



MCAST

25 YEARS
SHAPING
SUCCESSHEALTHY
MINDS
WORKMalta Chamber of
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PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday 4th November 2026:

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome Coffee and Registration
09:00 – 09:30	Opening Speeches
09:30 – 10:30	Keynote Address - Beyond Objectivity: Embracing Reflexivity in Qualitative Research (Prof. Nicole Brown)
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 – 13:00	Session 1 – Research Presentations & Panel Discussion <i>Track 1 - Transformative Practices and Creative Approaches in Qualitative Research</i> <i>Rhythms of Empowerment: A Focused Ethnographic Study of Malta Tama Tnabar Association's Percussion-Based Model for Social Inclusion, Transversal Skills in Foundation Vocational Educational Training - Monaliza Nocilla</i> <i>Bridging Heritage and Technology: A Practice-Based Learning Framework for Audio-Visual Poetry Adaptations in Maltese Formal Education – Ian Attard</i> <i>Mistaking the Tributaries for the Main River: A Methodological Reflection from the Early Stages of a Grounded Theory Study – Rachel Curmi, Marco Montalto</i> <i>When Recording May Silence: Relational Rigour in Note-Based Interviews with Childcare Managers in Malta - Shirley Ann Gauci</i> <i>Bridging Contexts: Adapting Prison Pedagogies for Inclusive Learning at MCAST – Pierre Mifsud</i> <i>Track 2 - Communities, Inclusion, and Social Change through Qualitative Inquiry</i> <i>Entrapment in Terence Rattigan's The Deep Blue Sea – an Audience's Perspective – Tyrone Grima</i> <i>Beyond a Single Lens: Complementary Qualitative Methodologies for Understanding Teachers' Professional Growth – Remigijus Bubnys</i> <i>Pre-service Learning Support Educators' awareness on diverse cultures, religions and languages in Malta - Christiana Sciberras</i>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:15	Session 2 – Research Presentations & Panel Discussion

	<i>Track 2 - Communities, Inclusion, and Social Change through Qualitative Inquiry</i> • <i>How do Freedom of Information Restrictions Impact Journalism in Malta? - Emma Brownrigg Fenech, Rosemarie Calleja</i> • <i>A Comparative Exploration of Student Support Services in European Vocational and Tertiary Education: Insights for Enhancing Provision at MCAST - Amanda Ann Galea</i> <i>Track 3 - Leadership, Organisations, and Human Experiences in a Changing Society</i> • <i>Leveraging Artificial Intelligence to Combat Illiteracy in the Canal Territory: A Community Empowerment Initiative by the Creativity & Excellence Center, Suez Canal Authority – Mohamed Salah</i> • <i>Ethical Climate Policy Under Uncertainty - Damian J Bridge</i>
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee Break
15:30 – 16:30	Session 3 – Research Presentations & Panel Discussion <i>Track 2 - Communities, Inclusion, and Social Change through Qualitative Inquiry</i> • <i>Towards Gender Inclusive Stem Education: An Analysis of Science and Mathematics Educational Initiatives in Malta - Maria Katarina Calleja</i> • <i>Fostering Emotional Wellbeing in Educational Settings: Exploring Strategies, Challenges, and Impacts on Primary Students' Social and Academic Progress - Fiona Marmara</i> • <i>Silenced Stories: The Limits of Crime Journalism in Malta - Thea Gauci, Rosemarie Calleja</i> • <i>A Responsive Approach to Teacher Formation: Insights from a National Study in Initial Teacher Education - Eliza Cachia, Ann Marie Cassar, Melanie Darmanin, Shirley Ann Gauci, Heathcliff Schembri</i>
16:30	Closure



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sme'sThursday 5th November 2026:

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome Coffee and Registration
09:00 – 10:00	Keynote Address - AI-Informed Learning Pathways within the Vocational Higher Education Sector (Dr Scott Kupferman)
10:00 – 10:15	<i>Coffee Break</i>
10:15 – 12:00	Session 1 – Research Presentations & Panel Discussion <i>Track 3 - Leadership, Organisations, and Human Experiences in a Changing Society</i> - Professional Caring in a Pandemic: Nurses' Experiences and Lessons Learned: A Qualitative Descriptive Study - Mary O' Regan-Hyde, Vera McCarthy, Caroline Dalton-O' Connor, Angela Flynn, Aisling Murphy - Navigating New Horizons: The Impact of Post-Graduate Research on Lecturers' Personal and Professional Identity - Rose Falzon - The Impact of Macrotrends on Work and Employment in Shaping Labour Markets in Kuwait and Malta: An Exploratory Study - Naser Zaeri, Sawsan Malik, William Gatt Fenech - Motivational Drivers of Female Entrepreneurship: An Exploratory Study of Small Businesses in Malta - Theresa Demanuele Montebello, Ronald Aquilina <i>Track 4 - Applied Qualitative Research Across Disciplines</i> - Developing a Lecturer-Controlled LMSAI Framework for Responsible AI-Supported Student Learning - Silvio Nocilla - More Than Just Fun: A Mixed-Methods Evaluation of a Summer Camp - Matthew Bartolo, Andrew Camilleri - Early Topic Identification, Research Behaviours, and AI-Assisted Writing: A Qualitative Follow-Up Study of Creative Media Students - Natalino Fenech
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>
13:00 – 14:45	Session 2 – Research Presentations & Panel Discussion

	<i>Track 3 - Leadership, Organisations, and Human Experiences in a Changing Society</i> • <i>Understanding Leadership Challenges within Small Family Owned Businesses - Mary Rose Mifsud, Rose Falzon, Alex Rizzo</i> • <i>Mental Health Through a Critical Constructivist Lens - Christina Agius</i> • <i>Resilience Among Early Years Education Students in Vocational Training and Education: A Desk-Based Literature Review - Ann Marie Grima Pulo, Isabelle Zammit</i> • <i>Understanding Educational Reform Through the Voices of Those Who Enact Policy in a Small-Island State - Heathcliff Schembri</i> <i>Track 4 - Applied Qualitative Research Across Disciplines</i> • <i>Financial Strategies and Decision-Making in Malta's Property Industry: A Grounded Theory Study - Josette Bonnici</i> • <i>Revisiting the Place of Focus Groups in Hermeneutic Phenomenology - Jonathan Vella</i>
14:45 – 15:00	Coffee Break
15:00 – 16:30	Workshop - Photovoice Reimagined: how to make qualitative research transformative (Prof. Nicole Brown)
16:30	Closure



Friday 6th November 2026:

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome Coffee and Registration
09:00 – 10:00	Keynote Address - Using Grounded Theory to Understand Business Reality (Dr Sawsan Malik)
10:00 – 10:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
10:30 – 10:45	Doctoral Colloquium - Welcome & Opening of the Doctoral Colloquium
10:45 – 11:30	Doctoral Colloquium - Conversation 1 – The Reflexive Researcher: Positioning Ourselves Effectively Within Qualitative Inquiry
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:45 – 12:30	Doctoral Colloquium - Conversation 2 – Grounded Theory in Research: From Data Collection and Analysis to Theory Development
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Networking Lunch</i>
13:30 – 14:15	Doctoral Colloquium - Conversation 3 – Qualitative Research in the Digital & AI Era: Tool, Partner or Threat?
14:15 – 14:45	Doctoral Colloquium - Open Doctoral Forum – Questions, Clarifications and further Contributions
14:45 – 15:15	Doctoral Colloquium - Closing Reflections Followed by Research Networking