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Exploring the Future of Immersive Education

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Abstract. This extended abstract describes the #iLRN16_SFP workshop which opened the iLRN'16 conference held in Santa Barbara, California USA from the 27th June to the 1st July 2016. The main focus of the workshop was exploring future trends and expectations for research into immersive learning. The event was a collaboration between the Creative Science Foundation and the Immersive Learning Research Network.

Keywords: Virtual-Reality, Immersive Learning, Mixed Reality, Ideation, Innovation, Science-Fiction Prototyping, Creative-Science.

Introduction

The focus of the workshop was to explore how current research might be imaginatively extrapolated to explore the possible ways immersive-reality technology might change future education. In doing this, it took a very broad vision for the delivery of education stretching from formal education at (say) university through industrial training to informal settings.

2 Methods

The workshop adopted the *Science Fiction Prototyping* method which was proposed by the futurist, technologist and author Brian David Johnson, a Professor of Practice in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society at Arizona State University in Phoenix who also provided the keynote at this event. Essentially, the method involves writing short fictional stories that imaginatively extrapolate current practices forward in time, leaping over incremental developments, exploring the world of disruptive product, business and social innovations. Because *Science-Fiction Prototyping* adopts a rich story-based structure it is able to create high-fidelity analogues of the real world, enabling it to act as a type of prototype to test ideas. In more practical terms the workshop followed the '*Imagination Workshop*' ideation methodology devised by Hsuan-Yi WU of the National Taiwan University. This workshop adopted a genre of Science Fiction Prototyping called μ SFP where the participants wrote Twitter-size fictions to illustrate some future possibilities for immersive education research.

3 Workshop Structure

The workshop followed a fairly conventional structure as shown below:

- Welcome to iLRN
- Invited talk (Brian David Johnson, the creator of the SFP method)
- Introduction to SFP
- Imagination Workshop (brainstorming, selecting ideas & writing a μ SFP)
- Group presentations, voting and prize for best μ SFP

4 Competition

To mix some fun with serious research the conference attendees were invited to enter a Twitter-based competition to write an individual μ SFP that described how they foresaw immersive learning technologies and pedagogies changing the nature of future education. To enter they were asked to tweet their stories to **#iLRN16_SFP, the name of this workshop**. The top 3 μ SFPs (as voted by attendees) received a prize (an Amazon voucher) which was presented at the closing session of iLRN 2016.

5 Outcomes

The workshop outcomes were posted on:

http://www.creative-science.org/activities/ilrn16_sfp/

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