The PLE Conference 2013

Personal Learning Environments: Learning and Diversity in Cities of the Future

Call for Papers

PLE 2013 - 4th International Conference on Personal Learning Environments

The Personal Learning Environment Conference (The PLE Conference) is an international scientific conference taking place annually, each time in a different city. Following the highly successful events in Barcelona in Spain 2010 (#PLE_BCN), in Southampton, UK in 2011 (#PLE_SOU) and the parallel events in 2012 in Aveiro, Portugal and Melbourne, Australia (#PLECONF), the 4th International PLE Conference 2013 will be held in Berlin, Germany together with a parallel event in Melbourne, Australia (#PLEONF) from the 10th to the 12th July 2013.

The PLE Conference intends to create a space for researchers and practitioners to exchange ideas, experiences and research around the development and implementation of Personal Learning Environments (PLEs) – including the design of environments and the sociological and educational issues that they raise.

To gain something of the flavour of the last conferences, search for #PLE_BCN, #PLE_SOU and #PLECONF and see http://pleconference.citilab.eu and http://www.pleconf.org/2011.

Conference theme

Personal Learning Environments (PLEs) are an approach to Technology-Enhanced Learning based on the principles of learner autonomy and empowerment. PLEs include methods, tools, communities, and services constituting individual learning infrastructures or ecosystems which learners use to direct their own learning and pursue their educational goals. This represents a shift away from the traditional model of learning based on knowledge transfer towards a model of learning based on knowledge construction where learners draw connections from a growing pool of online and offline resources to plan, organise, engage in, reflect on and evaluate their learning and development. By focusing on the enhancing learning of individual, yet interconnected learners, the PLE approach encompasses a diversity of learners, tools, perspectives and knowledge.

So far Personal Learning Environments have been designed and implemented in formal and informal learning contexts, such as school and higher education, work-based learning and in-company training, and in continuing education. The potential of Personal Learning Environments for crossing the boundaries of traditional learning contexts, connecting diverse communities and infrastructures has not been fully realised. Therefore, the 4th PLE Conference in 2013 aims at taking the discussion on Personal Learning Environments a step forward, providing a new impulse for PLE research and development.

The theme for the conference is learning and diversity in cities of the future. In view of the "Smart City" concept and the key priorities for research and innovation expressed in the EU Horizon 2020 framework, *innovative, sustainable and inclusive* solutions become crucial not only in terms of future and emerging technologies but first and foremost in terms of (i) human knowledge and skills, (ii) diverse and inclusive communities, as well as (iii) learning and knowledge networks. Hence, new forms of connected, interdisciplinary learning and cross-boundary cooperation are seen to play a critical role in the development of creative solutions and in the intelligent exploitation of networked urban infrastructures. In smart urban spaces, people, organisations and objects become interconnected by means of new technologies and media, forging new patterns of cooperation, production, research and innovation.

As smart cities we understand smart urban spaces sensu Michael de Certeau, i.e. "practiced places", places which are transformed and constituted by dynamic and diverse elements ("a tour is different than a map"). From this perspective the following questions emerge:

> *What shapes can Personal Learning Environments take to support diversity, cross-boundary learning and interdisciplinary transformation of urban spaces? How can we design and implement Personal Learning Environments as part of highly interconnected social and technological infrastructures of smart cities? What technology-enhanced scenarios can be envisaged to enhance learning and diversity in cities of the future?*

Conference themes include (but are not limited to):

- Concepts, scenarios and technologies for fostering diversity with PLEs
- Concepts, scenarios, technologies for learning in smart urban spaces
- General theories and frameworks for PLE
- Technologies and software for developing PLE
- Pedagogical and didactic approaches to Personal Learning Environments
- Personal Learning Environments and Personal Learning Networks (PLN)
- PLE and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC)
- Personal Learning Environments, Open Badges and Gamification
- PLEs in practice: case studies, good practice and approaches to PLEs
- PLEs in education: new approaches and managing change in education
- PLEs in organisations: new approaches and change in enterprises
- PLEs at work: PLEs work-based learning and vocational training
- PLEs in context: PLEs for contextual learning such as mobile learning
- PLE vision: emerging technologies and innovative approaches to PLEs

Conference formats

The PLE Conference has integrated both traditional and innovative formats since 2010, providing opportunities present and publish high quality research in formats which stimulate creative collaboration and idea generation. This mix of classic and progressive formats has proved to be valuable to the conference participants and to the growth of the PLE community. Therefore, the PLE 2013 Berlin Conference welcomes innovating and engaging presentations incorporated into traditional research paper strands alongside workshops, poster sessions and demonstrations. Furthermore, installations, debates, cafe and pecha kucha sessions and the famous PLE un-keynotes are essential to sustaining the dynamic and interactive discussion environment established by the previous events in Barcelona, Southampton, Aveiro and Melbourne.

The PLE conference is especially looking for originality and relevancy of ideas and for creative proposals, in both form and content. Formats for publication and communication of research are two different things! Regardless of the publication format you decide to contribute (full paper, short paper, workshop, doctoral consortium, demonstration, installation, pecha kucha etc.), we encourage interactive and engaging ways of communicating theoretical frameworks, models, concepts, plans and results of research and development.

Submission and review process

The conference organisers welcome **extended abstracts** for full papers (maximum 1,200 words) or short papers (maximum 700 words). We also invite submissions of **short abstracts** (400 words) for other submission types, such as pre-conference workshops, pecha kucha, sessions, symposia, poster sessions. The deadline for extended abstracts for full and short papers and for short abstracts for non-traditional formats is **4 March 2013**.

