

Preface

We are proud to present the proceedings of the second International Conference on Smart Learning Ecosystems and Regional Developments (SLERD2017). Following a successful first edition in Timisoara, Romania, in 2016, the conference was organized in 2017 in Aveiro, Portugal. SLERD2017 was hosted by CIC Digital/DigiMedia Research Group at the University of Aveiro, in the period June 22–23, 2017. DigiMedia¹—Digital Media and Interaction is an interdisciplinary research group focusing on innovation in the design of new interaction approaches for human-centered digital media applications aiming to foster interpersonal and community-oriented communication.

The conference was co-organized by the ASLERD (Association for Smart Learning Ecosystems and Regional Development)² an international no-profit interdisciplinary, democratic, scientific-professional Association that is committed to support learning ecosystems to get smarter and play a central role to regional development and social innovation. “Smart,” thus, are not simply technology-enhanced learning ecosystems but, rather, learning ecosystems that promote the multidimensional well-being of all players of learning process (i.e., students, professors, administrative personnel and technicians, territorial stakeholders, and, for the schools, parents) and that contribute to the increase of the social capital of a “region,” also thanks to the mediation of the technologies. ASLERD, thus, aims at generating a concrete impact by understanding learning ecosystems and accompanying design for “smartness,” fostering the development of policies and action plans, supporting technological impact well beyond prototypes and pilots, promoting networking and opportunities to discuss and debate like the SLERD yearly conference.

SLERD 2017 aimed at promoting reflection and discussion concerning R&D work, policies, case studies, entrepreneur experiences with a special focus on understanding how relevant the smart learning ecosystems (schools, campus,

¹DigiMedia - <http://digimedia.web.ua.pt/>.

²ASLERD - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASLERD>.

working places, informal learning contexts, etc.) are for regional development and social innovation and how the effectiveness of the relation of citizens and smart ecosystems can be boosted. The conference had a special interest in understanding how technology-mediated instruments can foster the citizen's engagement with learning ecosystems and territories, namely by understanding innovative human-centric design and development models/techniques, education/training practices, informal social learning, innovative citizen-driven policies, technology-mediated experiences and their impact. This set of concerns contributes to foster the social innovation sectors and ICT and economic development and deployment strategies alongside new policies for smarter proactive citizens.

Overall, we received 38 unique submissions from 19 countries, demonstrating the global interest for this research area and for SLERD2017. Out of the total submissions, after a rigorous double-blind peer-review and meta-review process, we accepted 12 full papers and 10 short papers. To complement the oral presentations of short and full papers, the SLERD2017 program also included presentations of the best ideas from the 2017 international and local student contests (not included in these proceedings). These competitions challenged local and international students to propose ideas and proofs of concept/prototypes to make learning ecosystems smarter.

The selected scientific papers aim to understand, conceive, and promote innovative human-centric design and development methods, education/training practices, informal social learning, and citizen-driven policies. The papers are organized mirroring the main conference sessions in three themes, namely (i) the elaboration on the notion of smart learning ecosystems; (ii) the investigation of the relation of smart learning ecosystems with their territory; and (iii) the identification of resources for smart learning.

SLERD 2017 contributes to foster the social innovation sectors, identifying and discussing ICT and economic development and deployment strategies alongside with new policies for smarter proactive citizens. The proceedings are relevant for both researchers and policy makers.

In summary, SLERD2017 offered an exciting program that provided an excellent overview of the state of the art in smart learning ecosystems and was an occasion for bringing research forward and creating new networks.

We are very proud of the final selection of papers, which would not have been possible without the effort and support of our excellent Conference and Program Committees, including more than 50 international researchers. We would like to thank all the ones who, in different roles, have contributed their time to organize the event with enthusiasm and commitment.

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