



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA



Rotary Peace Education Series (ROPES)

26-28 June 2026

Delivered by the Rotary Peace Centre, School of Political Science and
International Studies at The University of Queensland, St Lucia (Australia)



Table of contents

Rotary Peace Education Series (ROPES)

Overview	3
Who should attend	3
Entry requirements	3
What you'll learn	3

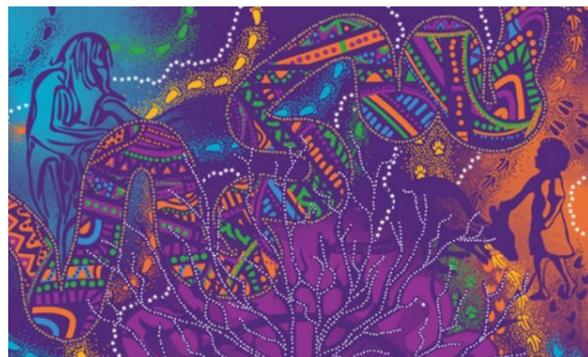
ROPES Programme Overview

Day 1 The new challenges to achieve World Peace	4
Day 2 Inclusive Peacebuilding: Gender, Youth, and Security	5
Day 3 The Visual Dimensions of War and Peace	6
Time Commitment	7
Assessment	7
Certificate and Accreditation	7
Cost	7
Contact	8
Facilitators	8

Facilitators' Bios

Dr Melissa Johnston	9
Associate Professor Sebastian Kaempf	10
Professor Katrina Lee-Koo	11
Dr Kirril Shields	12
Dr DB Subedi	13

Acknowledgment of Country



The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges 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.

A Guidance Through Time by Quandamooka artists Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow

Rotary Peace Education Series (ROPES)

26-28 June 2026

Overview

The Rotary Peace Education Series (ROPES) is a brand-new education programme, exclusively designed for Rotarians (and their families and friends) and Rotary staff who are interested in deepening their knowledge of peacebuilding. Participants gain an advanced understanding of the cutting-edge research on global conflict trends, the new challenges to world peace, the role of gender and youth in conflict resolution, and the visual dimensions of war and peace. This in-person, three full-day education series is led by the Rotary Peace Centre at The University of Queensland in close collaboration with Rotary International. This is unique opportunity to directly learn from and engage with some of the world's leading peace and conflict resolution experts and award-winning teachers.

Who should attend

Rotarians (and their families and friends) and Rotary staff who are keen to gain an in-depth understanding of global trends in violent conflicts, current challenges to peacebuilding, the role of gender and youth in conflict resolution processes, and the visual dimensions of war and peace. Rotarians from around the world and others with a keen interest in this area are invited to participate.

Entry requirements

No prior knowledge of conflict resolution and peace building is required. The programme is specifically designed to enable lay persons and non-experts to participate and learn from leading experts who research and teach in this field. Participants are expected to have a general desire to gain new knowledge and explore cutting-edge pathways to peace.

What you'll learn

- Understand current global trends in violent conflicts and the new challenges to peacebuilding.
- Fathom the importance of gender, youth, and security in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding.
- Understand the role that images play in both, sustaining war and promoting peace.

Day 1

The new challenges to achieve World Peace

Dr DB Subedi and Associate Professor Sebastian Kaempf

Pressing Challenges and Questions

For as long as there has been war, there have been demands for its elimination. Since 1945, and over the past few decades in particular, this quest for world peace has made significant inroads with regards to conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, and peacebuilding.

Today, however, these accomplishments are being stress tested by a new set of challenges that are more complex, connected, and complicated than ever before. There are two reasons for this. First, we now live in an age of polycrisis: inequalities, climate change, social polarisation, rapid technological change, the rise of violent extremism, and growing global insecurities all intersect and intensify one another, thereby producing more deadly and enduring cycles of violence and conflict at levels not seen since the end of World War II.

