

Simona Michelin – Curriculum Vitae

Professional Profile

PhD Candidate third year, discussion is planned for October 2026) in Learning Sciences and Digital Technologies and educational policy practitioner with expertise in digitalization, Artificial Intelligence in education, and Adult Learning and Education (ALE) systems. Coordinator of a national PNRR-funded lifelong learning ecosystem (Polo Onlife), with experience in multi-stakeholder governance, evidence-informed policy analysis, and inclusive digital transformation aligned with UNESCO frameworks (RALE 2015, Marrakech Framework for Action, SDG 4, and GRALE 6 conceptual approach).

Current Positions

PhD Candidate, Learning Sciences and Digital Technologies, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (UNIMORE)

Deputy Mayor and Councillor for Education, Municipality of Fagnano Olona (Italy)

Coordinator, Polo Onlife – National PNRR-funded Lifelong Learning Ecosystem (Italy, 2022–2024)

Adjunct Faculty Member, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Indire and IUL

Professor in Design Thinking, ITS Academy (Legnano) Milano

Economics Teacher (on leave) and Educational Project Manager

Key Expertise

- Digitalization and rapid change in Adult Learning and Education (ALE)
- Human-centred and ethical Artificial Intelligence in education and lifelong learning
- Lifelong learning ecosystems and institutional digital transformation
- Educational governance and multi-stakeholder policy implementation (PNRR)
- Equity, inclusion, and territorial access in lifelong learning systems
- Evidence-informed and policy-relevant analytical writing

Major National Initiative –

Coordinator of Polo Onlife, a national Italian lifelong learning ecosystem funded through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), delivering over 40 free training events (2022–2024)– ATA).

- Selected Expert Contributor, UNESCO-UNEVOC initiative on AI in TVET
- Participation in UNESCO Digital Learning Week and international policy dialogues on the Future of Education
- Conference speaker on Artificial Intelligence, digital education, and inclusive innovation in different academic conferences)
- Coordinator as national Hackathon against bullying and cyberbullying (2023)
- Coordinator PNRR
- Member Generazioni Connesse MIM

Education (selected)

- PhD in Learning Sciences and Digital Technologies (ongoing), UNIMORE
- Master’s Degree in Digital Philosophy, University of Udine (2023)
- Master in Management of Educational Institutions, Politecnico di Milano (2022)
- Degree in Economics and Commerce, Università dell’Insubria (110/110)

Selected Publications and Analytical Contributions

- Publications and policy-oriented contributions on AI in education, digital transformation, and inclusion
- Articles in educational and innovation journals (e.g., BRICKS, EMEM Italia, policy and research outlets)
- Analytical reports on digital education, lifelong learning, and AI literacy

Languages

Italian: Native

English: Professional working proficiency (B2)

German: Basic (A2)

Methodological Approach

System-wide and human-centred analysis of Adult Learning and Education in contexts of rapid change, good leadership and active listener.

28/02/2026

Jimona Nicholson

Digitalization and Rapid Change in Adult Learning and Education (ALE): Polo Onlife – National PNRR-funded Hub (Italy, 2022–2024)

1. Executive Summary

This evidence-informed writing sample analyses the role of digitalization and Artificial Intelligence in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) systems in contexts of rapid change, in line with the GRALE 6 conceptual framework. The case study focuses on Polo Onlife – National PNRR-funded Hub (Italy, 2022–2024), a national lifelong learning ecosystem funded through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) that delivered over 40 free training events involving approximately 1,160 adult education professionals.

The programme combined synchronous training, mandatory applied didactic assignments, and structured reflective dialogue with the Polo Onlife team (synchronous, asynchronous, and proximity-based). The pathway recorded an 85% completion rate, indicating high retention, sustained engagement, and effective transfer of digital and AI competencies into professional practice. The initiative is embedded within the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), which prioritizes digital transition, innovation, and lifelong learning. From an ALE perspective, the upskilling of the adult educational workforce is essential to respond to rapid technological change, aligning with SDG 4, RALE (2015), and the Marrakech Framework for Action.

