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Rethinking lifelong learning in the 'fourth industrial revolution'

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Two key discourses of our time, lifelong learning (LLL) and the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), have been linked to offer a compelling narrative of the coupling of education models and technological change to enable individual empowerment, social inclusion and shared prosperity. We identify flaws and difficulties with the both concepts and their application, and examine how they have been brought together. However, we also suggest that the 4IR can provide an impetus for thinking about LLL in new ways which transcend the individual employment-focused discourse and point to a progressive conceptualisation of LLL responsive to the changing nature of work and indeed more fundamental issues for humanity.