

NEWS RELEASE - For Immediate release

March 13, 2017

### **World's top education experts to answer key questions in Iceland**

**Education experts, Edtech entrepreneurs and an assortment of thinkers, analysts and administrators from around the world will travel to Iceland in June for discussions about some of the most important issues affecting modern education and training.**

They'll be taking part in **OEB MidSummit** – a new “thinkference”, at which participants from a wide variety of backgrounds reflect on some fundamental questions for global education, as it struggles to cope to with the impact of rapid technological change.

Questions up for discussion at MidSummit, which will be held in Reykjavik, the world's northernmost capital city, include:

**Who is shaping today's digital learning agenda and why? Is their vision utopian or dystopian?**

**What will tomorrow's learning experience be like?**

**What can we learn from the way our brains work about the best methods to engage learners?**

**How can technology make leadership development available to the masses, rather than just the elite?**

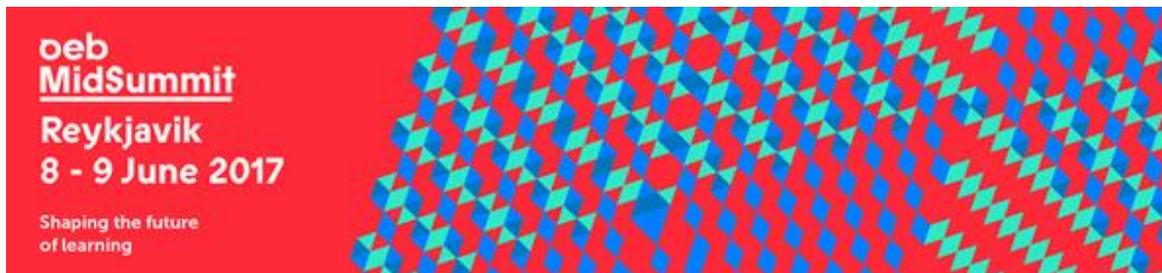
**In an age of disinformation and 'fake news,' how can we teach discernment and help students and citizens to distinguish truth from falsehood?**

The discussions will be led by some of the most controversial figures in global education. One of them, education writer **Audrey Watters**, who has been nicknamed “the Cassandra of Edtech,” has already set the tone for the conference with an attack on the use of ‘big data’ in schools.

She told the conference news platform '**OEB Insights**' recently that “education data should be a top priority for the new Trump regime. Schools are wildly obsessed with collecting data. They have been for a very long time but new digital technologies have compelled them to collect even more, all with the promise of better insights into teaching and learning. By and large, I think a lot of that promise is overstated. Now, particularly under Trump, we have to consider if, instead of helping students, we're actually putting them more at risk... I'm deeply concerned that, by enabling such expansive profiling, we are furthering a dangerous climate of surveillance...”

Conference organiser Rebecca Stromeyer, CEO of the Berlin-based ICWE GmbH, says that:

“MidSummit will be unlike any other conference in the education sector. We're calling it a ‘thinkference’ because, whilst it's a great opportunity for networking, it will be much more reflective



than most conferences. People from all sorts of backgrounds, who have different approaches to problems, are going to tackle some of the biggest challenges for modern society and its education systems. MidSummit complements our main conference, OEB Global, but it is an opportunity for more profound reflection about some of the most pressing issues for education.

“I’m delighted that we’re holding it in Iceland, where the Government is using technological change to open up a host of new opportunities for learners. In the run-up to midsummer, in the inspiring setting of the world’s northernmost city, midway between Europe and America, I am confident that MidSummit will be a truly fascinating event.”

The first details of the conference programme have now been published online and are available on the MidSummit website – [www.oebmidsummit.com](http://www.oebmidsummit.com).

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**Notes for editors**

OEB MidSummit

When: June 8 – 9, 2017

Where: Hilton Reykjavik Nordica, Suðurlandsbraut 2, 108 Reykjavik, Iceland

The MidSummit is a two day Mid-Atlantic event which will explore the complexity of learning in the digital era through multidisciplinary perspectives.

Speakers will include, amongst others, workplace learning leader [Niyazi Arda Aygul - Isbank \(Turkey\)](#), neuroscientist [Harold Bekkering - Radboud University \(The Netherlands\)](#), commentators on the digital revolution [Andrew Keen](#), Penn State Chief Academic Learning Officer [Andrew Shean - The Institute for Emerging Leadership in Online Learning, Penn State University \(USA\)](#), education foresight researcher [Tryggvi Thayer - School of Education, University Of Iceland](#), [Roger Schank](#), leading visionary in artificial intelligence and education technology writer [Audrey Watters - Hack Education \(USA\)](#)

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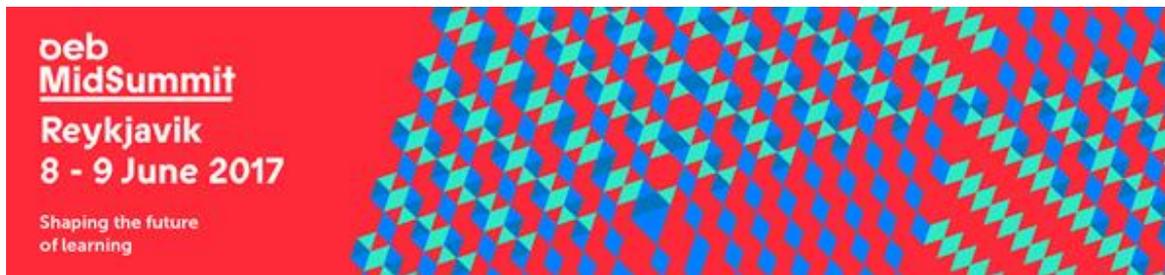
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