Polo Onlife – National PNRR-funded Hub was conceptualized as a national Quality Learning Ecosystem. Between 2022 and 2024, it implemented more than 40 events across Italy, characterized by free access, flexible modalities (online, in-person, and blended), and multi-stakeholder collaboration with universities, schools, territorial institutions, and foundations.

2. Methodology and Data Sources

This study adopts an evidence-informed and mixed-method approach consistent with GRALE 6 standards. Data sources include programme monitoring data (2022–2024), national participation records (N=1,160), and empirical attendance datasets from the Sardinia training cycle (N=340), alongside UNESCO policy frameworks.

Participants were required to submit, after learning pathway, a didactic activity to fully complete the pathway. The assignments were mixed (instructional design, classroom experimentation, and documented pedagogical practices) and were discussed with the Polo Onlife team through synchronous, asynchronous, and proximity-based feedback.

The programme achieved an 85% completion rate among 1,160 adult participants, representing a strong indicator of retention, engagement, and practice-based learning in Adult Learning and Education contexts.

3. Regional Deep Dive: Sardinia (Empirical Analysis)

The Sardinia training cycle involved 340 adult participants across Sassari, Nuoro, Oristano, Cagliari, and online sessions, enabling gender-sensitive and territorial analysis aligned with GRALE 6 priorities.

Table 1. Sample Description (Sardinia Dataset)

Indicator	Value
Total Participants (N)	340

Table 2. Estimated Gender Distribution (Declared Method)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female (Estimated)	240	≈70%
Male (Estimated)	100	≈30%

Table 3. Territorial Participation Distribution – Sardinia Training Cycle

Location	Participants (n)	Percentage (%)
Nuoro	101	29.7
Sassari	90	26.5
Oristano	71	20.9
Cagliari	67	19.7
Online	10	2.9

Table 4. Policy-Relevant Indicators (GRALE 6)

Indicator	Policy Interpretation
Female Participation Rate	High female engagement (~70%), aligned with ALE workforce composition
Territorial Inclusion	Strong outreach in peripheral regions (Nuoro, Oristano, Sassari)
Accessibility Model	Free, blended, and in-person delivery reducing participation barriers
System Relevance for GRALE 6	Evidence of inclusive, resilient lifelong learning ecosystem (ALE-focused)

The initiative fostered AI literacy, critical digital skills, and innovative pedagogical practices. By integrating applied tasks and reflective feedback, the programme supported the real-world transfer of digital competencies and strengthened institutional adaptive capacity in times of rapid technological change. Free participation, flexible delivery formats, and strong outreach in peripheral regions such as Sardinia ensured equitable access and reduced structural barriers to lifelong learning, fully aligned with UNESCO ALE priorities.

4. Governance and Policy Implications for GRALE 6

The multi-stakeholder governance model and publicly funded structure (PNRR) demonstrate how national lifelong learning ecosystems can effectively respond to rapid digital transformation. The integration of mandatory applied assessment, dialogic feedback, high completion rates, and evidence-informed monitoring positions Polo Onlife as an international promising practice aligned with GRALE 6, RALE (2015), and SDG 4.

The fear of making mistakes often represents a significant barrier in adult learning processes; therefore, it is essential to engage empathetic trainers who can create a climate of trust and adapt the pace and timing of teaching to the diverse rhythms of learning, thereby fostering active participation, confidence, and effective transfer of competencies.

