Central Asia (Kazakhstan), the Caucasus (Azerbaijan), and Belarus. Prior to her academic career in the U.S., she worked as an education researcher and adviser with various international organizations, including UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, and the Open Society Institute/Soros Foundations. Her long-term goal is to continue to bridge the traditional theory/practice dichotomy by engaging in meaningful and ethical collaborations between academics, policymakers and education practitioners in various cultural contexts.

**Ann Nielsen**
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Ann Nielsen received her EdD from Arizona State University in Educational Leadership and Supervision. Her interests in education and research have focused on teacher professional subjectivities, teacher leadership, and school leadership using visual and qualitative methodologies.

As director, Nielsen has served as the principal investigator for international initiatives such as the International Leaders in Education Program, the Argentina Teacher Exchange Program, the Exchange Program for Brazilian Awarded Public School Principals, the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program, Building Leadership for Change Through School Immersion—Ideas to Action Project—Sri Lanka. In addition to leading the implementation of multiple international initiatives, Nielsen has provided technical expertise and assistance in the West Bank Pre-Service Teacher Activity and the Strengthening Higher Education Access in Malawi Activity.

She previously served in the role as the TAP director in the Arizona Ready for Rigor Grant, overseeing the implementation of the TAP System for Teacher and Student Advancement in 59 schools across the state. She has trained and collaborated with educators at the pre-service and in-service levels of the profession across Arizona, the United States and internationally.

**Yeukai Mlambo**
DIRECTOR, MASTERCARD FOUNDATION DIGITAL INITIATIVE, ASSISTANT RESEARCH PROFESSOR

Yeukai Angela Mlambo is director of Mastercard Foundation Digital Initiatives at ASU’s EdPlus and an assistant research professor at MLFTC. In her administrative role she leads the Batshe Community Platform, a Mastercard Foundation-funded digital alumni engagement and social learning platform for African youth. As a scholar, her research centers on addressing higher education leadership representation through broadening access, inclusion and equity for underrepresented groups in higher education.

**Abubakar Idris**
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MASTERCARD FOUNDATION SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Abubakar Idris was born and raised in Nigeria. He earned his bachelor’s degree from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. He came to the United States to further his education and completed a master's degree and PhD in the K–12 Educational Administration program at Michigan State University. He is also an alumnus of the U.S. Fulbright Scholars program. Idris has strong research and professional interests in education policy and administration, student affairs, and gender studies in an international context.

**Alejandra Enriquez Gates**
PROGRAM DIRECTOR

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Thank you to our partners

The programs and initiatives of the Office of Global Engagement would not be possible without the work and contributions of our valued partners. Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University wishes to thank these organizations for their dedication, expertise and generous financial support for achieving educational quality and equity around the world.