Second, many countries today are experiencing a shift marked by the rise of illiberal, more authoritarian, and populist-nationalist politics. This development reduces the space for dialogue, constrains state-society interactions, weakens social and political trust, and makes it harder for societies to resolve disagreements peacefully. The combined effects of these two contemporary trends – the emergence of the age of polycrisis and the global rise of illiberal forces – have profound effects on our ability to achieve world peace.

This session provides foundational understanding of the changing nature of violent conflicts and why their frequency has increased over the past two decades. It then examines how previously successful mechanisms for conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, and peacebuilding are increasingly being rendered inadequate and ineffective. The session then examines how these global shifts are bringing to the fore new peacebuilding practices. Here, newly emerging mechanisms such as 'illiberal peacebuilding' and 'authoritarian conflict management' will be examined. Based on this understanding, the session explores what world peace means in an age of polycrisis and enables participants to explore practical and feasible pathways for building peace in today's world.

The key questions for this session are:

1. What causes conflicts and what are the long-term trends regarding their occurrence?
2. How can world peace be achieved in an age of polycrisis?
3. How are recent shifts in global and national politics reshaping the challenges and prospects for world peace?
4. And how can we support and strengthen efforts to build pathways towards sustainable peace and a more peaceful world?

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand and analyse the broad dynamics and causes of violent conflict.
2. Gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of peace in an age of polycrisis.
3. Develop a clearer understanding of how the recent shifts towards illiberalism and authoritarian politics are impacting upon approaches and practices of conflict transformation and peacebuilding.
4. Explore approaches and mechanisms to curtail war and to build inclusive pathways for sustainable peace.

Day 2

Inclusive Peacebuilding: Gender, Youth, and Security

Dr Melissa Johnston and Professor Katrina Lee-Koo

Pressing Challenges and Questions

The theme on day two will focus on the values of inclusive peacebuilding and explore peacebuilding approaches that are catered for the specific needs of men, women, boys, and girls.

As men, women, and young people do not experience war and peace in the same way, this presents challenges for building peace. While men and boys may be largely involved in the decision-making about war and be the main combatants, women and girls tend to be quite differently and disproportionately affected by war and its aftermath. This can include experiences of gender-based violence and discrimination, increased caring responsibilities, an acute lack of resources and services, and an exclusion from decision-making forums and roles after conflicts have ended. Moreover, violence on the war front may result in increased gender-based violence in the home, an after effect of war that has a long shadow.

Nonetheless, peacebuilders tend to look to women as agents of peace, reliant on a logic that women are peaceful and caring. Young people too are relied upon to extend the peace into future generations. While women and young people may indeed be invested in peaceful communities, rebuilding families and reestablishing peaceful economies, this places disproportionate labour burdens on them, sometimes undermining their wellbeing to an extreme extent. The depletion of these groups, can, in turn, undermine social cohesion and resilience, and thereby generate conditions conducive for the renewal of conflict.

The key questions for this session are:

1. How do gender-based dynamics between men, women, boys and girls foster or inhibit conflict?
2. What gender- and age-based stereotypes and assumptions do peacebuilders rely on when they seek to address conflict?
3. What steps can peacebuilders take to properly recognise how experiences of war differ for men, women, and young people?
4. How can peacebuilders support women and young people in conflict affected contexts without increasing their burdens?

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand and analyse gender- and age-based dynamics in conflict.
2. Grasp the challenges that peacebuilders face when seeking to intervene in gender- and age-based dynamics in conflict.
3. Develop a sense of what can be helpful and harmful for women and young people in conflict situations.
4. Understand the importance of recognising the disproportionate labour burdens on women and young people in post conflict rebuilding.

Day 3

The Visual Dimensions of War and Peace

Associate Professor Sebastian Kaempf

Pressing Challenges and Questions

We live in a visual age. Television, film, photographs, new media sources and artworks decisively influence how we perceive and deal with political phenomena as diverse as war, terrorism, refugees, financial crises, and peace. But we know surprisingly little about the exact nature and impact of this visual power.

