

# Heriot-Watt University Learning and Teaching Conference

## 2025 Keynote



**Dr Kaya Prpic** (University of Melbourne)

### **“Global Knowledge, Local Heart: Building Belonging in the Fractured Spaces of Learning”**

Tuesday 3 June 2025, 6-7am UK | 9-10am Dubai | 1-2pm Malaysia

[Book a place for Dr Prpic's keynote on 3 June.](#)

#### **Abstract:** Global Knowledge, Local Heart: Building Belonging in the Fractured Spaces of Learning

This keynote revisits *Global Knowledge, Local Learning*, a project that led to the 2006 conference *A Matter of Heart* in Malaysia, bringing together educators from around the world to reflect on the growing disconnect between transnational education and local relevance. As universities like Heriot-Watt expand their global footprint — with campuses in Dubai and Malaysia — urgent questions remain: How do we foster genuine belonging in STEM education across cultural, disciplinary, and geographic boundaries?

Belonging is not about assimilation or standardisation. It is a relational and ethical practice, grounded in reciprocity, place, and purpose. Drawing on Indigenous knowledges, symbolic thinking, and intercultural collaboration, I explore how threshold experiences, metaphor, and memory can transform STEM education from knowledge transfer to values-based, place-conscious learning.

Rather than replicate curricula across borders, we are called to build hearths of connection — where knowledge is carried with care, and global change is inspired by local heart.

#### **Biography:**

**Juliana Kaya Prpic** is an Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne whose work spans engineering and STEM education, intercultural pedagogy, and Indigenous engagement. With a background in science and Jungian analysis, her research explores how threshold experiences, symbolic thinking, and relational methodologies transform learning. Juliana has led international projects across Asia and Africa, including *Global Knowledge, Local Learning* and the 2006 *A Matter of Heart* conference

in Malaysia. Her award-winning work fosters belonging across classrooms, cultures, disciplines, and worldviews.

## Conference information

Full conference information is available on the [Heriot-Watt Learning and Teaching Academy website](#).