Main Conference Preface

ILRN 2018 is the fourth annual international conference of the Immersive Learning Research Network, following the 2017 edition in Coimbra (Portugal), and returning for the second time to the United States, after the Santa Barbara edition in 2016.

There have been sixty-seven submissions to the conference in 2018 encompassing long and short papers, posters, demo proposals, special tracks and workshops. Albeit a third less than last year when the total was ninety-four, it is fifty percent more than in the last North American edition. Clearly, while travel logistics from other continents to the United States still pose challenges to participation, the research area is attracting more attention in North America, and more people overseas are overcoming those challenges. Of a total 150 authors of accepted papers and posters, 55% are from North America and 45% from the rest of the world, with Europe accounting for 21%, Africa 12%, South America 7%, and Asia 5%. The iLRN goal of developing a balanced transatlantic (and beyond) event enabling exchange of practices and research is being achieved. Authors of accepted contributions are from Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Tunisia, United Kingdom and the United States. Within the United States, there is exciting diversity as authors are from 17 states: Arkansas, California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin (fig. 1).
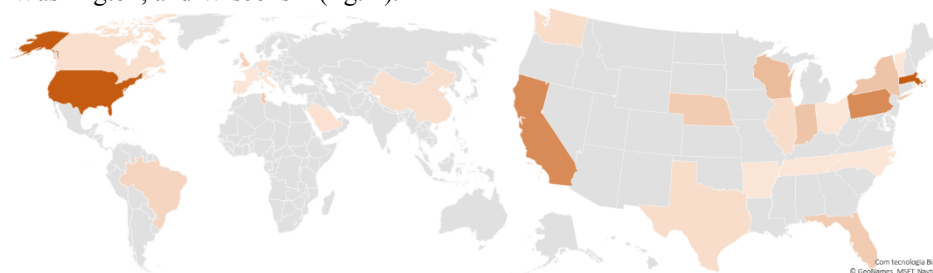

Figure 1: Geographical distribution of accepted paper authors at iLRN 2018

The overall acceptance rate for full papers was twenty-nine percent, with all papers and posters being independently reviewed: full/long papers by 3 – 5 reviewers, short papers by 2 – 4 reviewers and posters by 2 reviewers. 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 given format, full/long papers were invited to be resubmitted as short papers and short papers as posters. Fourteen of the accepted papers were published in an edition of Springer's series Communications in Computer and Information Sciences, the remaining revised papers and poster abstracts being included in this volume.

The main conference includes four distinguished plenaries demonstrating both breadth and depth in immersive learning. Chris Dede links virtual reality with its ability to empower educational transformation; Bonnie Bracey challenged ideas about purpose

and use of museums, through the presence of digital artefacts combining the 3D ecosystem and the Internet of Things; Eliza Reilly, showed how teaching and learning and working within native communities on challenges that they care about is an immersive learning context; and Drew Minock explored how augmented reality is raising the bar today by improving productivity and safety, minimizing downtime, and accelerating learning and adaptation.

If you are not already involved in thinking about or researching immersive learning, check out these proceedings, and get excited about joining the iLRN community.

Leonel Morgado & Colin Allison
iLRN 2018 Co-Program Chairs