

Shifting the Culture of Out-of-field Professional Education for Teachers (SCOPE-T)

# Imagining professional learning for OOFT

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# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which we meet.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country.

We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.

At this difficult time, I honour the wisdom of Elders. While I seek to walk together in the spirit of reconciliation, I acknowledge this is a time for quiet reflection and grieving





# Imagine

- ▶ In this session, we consider the complex problem of the teacher shortage and OOF teaching.
- ▶ We will invite you to respond to a series of questions and provocations designed to explore areas of resonance and dissonance in the OOF phenomenon across global education systems.
- ▶ Our aim is to use the presentations from this conference as a stimulus to consider how we are conceptualising the problem.

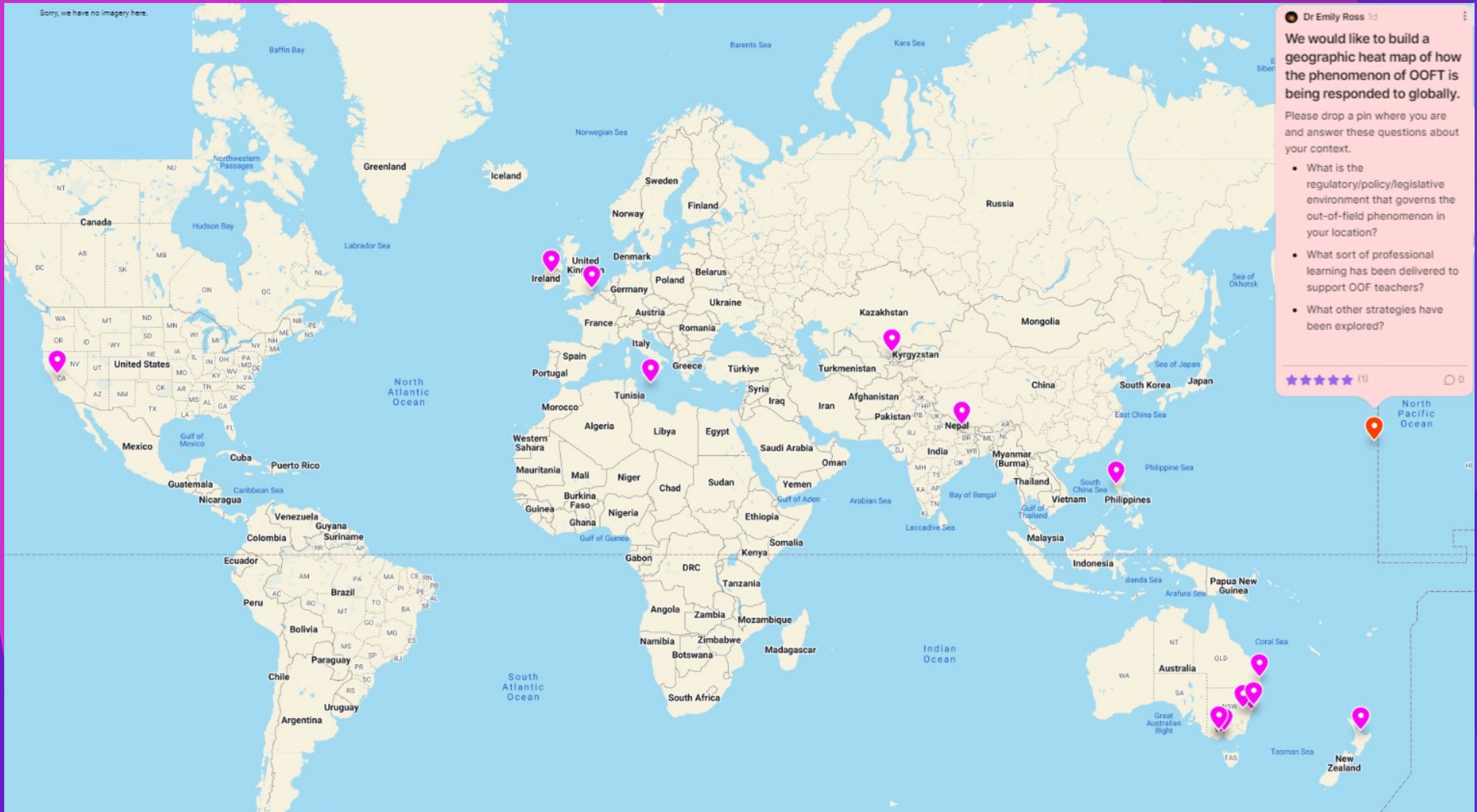
Please use the QR code or link.  
Drop a pin for where you are,  
and in the text box, could you  
please answer these questions:



- What is the regulatory/policy/legislative environment that governs the out-of-field phenomenon in your location?
- What sort of professional learning has been delivered to support OOF teachers?
- What other strategies have been explored?

