ALT annual conference 2024

Date: Tue 3 – Thu 5 Sept, 2024
Location: Manchester airport
Conference website: https://altc.alt.ac.uk/2024/call-for-proposals/

The Association for Learning Technology's Annual Conference is one of the UK's largest conferences for colleagues whose work involves elements of using and/or supporting the use of educational technology. Held over three days, the conference provides a valuable and practical forum for practitioners, researchers, managers and policy-makers from education and industry to solve problems, explore, reflect, influence and learn. The conference attracts over 350 delegates from across the UK and around the world. Delegates are practitioners from Higher and Further Education, Schools and Industry at all levels of seniority. Delegates are in a wide range of roles including digital education professionals, educational developers, senior/executive leaders, learning and development professionals, academics and researchers.

Relevance to the work of the Academy

The themes this year are especially relevant to the work at the Academy. The themes include

- **Cultivating Collaboration** including students as partners, which is something the Academy actively encourage.
- **Reviewing, Reflecting, Re-imaging**, this is the theme that focuses on staff development, looks to be focusing on personal reflection, capturing achievements and celebrating them, which is well within the scope of my role.
- **Inviting Improvement,** this theme explore CPD opportunities including developing leadership, coaching and improving teaching. All of which are relevant to the work at the Academy, most are relevant to my role.
- **Emerging research,** I would expect the research sessions will mostly be related to educational research, which is directly relevant to my role and what we are trying to support as part of the wider support under educational scholarship.

As I will go into more detail in the next section, attendees include colleagues who work in multi-disciplinary context, so the sessions and the discussion and networking will more certainly inform what we do at the Academy.

On my JD/PS, innovative pedagogies and the use of educational technologies are mentioned a number of times. Innovation is deeply rooted in the development of (educational) technologies, this conference is one of the annual events where these things are discussed and explored. This will help me to learn (and bring back to share) what others are doing in the sector and be able to share what we do at Queen Mary.

I am submitting a paper for a session on how we, at Queen Mary, encourage colleagues to use alternative ways to disseminate scholarly work digitally. Presenting this will invite discussions with external colleagues on how they do it and showcase what we do and our commitment to scholarship development.

Contribution to the reputation of the Academy and Queen Mary as an institution

I have a track record of representing my institution well at external events.

I am an elected Trustee at ALT; I was elected from a nine people race in 2022. This was partly due to my high profile presence in the HE community, especially with the educational technology and educational development groups of peers. My profile has continued to raise ever since as it has been proven in almost every conference I have attended in the last couple of years. People are attracted to me and want to learn more about what I do.

I was able to represent Queen Mary at Digifest this year, although not officially attending with my Queen Mary identity. My existing profile alongside the Jisc award I won meant I also appeared on the main stage with my Queen Mary identity. The connection I build not only include colleagues working in education technology, but also others in teaching, research and multi disciplinary context.

I introduced theTEL team at the top the ALT community by being one of the opening keynote speakers at a previous ALT conference. I have also help strengthen the sector leading position of UAL by presenting, networking and engaging discussions at another previous ALT conference.

I can do the same for the Academy and Queen Mary with ease. I acknowledge the ALT annual conference naturally attract more educational technology peers, however, the majority of people I have spoken to are either based in a teaching and learning centre similar to the Academy, have some multi disciplinary roles where their work broadly covers staff development, teaching on PgCert, SoTL scholars and research.
at different level of seniority) wanted to meet me and learn more about what I do.
Given the fact that we are trying to make our educational scholarship more inclusive and extend it beyond just REF-able research or educational research, the ALT conference will be a good forum to exchange ideas with colleagues from other institutions.

Value for money, costs of attendance, travel and accommodation

The conference represents good value for money with over 100 sessions including three keynotes, from leading experts in the sector, panel discussions, workshops and research papers. All of the sessions will be recorded, therefore, I will have access to any I cannot attend as well as a significant resource I can continue to use after the conference. This is also better value for money than the Advance HE annual conference and the themes this year are the "least" educational technology focused I have seen in a while. I'd argue it is less so than the upcoming Advance HE conference where that seems to focus on AI.

For my own CPD, given the fact that I am not required to gain any accreditation or undertake our PGCAP as I have achieved SHFEA, SCMALT and PgCert before joining Queen Mary, the cost to attend this conference is a reasonable value for money for my CPD.

Breakdown of cost:

- £695 + £310 (3 nights in Radisson Blu at a discount rate) + £70 (train) = £1,230

- £695 + £180 (3 nights in ibis the cheapest) + £70 (train) = £1,035

Or

- £695 + £465 (2 nights in Radisson Blu at a discount rate) + £70 (train) = £1,075
- £695 + £270 (2 nights in ibis the cheapest) + £70 (train) = £945

This year the venue will be at the Radisson Blu hotel at the Manchester airport, which is why ALT is a deal with the hotel that they recommend. I full acknowledge that is very expensive hotel, so at ALT, we also did a check of nearby hotels and the 2nd breakdown is the cheapest option. The actual cost would likely to the slightly different depends on the actual hotel and the time of booking.

The conference is held across 3 days, day 1 will start at 10am so I'd like to be there the night before instead of traveling for over 3 hours in very early hours the 1st day, also to help set up because I see this as supporting my community. However, it is not necessary.