ascilite 2010 sydney

curriculum, technology & transformation for an unknown future

Editorial from the Program Committee

The ascilite 2010 program committee is pleased to report on the submissions, review and selection of papers, symposiums, workshops and posters for presentation at the Sydney conference. We are delighted with the quality of all categories of submissions this year and look forward to what promises to be a highly engaging and stimulating conference. We are pleased with the levels of submissions and presentations this year particularly in light of a number of factors that we believe are influencing submission and presentation patterns across and beyond the ascilite community (See Tables 1 and 2). First, the current global financial climate and its consequential impact on tertiary and other education sectors has made it difficult for some researchers to participate in our conference. Communication from authors has indicated that acute financial considerations in their own institutions have impacted on their capacity to attend ascilite and present their work. However, we are most grateful to those authors who are able to attend and will undoubtedly make the ascilite 2010 a successful conference and of the high standard that we have come to expect. Second, the increasing pressures on researchers to publish their research in premium journals combined with the contentious Australian Research Council (ARC) Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) (tiered) rankings appear to have had some impact, particularly on submission type, in the Australasian region. This is discussed more fully below in relation to table 2.

Table 1: No. of submissions and presentations at ascilite Sydney 2010

Category	Sub	Full papers		Concise Papers		Posters		Workshops/ Symposia		Reject
		Acc	Pres	Acc	Pres	Acc	Pres	Acc	Pres	
Full	82	66	57	6	4	5	3			5
Concise	71			58	58	7	3			6
Workshops	15							15	15	
Posters	33					32	30			1
Symposia	6							5	5	1
Total	**207**	**66**	**57**	**64**	**62**	**44**	**36**	**20**	**20**	**13**

Notes: Data is at 6 Nov 2010 and may be revised owing to cancellations

In 2010 (see Table 1), 82 full papers were submitted with 66 accepted and 57 intending to present at the conference. Of the 82 submitted full papers 16 were rejected as full papers. Of the 16 rejected for this category 6 were accepted as concise (4 presenting), 5 were accepted as posters (3 presenting) and 5 were rejected outright. Of the 71 concise papers submitted, 7 were rejected as concise papers and accepted as posters (3 presenting) and 6 were rejected outright. This year the quality of workshops, posters and symposia were very high. All workshops and most symposia (5 out of 6) were accepted. The program committee was very impressed with the range of symposium topics and the proposed format of sessions.

Table 2 compares the number of submission and presentation types at ascilite conferences since 2001 (excluding workshops, symposia and other interactive sessions). Of particular interest in 2010, is the fact that the number of concise refereed papers that will be presented will exceed the number of full papers presented. This is indicative of a trend that shows a decline in the number of full papers submitted relative to the number of concise papers submitted. For example, Singapore 2007 saw 109 full papers submitted to 63 concise (ratio 1.73), Melbourne 2008 saw 114 full papers submitted to 86 concise (ratio 1.31), Auckland 2009 saw 104 full papers to 87 concise (ratio 1.19) and Sydney 2010 saw 82 full papers to 71 concise (ratio 1.15). It may well be that refereed concise papers are increasingly preferred because they are less time consuming to write and yet still provide an opportunity to report on research work, get peer feedback and review and make connections across our academic communities. This course of action can be of great benefit during the process of writing a full journal publication. Certainly this submission preference is a trend to monitor across the tertiary education sector and may be worthy of further investigation.

Table 2: Numbers of presentations at ascilite Conferences 2001-2010

	Melb 01	Auck 02	Adel 03	Perth 04	Bris 05	Syd 06	Sing 07	Melb 08	Auck 09	Syd 10*
Total no. subs received	n/a	185	118	153	119	194	195	216	226	186
Total no. presentations	104	124	109	131	96	152	166	162	180	155
Full papers submitted	n/a	n/a	n/a	104	82	108	109	113	104	82
Concise papers submitted	n/a	n/a	n/a	44	29	72	63	86	87	71
Full Papers presented	60	76	60	68	56	69	80	76	72	57
Concise Papers presented	24	31	38	51	30	53	46	59	69	62
Poster Presentations	19	17	11	12	10	30	40	27	39	36

Notes: Data is at 6 Nov 2010.

** The table does not record numbers of workshop, special session or symposia submissions and presentations. Again, 2010 presentations may be revised due to cancellations. Melbourne 2001 numbers are from the Conference website. Numbers for others are from the printed Proceedings and the websites. There are some minor discrepancies between Programs and Proceedings, presumably due to cancellations, not detailed in this table.

