

# iLRN 2023 Preface

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The 9th annual International Conference of the Immersive Learning Research Network (iLRN2023) continued to push the boundaries of immersive learning, offering a hybrid experience that combined a virtual campus experience on the iLRN Virtual Campus (powered by ©Virbela) and Zoom meetings in May, followed by on-location events at the California Polytechnic State University (CalPoly) campus, in San Luis Obispo (SLO), California. This year's conference brought together an international community of scholars, practitioners, and innovators to explore the theme of *Learning Across the Metaverse: Building an Evidence-based Framework through Science, Community, Vision, & Adventure!*

Building on the success of our past conferences, iLRN2023 showcased cutting-edge research that explored the transformative potential of immersive learning to create more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning experiences for diverse populations. The conference also provided a platform for attendees to network, connect, and contribute to the growing area of immersive learning. In addition, iLRN2023 keynote and featured speakers represented a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives, including experts worldwide, contributing to the discussion of applications of Immersive Learning in different domains.

In keeping with our commitment to innovation and inclusion, iLRN2023 featured a range of exciting events, including the Metaverse Adventures series, which brought together experts and thought leaders worldwide to explore the latest developments in the metaverse. We hosted eleven academic tracks, including the special track Immersive Learning across Latin America, which explored state-of-the-art research, use cases and projects specifically for the Latin America region. Additionally, in collaboration with Hitcher Encounters, we organized our first alternate reality game (ARG) for all registered attendees, highlighting the potential of collaborative social learning.

Three hundred thirty authors from 169 different academic institutions, research centers and companies in thirty-one countries submitted publications to the Academic and Practitioner tracks. Countries included Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Malawi, Mexico, Netherlands, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Turkey, UK, and USA.

One-hundred and ten submissions were received for the Academic track. These include full and short papers, work-in-progress (WiP) poster papers and submissions to the Doctoral Colloquium. Every submission underwent a rigorous review by at least three members of the Program Committee to maintain high scientific and quality standards. All contributions were evaluated in a double-blind review process and checked for plagiarism to ensure authors submitted original work. All authors were given meaningful feedback on their submissions. After the peer-review process, all authors were given meaningful feedback on their submissions, and promising work was invited to resubmit in a different category when reviewers agreed that papers needed substantial work (i.e. full papers were invited to resubmit as short papers and short papers as WiP posters).

After a rigorous review process and based on the peer-review results, 64 papers were accepted within their submitted format for inclusion in the final Academic proceedings (58.18 % overall acceptance rate, including WiP and DC). From those, 26 out of 44 full papers were accepted (59.09% acceptance rate), 13 out of 28 short papers were accepted (46.43% acceptance rate), 23 out of 29 work-in-progress papers were accepted (79.31% acceptance rate) and 2 out of 9 doctoral colloquium papers were accepted (22.22% acceptance rate).

In addition, we are proud to present our second Practitioner Proceedings volume, which includes 34 submissions. These submissions were peer-reviewed and presented at the conference. They include 11 oral presentations, 10 posters, 5 workshops, 4 panels and 4 practitioner colloquium submissions. Authors were required to submit an abstract with well-articulated perspectives on applications of Immersive Learning.

We are pleased to partner with Springer's Communications in Computer and Information Science (CCIS) series to publish all accepted and registered full and short papers in the Academic Stream presented at iLRN2023. All work-in-progress poster papers, doctoral colloquium papers, and practitioner papers were published with an individual DOI in the iLRN online proceedings. We hope these publications will be a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and researchers in immersive learning and inspire future discoveries and innovations in our exciting and rapidly-evolving field.

We celebrated outstanding contributions through our *Best Academic Paper* awards (with awards for each category, including student papers) and *Best Practitioner* awards. The Program Chairs chose final nominees from those that received the best reviews and have been nominated for awards by reviewers. The winners were selected by an independent jury panel, which was asked to review the nominated papers based on contribution, methodology, and clarity.

Reviewers provided feedback on submitted papers, suggested improvements, and recommended to the Program Chairs whether to accept, reject or request paper changes. Reviewing is a volunteer and time-intensive process, and we are grateful to all our reviewers for contributing to our community. We implemented the *Best Academic Reviewer* award as a small way to recognize them for their service. An independent jury panel chose the winning reviews. The jury panel made a meta-review of the nominated reviews based on the study's rigor, contribution to improving a paper and developing the conference.

In addition, we recognized the service our conference organizing committee does, volunteering their time to make this event happen. We acknowledge their contribution via the Service awards. The list of winners is available in the *Awards* section of this volume. We sincerely thank those involved who volunteered their time to make this such a great event and attendees for joining us and sharing their excellent work with the iLRN community.

If you are not already involved, we invite you to read these proceedings and join us in our subsequent events and ongoing initiatives.

Anasol Peña-Rios and Andreas Dengel  
iLRN 2023 General Chairs

# About iLRN Conference Series

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iLRN's annual conference is the premier scholarly event focusing on advances in the use of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), mixed reality (MR), and other extended reality (XR) technologies to support learners across the entire span of learning—from K-12 through higher education to work-based, informal, and lifelong learning contexts.

iLRN's annual conference, indexed with CORE ranking C (<http://portal.core.edu.au/conf-ranks/2266/>), is the most relevant conference in Immersive Learning, devoting the entire conference to this topic.

iLRN has hosted a hybrid conference in Vienna (2022), two entirely online and in-VR conferences in 2021 and 2020, and in-person editions in London, UK (2019), Missoula, Montana, USA (2018), Coimbra, Portugal (2017), Santa Barbara, California, USA (2016), and Prague, Czech Republic (2015).

## Contact

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- General inquiries about iLRN may be sent to [info@immersivelrn.org](mailto:info@immersivelrn.org)

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