<https://tinyurl.com/UNESCO-OOFTAS>

Sorry, we have no imagery here.



Dr Emily Ross 1d

We would like to build a geographic heat map of how the phenomenon of OFT is being responded to globally.

Please drop a pin where you are and answer these questions about your context.

- What is the regulatory/policy/legislative environment that governs the out-of-field phenomenon in your location?
- What sort of professional learning has been delivered to support OOF teachers?
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# Report on the 2022 Transforming Education Summit Convened by the UN Secretary-General (UNESCO, 2022)

- ▶ The Vision Statement ‘*Transforming Education: an urgent political imperative for our collective future*’ (outcome of the Summit) identified four areas within education systems that require transformation, including:
  - ▶ First, a learning environment must be **supportive of the development of all learners**.
  - ▶ Second, teachers must be **supported and empowered to transform themselves** and become agents of change, knowledge producers, facilitators, and guides for understanding complex realities.

# Teaching out-of-field (OOF)



Current teacher shortage - common solution to this problem is to assign teachers to teach subjects or phases of schooling for which they are not qualified - that is, to teach out-of-field



AITSL (2021): potentially 40% of Mathematics teachers, 36% of Humanities teachers, 29% of Science teachers and 28% of English teachers are teaching OOF.



These core subjects comprise the bulk of the students' learning during the compulsory years of schooling



Teaching OOF ultimately masks the true extent of the teacher shortfall.  
Persists as a significant issue facing the education system (DESE, 2021, 2022)



Out-of-field teaching is linked to:

Low academic performance of students (Van Overschelde, 2022)

Teacher attrition (Sharplin, 2014)

Poor teacher confidence and sense of belonging (Du Plessis, Carroll & Gillies, 2015)



Calls for:

Upskilling of teachers

More teachers

Better school funding and leadership practices

# Teachers vary

OOF teachers are a heterogeneous group (Hobbs, 2020), therefore their support needs and willingness to remain teaching the OOF subject and seek additional qualifications varies.

- ▶ OOF-*ness* (Hobbs, Campbell, Delaney, Speldewinde & Lai, 2022)
  - ▶ qualifications and specialisations
  - ▶ the stability of a teachers' subject allocation
  - ▶ teachers' developing subject identity and capability
  - ▶ possible pathways to becoming 'in-field' through formally recognised re-specialisation programs
  - ▶ school's context and culture of support have a mediating effect on teachers' commitment to the subject, self-concept and confidence





# What do out-of-field teachers need to learn?

- ▶ Boundary crossing provides opportunities for learning, as long as there is support (Hobbs, 2013) and reflexive practice (Caldis, 2022)
- ▶ An issue that centres on the discipline and school subject
- ▶ Subject-specific, translatable, transferable elements
- ▶ What do secondary teachers need to learn when teaching a new subject? (Hobbs, 2020):

New subject matter  
(e.g., knowledge, skills, attitudes, stories)

New teaching strategies specific to that content

How students behave and learn across different subjects

How to make the content relevant

Translation of in-field practices and knowledge to their out-of-field teaching, and vice versa

An appreciation for what other teachers do

Useful forms of support (within and outside of the school)

How to remain a passionate teacher despite teaching out-of-field

# Legitimising government funding of upskilling teachers - professional education (PE)

- ▶ **Current problem:** limited impact because at the level of system, cultural norms within schools and education systems do not recognise nor value teacher specialisation
- ▶ With OOF teaching likely to be unavoidable for the foreseeable future, maintaining the quality of teaching is of utmost importance, especially for teachers whose career trajectories are likely to include the OOF subject in the long term.
- ▶ Understand factors influencing the pattern of uptake of PE by OOF teachers:
  - ▶ school priorities for OOF teacher learning,
  - ▶ how policy contributes to the culture surrounding P,
  - ▶ the roles of stakeholders in the provision and discourses around PE
  - ▶ system motivations that increase the attractiveness of PE designed to develop in-field capability

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**How do you feel OOFT should be responded to from your research context?**

# slido



If there were no constraints (policy, legislation, financial), how should the OOF phenomenon be approached?





*Education transforms  
▶ lives (UNESCO)*

So, thank you for sharing