Table 3 monitors ascilite conference submissions and acceptances on a regional basis. These tend to vary with the location of the conference however submissions from the UK in particular are down on recent years (17 in 2009, 19 in 2008 and 8 in 2007). The decline from UK-based submission may well be attributed to a particularly challenging financial climate.

Table 3: Origins of submissions and acceptance rates of full and concise papers by country

Countries or city (a)	No. Submissions	% of Submissions	No Accepted (b)	% Accepted
Australia (.au)	98	64.1%	88	89.8%
New Zealand (.nz)	17	11.1%	14	82.4%
United Kingdom (.uk)	3	2.0%	2	66.7%
Malaysia (.my)	7	4.6%	5	71.4%
Hong Kong (.hk)	2	1.3%	1	50.0%
Singapore (.sg)	14	9.2%	13	92.9%
USA	5	3.3%	4	80.0%
Germany	2	1.3%	0	0%
Others (c)	5	3.3%	3	60.0%
TOTAL	153	100%	130	85.0%

a. Determined from address or home country of the first author.
b. Accepted as full or concise papers. (This includes the withdrawals that transpired post acceptance.)
c. One each from Finland, Greece, Romania, South Africa and one unknown Country of origin

Table 4 monitors acceptance rates for full refereed papers. The acceptance rates for 2010 are higher than usual however the review procedure was as rigorous as in previous years. Reviewers were appointed on the basis of their expertise and experience in areas relevant for the conference and the paper. This approach has facilitated a uniformly high standard of reviewing over many years. Most of our Reviewers are 'experienced' and it is not necessary for Reviewers to be members of ascilite, or to be registered for the Conference. We also encourage the induction of 'novice' Reviewers, to broaden the Reviewer pool, and to produce 'experienced' Reviewers in the future. Reviews allocated to a 'novice' Reviewer are also allocated to an 'experienced' Reviewer, and is backed up by Program Committee reviews, if appropriate. All reviewers were provided with guidelines and each paper was at least double-blind reviewed according to the following criteria:

- Quality of research
- Originality and scholarly contribution
- Relevance and suitability to ascilite 2010
- Quality of written presentation.

The Committee confirms that refereed papers accepted for ascilite 2010 Conference publication:

- Meet the definition of research in relation to creativity, originality, and increasing humanity's stock of knowledge;
- Are selected on the basis of a DEEWR compliant peer review process (independent, qualified expert review; double blind reviews conducted on the full articles, prior to publication);
- Are published and presented at a conference having national and international significance as evidenced by registrations and participation;
- Are made available widely through the Conference web site.

Table 4: Full paper acceptance rates for ascilite Conferences

Year	No. full papers submitted	No. of full papers accepted*	% acceptance
2010	82	66	80.5%
2009	104	77	74.0%
2008	113	81	71.7%
2007	109	81	74.3%
2006	108	71	65.7%
2005	82	58	70.7%
2004	104	69	66.3%

Average acceptance rate 2004-2010: 71.9%
* Does not include full papers that were accepted subject to revision to concise format

Ascilite is privileged to attract such a large and diverse panel of volunteers for conducting double-blind peer review on full and concise papers (Table 5). Mindful of the workloads of our volunteers we managed to maintain the 2009 average of 2 papers per reviewer. Where discrepancies in reviews were evident, we were fortunate that our ascilite executive members volunteered to conduct a third blind peer review. A total of 166 reviewers volunteered however 10 withdrew before or during the review process.

Table 5: Origins of reviewers by country

Countries Or City Or Province	No	%
Australia (.au)	109	69.9%
New Zealand (.nz)	16	10.3%
Singapore (.sg)	13	8.3%
United Kingdom (.uk)	5	3.2%
Malaysia (.my)	5	3.2%
Other: Arab Emirates (1), Canada (1), Hong Kong (1), Japan (2), Sweden (2), USA (1).	8	5.1%
TOTAL	**156**	**100%**

Our heartfelt thanks to the fine efforts of our review panel and the executive who gave their time on quite short notice to help us with our final selection. Thank you also to Dr Roger Atkinson who assisted us on setting up the MyReview system and has set a high standard both procedurally and with regard to the quality of ascilite conference proceedings in recent years. We would also like to recognize the important contribution of Netspot for hosting the MyReview software. Our warm thanks also to Emma Somogyi who edited the entire proceedings and tirelessly contacted authors to check on missing details, dead links and other editorial matters.

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References

ARC (Australian Research Council) (2009a). Higher Education Research Data Collection. http://www.innovation.gov.au/Section/Research/Pages/2009HigherEducationResearchDataCollection(HERDC)Review.aspx

2010 Reviewers

Review Panel

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