The focus of day three of our workshop is placed on unpacking the nature, power, and impact of images; enabling participants to gain a deeper understanding of the important role that images play in both, sustaining war and promoting peace. The session equips participants with the tools and skills to 'read' and analyse the meaning of images, and to thereby understand the ability of images to shape our attitudes towards political phenomena such as war and peace. The session also focuses on how militaries and intelligence agencies in democratic societies, such as the Pentagon and CIA, have been influencing Hollywood film and TV productions for decades, with the explicit goal to foster pro-military attitudes and hinder imaginations of world peace amongst media consumers.

The key questions for this session are:

1. What makes our age a particularly visual one? What is the power of images we encounter via TV, film, photographs, new media sources and artwork? How do these influence us?
2. What are the techniques we can use to analyse and understand the meaning and influence images of war and peace?
3. How have the Pentagon and CIA been able to influence over 10,000 Hollywood film and TV productions? How does this collaboration between the world's most powerful security apparatus and the world's most influential entertainment industry work?
4. What are the core messages that the Pentagon and CIA have succeeded in writing into film scripts? And how do these sustain positive attitudes towards war and hinder imaginations of world peace?

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand and analyse the power and meaning of images.
2. Grasp the important role images play in our understanding of war and peace.
3. Understand the dynamics and nature of the close collaboration between democratic militaries and the global entertainment industries in shaping audiences' attitudes and emotions.
4. Gain the necessary skills to become a critical consumer of images of war and peace.

Time Commitment

This is an in-person course that will require roughly 32 hours to complete.

- 8 hours of individual, self-paced study using online materials in preparation for the 3-day education programme.
- 3-day in-person education programme.

Following registration, each participant will receive a study pack in preparation for each of the topics of the ROPES.

Assessment

This education programme does not have any assessment items.

Certificate and Accreditation

Participants who successfully complete the course will receive a Certificate of Completion, signed by both Rotary International and the UQ Rotary Peace Centre.



Click or scan to register and learn more about the programme

Cost

Applicant	Price
Individual domestic (incl. GST)	A\$1,400
Individual International (GST not payable)	A\$1,273

The course will only proceed if there are 30 or more participants registered and paid **by 15 May 2026**. If UQ cancels the course due to insufficient enrolment, UQ will refund in full all payments made on or before this date to the registered participants.

Please note: No refunds will be issued for cancellations made by participants **after 15 May 2026**.

Registrations close 15 days before the course starts, i.e. on 11 June 2026.

Catering (morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea) for each day is included in the course fees.

For domestic participants, GST is included in the cost. For international participants, GST is not payable.

Participants are responsible for arranging for their travel and accommodation.



Location

Global Change Institute (Building 20)
The University of Queensland
St Lucia, QLD 4072
Australia
gci.uq.edu.au

Contact

School of Political Science and
International Studies, Rotary Peace Centre
Email: rotarypeacecentre@uq.edu.au

Facilitators

Dr Melissa Johnston

Deputy Director UQ Rotary Peace Centre
School of Political Science and International Studies
polsis.uq.edu.au/profile/7022/melissa-johnston

Associate Professor Sebastian Kaempf

Director UQ Rotary Peace Centre
School of Political Science and International Studies
polsis.uq.edu.au/profile/1237/sebastian-kaempf

Professor Katrina Lee-Koo

Head of School
School of Political Science and International Studies
polsis.uq.edu.au/profile/7975/katrina-lee-koo

Dr Kirril Shields

Director of Education
Asia-Pacific Centre for The Responsibility to Protect
School of Political Science and International Studies
polsis.uq.edu.au/profile/3963/kirril-shields

Dr DB Subedi

Senior Lecturer
School of Political Science and International Studies
polsis.uq.edu.au/profile/7813/db-subedi

Facilitator



Dr Melissa Johnston

Deputy Director UQ Rotary Peace Centre
School of Political Science and International Studies

Melissa Johnston is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Political Science and International Studies and the Deputy Director of the Rotary Peace Centre at The University of Queensland. She is currently working on a project entitled 'Brideprice, Conflict, and Violence Against Women in Asia'. Funded by the Australian Research Council, this project examines how gender-based violence, gender inequality, and marriage markets may lead to violent conflict.