Authors of accepted abstracts will be invited to submit their **final papers** of no more than 3000 words (short papers) or 8000 words (full papers) by **14th June 2013**. The word limits include everything (title, abstract, keywords, bibliography). Figures and tables account for 250 words each.

The submission formats are (but are not limited to):

- Full papers (abstract max. 1,200 words, final max. 8,000 words)
- Short papers (abstract max. 700 words, final max. 3,000 words)
- Pre-conference workshop (max. 400 words)
- Pecha kucha session (max. 400 words)
- Poster session (max. 400 words)
- Demonstrations (max. 400 words)
- Installations (max. 400 words)
- Debates (max. 400 words)
- World cafe sessions (max. 400 words)
- Idea generation session (max. 400 words)
- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) (max. 400 words)
- Hackathons (max. 400 words)
- Other formats

Please submit your contributions via the **EasyChair** submission system. All submissions should include **two keywords**:

KEYWORD 1: The preferred location for presentation (Berlin or Melbourne)
KEYWORD2: The submission format (e.g. "full paper", "pecha kucha").

Review Process

To enhance the participatory character of the PLE conference the review process of the PLE Conference 2013 is based on the **shepherding** concept.

This means: Authors submit extended abstracts for full and short papers proposals and these abstract are subject to a peer review process. Authors of accepted abstracts are invited to submit full versions of their papers and are assigned one mentor (shepherd) to guide them in this process. Mentors (shepherds) are experienced authors who help the submitter by making suggestions for improvement. The submitters incorporate these improvements into their papers in a few iterations depending on the individual case.

The aim of this one-to-one mentoring (shepherding) is to enable authors to develop their full potential and enhance the quality of the submissions.

All accepted proposals will be published electronically in conference proceedings with an ISSN number. As the PLE Conference is dedicated to the principles of Open Access, all submissions in conference proceedings will be licensed under a **Creative Commons** license. In addition to the conference proceedings, we intend to publish selected conference papers in special editions of the journals that support the conference.

Important dates

- **4 March 2013:** Deadline for all submissions, i.e. extended abstracts for full and short papers and short abstracts for workshops and other formats

- **12 April 2013:** Author notification of acceptance of extended abstracts (full and short papers) and short abstracts for other submissions

- **14 June 2013:** Submission of final papers as a result of the shepherding

- **10 July 2013:** Pre-Conference Workshops

- **11-12 July 2013:** Main Conference

Guidelines for submissions

Full papers
As a guide, the extended abstract for a full paper should include the following:

- **Background:** The area and theoretical framework of the work, e.g. "This paper takes a socio-cultural perspective to the design of PLEs." or "This is an action research study of the introduction of mobile PLEs."
- **Approach:** Describe the approach and methods employed in the work.
- **Results:** Give an account of the work that is in progress or has been carried out, and why it is important. Show how you have evaluated or conducted a critical appraisal of the work.
- **Conclusion:** Reflect on the successes and limitations of the work and its potential for further development. Submissions should address one or more conference themes or be related to the general theme of PLE.

Full papers may report on research or bring together research and/or policy into an overview that gives new insight into an area or suggests ways in which policy and/or practice may develop from current work. This may include reports on work in progress at an early stage, perhaps indicating key results to date.

Short papers
As a guide, the extended abstract for a short paper should include the following:

- **Background:** The area and theoretical framework of the work, e.g. "This paper takes a socio-cultural perspective to the design of PLEs." or "This is an action research study of the introduction of mobile PLEs."
- **Approach:** Describe the approach and methods employed in the work.
- **Results:** Give an account of the work that is in progress or has been carried out, and why it is important. Show how you have evaluated or conducted a critical appraisal of the work.
- **Conclusion:** Reflect on the successes and limitations of the work and its potential for further development. Note that a written paper is not required in addition to the abstract.

A short paper should describe and analyse either innovative work or some other significant contribution to the field of PLE development and implementation. The short paper format is suitable, e.g., for reviews of projects, for work-in-progress, or for discussion or position papers. A key requirement is that the paper has a clear focus.

Workshops, demos and other formats

As a guide, the abstract for a workshops, demos and other interactive formats should include the following topics:

- **Background:** The aims, the area and theoretical framework.
- **Approach:** Describe the approach and methods being employed in the work, and how you will convey this to conference participants.
- **Results:** An account of the work that is in progress or has been carried out, and why it is important.
- **Conclusion:** Summary of effects and any developments you anticipate.

Posters

As a guide, the abstract for a poster should include the following topics:

- **Background:** The area and theoretical framework of the work.
- **Approach:** Describe the approach and methods being employed in the work, and how you will convey this to conference participants. Include a description of a diagram or picture that will form the focus of the poster.
- **Results:** An account of the work that is in progress or has been carried out, and why it is important.
- **Conclusion:** Summary of effects and any developments you anticipate.

We also encourage poster presenters to make their poster available a PDF or a standalone web page. This will enable posters to be viewed electronically as well as physically thus making them widely available to conference attendees. You do not need to address this at the stage of submitting the abstract. We aim to give posters prominence during the PLE 2013 conference. A prize will be awarded to the best poster during the conference. Posters are especially welcome from new practitioners or researchers, including post-graduates in TEL. All accepted posters will be will be published with an ISSN.

Final Information

The PLE Conference is committed to an open publication model for conference contributions. By submitting a proposal to PLE 2013, authors agree that they or their employer retain copyright, but that contributions - if published - will be licensed for use with a CC License - http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us at pleconfweb@gmail.com