Data source: Polo Onlife – National PNRR-funded Hub programme monitoring data (2022–2024); empirical attendance datasets from Sardinia training cycle (N=340); national participation records across 40+ events (N=1,160). <https://www.polo-onlife.it/>

Application for UNESCO UIL Consultancy – GRALE 6 Digitalization and Adult Learning and Education (ALE)

Applicant: Simona Michelon; Country: Italy

(i)Analytical Framing: The proposed chapter adopts a system-wide and human-centred analytical framework aligned with the GRALE 6 conceptual approach, conceptualizing digitalization and Artificial Intelligence as drivers of rapid change in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) systems. Rather than focusing on technological adoption alone, the analysis will examine how ALE systems adapt structurally across lifelong learning ecosystems, professional development pathways, and policy governance mechanisms.

Guiding Questions: How does digitalization (including AI) reshape participation, access, and learning outcomes in Adult Learning and Education systems? How can ALE ecosystems enhance resilience, empowerment, and adaptive capacity in contexts of rapid technological change? Which governance, pedagogical, and institutional strategies support inclusive and human-centred digital transformation in ALE?

(ii)Evidence strategy (types of sources and examples): The chapter will adopt an evidence-informed approach combining multiple complementary data sources, in line with requirements: Types of Sources: International datasets (UNESCO, OECD, EU lifelong learning indicators), GRALE 6 survey data Regional and national policy literature on digitalization and ALE, Scholarly literature on AI, lifelong learning, and adult education systems, Empirical case studies of lifelong learning ecosystems

(iii)Approach across learner, educator, organizational and policy levels: Adult school workforce (teachers, leaders, administrative staff) as lifelong learners, with analysis of participation patterns, completion rates (85%), and learning transfer through applied didactic assignments and reflective feedback. Continuous professional development in digital pedagogy and AI integration, fostering AI literacy, critical digital competencies, and reflective professional practice. Institutional digital transformation within schools and training ecosystems through blended learning models (online, in-person, and asynchronous) and practice-based, dialogic assessment mechanisms (synchronous, asynchronous, and proximity feedback). National funding frameworks (e.g., PNRR) and multi-stakeholder governance (universities, schools, local authorities, foundations) supporting lifelong learning ecosystems aligned with SDG 4 and ALE policy priorities.

(iv)Addressing cross-cutting dimensions: equity and gender: A gender-sensitive and equity-oriented lens will be integrated throughout the analysis, in line with UNESCO and GRALE 6 priorities. The study will examine: Access to digital tools and lifelong learning opportunities, Participation in peripheral and underserved regions, Free and flexible learning modalities as mechanisms for reducing structural barriers, Inclusion of diverse adult learners across professional roles and territories, Gender-sensitive interpretation of participation data (e.g., estimated gender distribution in ALE workforce), Consideration of feminized professional sectors such as education, Impact of digital upskilling on women's professional empowerment in ALE contexts

Overall, the chapter will frame digitalization as a **human-centred and inclusive transformation**, highlighting who benefits from ALE digital transition and who risks marginalization across gender, territory, and professional roles, in full alignment with GRALE 6 cross-cutting themes of equity, resilience, and empowerment.

Financial Proposal

Consultancy: Thematic Chapter on Digitalization and Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 6)

Applicant: Simona Michelin

Proposed Fee Structure: Lump-Sum (Deliverable-Based)

I propose a lump-sum consultancy fee covering the full scope of work as described in the Terms of Reference, including literature review, analysis of international datasets and policy documents, integration of empirical evidence, drafting of the thematic chapter (5,000–7,000 words), revisions, and finalization in accordance with UNESCO UIL editorial guidelines.

Total Proposed Lump Sum: €6,000 (gross)

Estimated Workload

Estimated total working time: approximately 40–50 working days, including research, data analysis, writing, revisions, and coordination meetings with the UIL team (online or in presence).

Scope of Work Included

- Evidence-informed analysis of digitalization and Adult Learning and Education (ALE)
- Integration of international datasets and policy literature
- Use of empirical case studies and program monitoring data
- Gender-sensitive and equity-oriented analytical approach
- Alignment with GRALE 6, RALE (2015), Marrakech Framework for Action, and SDG 4

28/02/2026

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