Melissa's general research interests lie in the political economy of post-conflict reconstruction, gender, and peacebuilding. She has won the 2019 Australian Political Studies Association prize for her doctoral dissertation. Her book monograph, *Building Peace, Rebuilding Patriarchy: The Failure of Gender Interventions in Timor-Leste* (Oxford University Press), was the winner of the British International Studies Association IPEG book prize in 2024. In this monograph, Melissa applies a feminist political economy approach to account for the uneven outcomes in gender programming by international development agencies. The book argues that the uneven outcomes of international interventions on gender responsive budgeting, laws against domestic violence, and microfinance are shaped by power relations between men and women in a setting of elite dominance. In the Timor-Leste case specifically,

the political economy of kinship - as manifested in brideprice or traditional dispute resolution - has been as crucial to class formation as it has in perpetuating gender injustices. 'Frontier Finance', a journal article from this work, was the winner of the 2021 Australian International Political Economy Network best journal article prize.

Melissa's research is policy relevant, seeking to provide a sound evidence base for action. Her research on the links between misogyny and violent extremism has been cited by the UN Secretary General and other international organisations.

Previously, Melissa has worked for the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) on Asia-Pacific development, and for Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) on European Union programs to protect women from severe intimate partner violence.



Scan to learn more about
Dr Melissa Johnston

Facilitator



Associate Professor Sebastian Kaempf

Director UQ Rotary Peace Centre
School of Political Science and International Studies

Sebastian Kaempf is an Associate Professor in Peace and Conflict Studies in the School of Political Science and International Studies at The University of Queensland. He is also the Director of the Rotary Peace Centre at UQ.

His expertise lies at the intersection between International Relations and Peace and Conflict Studies, with specialization in the areas of international security, ethics and the laws of war, and information technology relating to global politics and violent conflict.

Dr Kaempf received his PhD at the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University (UK). He holds a BSc and MSc in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He won the ISA Deborah Gerner Award for Teaching Innovation in 2020. In 2013, he won an Australian national award for teaching excellence (AAUT); in 2012, he won UQ and Faculty awards for teaching excellence.

Together with his colleague A/Prof Al Stark, he hosts the podcast 'Higher Ed Heroes': <https://www.buzzsprout.com/813707>. And he is the co-producer of the award-winning film documentary *Theatres of War: How the CIA and Pentagon took Hollywood*: <https://go.mediaed.org/theaters-of-war>. He is a member of the editorial team of the journal 'Review of International Studies'.



Scan to learn more about
Associate Professor
Sebastian Kaempf

Facilitator



Professor Katrina Lee-Koo

Head of School
School of Political Science and International Studies

Katrina Lee-Koo is the Head of School of Political Science and International Studies at The University of Queensland. She researches in the fields of inclusive peace and security, feminist international relations, and women and leadership.

Her most recent book publications are: *Gender Politics: Navigating Political Leadership in Australia* (co-edited with Zareh Ghazarian, 2021, New South Publishing), and *Young Women and Leadership* (co-edited with Lesley Pruitt, New York: Routledge, 2020). She has also published in her areas of research in: *Co-operation and Conflict*, *Contemporary Security Policy*, *Journal of Global Security Studies*, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, *International Political Science Review*, *International Studies Perspectives*, *Third World Quarterly*, *Feminist Review*, *the Australian Journal of Political Science* and elsewhere.

She has been chief investigator of an Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Project entitled 'Gender after Conflict' and an ARC Linkage Project 'Towards Inclusive Peace: Monitoring the Gender Provisions in Peace Settlements' with partner organization the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

She has held research partnerships across Australian government departments and with international organisations and NGOs.

She is currently on the editorial board for the *Australian Journal of Political Science*, the *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, the *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International feminist Journal of Politics* and *Politics and Gender*. She is on the advisory board for the Royal Holloway Gender Institute, a series editor for the Palgrave Studies in International Relations and in 2023 was a Visiting Professor at the University of Brawijaya, Indonesia.

