

Main Conference Preface

ILRN 2017 is the third annual international conference of the Immersive Learning Network. It follows on from the inaugural conference held in Prague in July 2015 and the second conference held in Santa Barbara in June 2016.

There have been ninety-three submissions to the conference in 2017 encompassing long and short papers, posters, special tracks and workshops. This has more than doubled since last year when the total was forty-five. This research area is clearly attracting more attention as the usability and affordability of powerful virtual reality devices grows alongside the search for new modes of learning and delivering effective educational experiences. In addition to the ongoing development of virtual laboratories, bespoke learning systems and collaborative training environments the emerging interdisciplinary fields of cultural heritage, VR-related cognitive studies and VR-mediated communication are also represented in these proceedings.

The Immersive Learning Research Network is highly inclusive, keen to accommodate and encourage all interested parties to actively participate in this vibrant research area, especially by attending the annual conference. All papers and posters were independently reviewed: long papers by 3 – 5 reviewers, short papers by 2 – 4 reviewers and posters by 2 reviewers. This ensured that all authors were given a good mix of feedback on how to improve their submissions for publication and presentation at the conference. In cases where the reviewers agreed that much more work was needed for a particular format long papers were invited to be resubmitted as short papers and short papers as posters. Submissions for the main track of the conference included nine posters and thirty-four papers. Eleven of these papers were accepted for inclusion in an edition of Springer's long running series Communications in Computer and Information Sciences with the remaining revised papers and abstracts for posters being included in this volume. This publication is Open Access with a DOI and also a separate DOI for each long paper.

The main conference includes six distinguished plenaries demonstrating both breadth and depth in the ILRN. Curtis Bonk locates immersive technologies in a historical context, where the fourth industrial revolution meets the 4th E-Learning revolution; Alan Miller takes time out from his busy schedule of installations from Iceland to the Caribbean to share his experiences of supporting cultural heritage and digital tourism through virtual time travel, virtual museums and community engagement; ILRN's own executive director, Jonathan Richter, highlights the pressing need to build research capacity in the area and proposes a design for an open networked global community effort; Carsten Ullrich presents results and insights from the APPist research project which investigated how adaptive technology can support the employee in the challenging environment of the shop floor; Nelson Vilhena illustrates the role of immersive technologies in computer-mediated reality giving examples from diverse contexts including mission planning, healthcare, and hydroelectric power management; Minjuan Wang focuses on augmented reality as a key emerging trend in education, providing an overview of its current development, exploring examples of curriculum integration, and describing which approaches are likely to be successful.

If you are not already involved in thinking about or using immersive learning in educational contexts we believe that these proceedings will stimulate you to so by joining the ILRN.

Colin Allison
ILRN 2017 Program Chair