Katrina completed her undergraduate degrees at the University of Queensland, her Masters degree at the University of Nottingham, and her PhD at the Australian National University where she was employed from 2004-2014. Before joining UQ, Katrina was the Head of the Politics and International Relations program and Director and Deputy Director of the Gender, Peace and Security research centre at Monash University.



Scan to learn more about
Professor Katrina Lee-Koo

Facilitator



Dr Kirril Shields

Director of Education
Asia-Pacific Centre for The Responsibility to Protect
School of Political Science and International Studies

Dr Kirril Shields is a member of the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (APR2P Centre), a partnership between DFAT and UQ, where he oversees regional initiatives to prevent atrocity crime and human rights violations, working with governments, CSOs, NGOs, and other tertiary institutions across Southeast Asia. Dr Shields also oversees the Centre's prevention of hate speech research and incentives, including capacity building with regional government officials on the prevention of hate speech and disinformation.

In the international sector, Dr Shields has worked with the World Bank and the UN in Mongolia, and currently with the UN Office of Genocide Prevention and R2P as an Expert Consultant. As part of his work with the UN, Dr Shields designed and then helped to facilitate the implementation of the UN's atrocity prevention course being taught into tertiary institutions in Southeast Asia. His work directly involves him in the region's peace and conflict architecture, and its humanitarian architecture.

Dr Shields teaches into the School of Political Science and International Studies (POLSIS),

including on the region's politics, and he also teaches on Asia's past as a determinant on how to negotiate present conflicts. He teaches across the Arts faculty on topics of literature, film and television, and communication. He is the current Editor-in-Chief of the international journal *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, and he writes on topics that include foreign affairs and regional politics. He is an Auschwitz Jewish Centre Fellow, a Fellow of the Holocaust Education Foundation at Royal Holloway, and currently a Charles E. Scheidt Faculty Fellow in Atrocity Prevention at Binghampton University's Institute for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention.



Scan to learn more about
Dr Kirril Shields

Facilitator



Dr DB Subedi

Senior Lecturer
School of Political Science and International Studies

Dr DB Subedi is a Senior Lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies in the School of Political Science and International Studies at The University of Queensland. He received his PhD in Peace Studies from the University of New England in Australia, his MA in Sociology from Central European University, and his Bachelor's degree in humanities from Tribhuvan University in Nepal. His research interests include conflict transformation and peace building, the intersection between religion and politics, and populism and nationalism in the Asia Pacific region. He has conducted research fieldwork across South and Southeast Asia, especially Nepal, Sri Lanka, India, and Myanmar.

Dr DB Subedi is the author of [Combatants to Civilians: Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Maoist Fighters in Nepal's Peace Process](#) (Palgrave, 2018) and co-editor of [The Routledge Handbook of Populism in the Asia Pacific](#) (Routledge, 2024) and [Reconciliation in Conflict-Affected Communities: Practices and Insights from the Asia Pacific](#). He has also published his research in scholarly journals such as *World Development*, *Contemporary South Asia*, *Religion & Politics*, *Asian Studies Review*, *Journal of Human Rights*, *Conflict, Security & Development* and *Contemporary Politics*.

Before entering academia, DB worked with international organisations for more than ten years in Nepal, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. He has provided research and consultancy service to several agencies including United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, ActionAid Myanmar, UNICEF, International Alert UK, Care International and Mercy Corps. In 2022, he supported the Connected Communities team in NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet to develop and implement the evaluation framework and plan for NSW's Countering Violent Extremism Programme. He is currently working on a collaborative project (2024-2026) that aims to support democratic action in Myanmar through research, capacity building, training, and advocacy.



Scan to learn more about
Dr DB Subedi



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

Every attempt has been made to ensure that the information contained in this Handbook is correct at the time of publication.

**School of Political Science
and International Studies**

Website: polsis.uq.edu.au

Email: polsis@uq.edu.au

**The University of Queensland
Rotary Peace Centre**

Website: rotary.centre.uq.edu.au

Facebook: Rotary Peace Centre at
The University of Queensland

Email: rotarypeacecentre@uq.edu.au