

SPRING INTO EXCELLENCE RESEARCH SCHOOL

The Spring into Excellence Research School was introduced and launched in 2017 as an initiative by the previous ASCILITE President, Professor **Dominique Parrish**. Unfortunately, we were unable to conduct this event in either 2020 or 2021 due to COVID-

19 lockdowns. In 2022, this event was co-sponsored by HEDI (Hub for Educational Design and Innovation) at Monash University with Professor **Michael Henderson** leading this and Professor **Phillip Dawson** from CRADLE (Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning) at Deakin University also sponsoring the event. This year the event was conducted at Deakin Downtown from 24-26th October.

In 2022 the Spring into Excellence Research School was led by Professor **Sue Gregory** (ASCILITE Executive), Associate Professor **Chris Campbell** (ASCILITE Executive President), Professor **Petrea Redmond** (ASCILITE Executive), Professor **Dominique Parrish** (ex-President ASCILITE) Professor **Michael Henderson** (Monash), Professor **Phillip Dawson** (Deakin) and Professor **Margaret Bearman** (Deakin). In total, 22 participants from nine institutions from across Queensland, NSW, Victoria, and South Australia participated in the Research School.

ASCILITE members were initially invited to submit Expressions of Interest in August 2022 to attend the Research School, which resulted in 23 applications. The host and sponsoring institutions, Monash University and Cradle at Deakin were offered a total of 11 complimentary places. ASCILITE members were offered a discount on the enrolment fee over non-members who while paying extra received 12 months membership to ASCILITE.



Research School participants 26th October at Deakin Downtown.

The aim of the ASCILITE Spring into Excellence Research School was to:

- Provide support and guidance to participants in developing and progressing Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) research initiatives including but not limited to:

- Formulating a relevant and effective TEL research project.
- Collecting appropriate TEL research data.
- Identifying what data is most appropriate for TEL research.
- Assist participants to identify and plan a contemporary TEL research project.
- Enable opportunities for participants to link with like-minded collaborators from other universities and potentially to establish viable cross-institutional research collaborations.
- Guide participants in developing a grant application or research plan for a TEL research project. This would include both projects that have already been conceptualised as well as new projects that have not yet been conceived.
- Develop participants' capacity to prepare manuscripts for journals and review manuscripts.

At this year's School, participants undertook the following activities:

- Participants were given the opportunity to commence development of their own research, including research aims, objectives and research questions that they wanted to explore.
- Explored various TEL research methodologies and methods as well as research terminology used across various types of research designs, particularly related to TEL research.
- Discovered a range of approaches for collecting data and methods that could be used in data collection – qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods as well as how data analysis might transpire once data has been collected. Participants then had the opportunity to identify and refine data collection strategies for their own research and think about some of the common research theories that are used in TEL research.
- Presented with suggestions and opportunities for research funding including potential funding currently available. Participants were encouraged to seek institutional and internal grants before moving to the external national/international funding opportunities.
- Discussed and completed a "Shut up and Write" session, which included strategies for writing. This has been published as a TELall blog post and can be found [here](#).
- Discussed how to disseminate research findings as well as how to successfully submit and publish journal articles.
- Constructively unpacked how to deal with reviews.



Project grants session Day 2.

Throughout the Research School, both participants and facilitators had the opportunity to network over lunch, during breaks and at arranged dinners on both evenings.

From the 22 participants this year, 10 completed the Research School evaluation with participants agreeing the Research School activities were useful in helping them to formulate a relevant TEL research project 4.90 (out of 5). They felt that the order and organisation of the activities were appropriate with a mean of 4.70 and the Research School was successfully facilitated with a mean of 5.0. Participants felt they had an adequate opportunity to contribute (4.8), and also indicated that they would tell others about the Research School initiative (5.0). All of these scores are higher than previous years with scores ranging from 4.5 (time allocation for activities was suitable) to 5.0 for several areas.

One participant commented:

It was extremely well-thought out as an end-to-end process, with a good mix of activities and facilitated discussion from experts. The design and content, the duration of activities, all had something for all levels of researchers. It felt collegial and informative, and I learnt most from reflecting on the questions posed by researchers. I also feel I have a valuable toolkit to take away and refer to. I absolutely loved the letter writing idea to wrap up the session.

Another commented:

- 1. hearing about other people's projects and discussing the diverse nature of these.*
- 2. having uninterrupted time to think about a project I wasn't expecting but is very interesting*
- 3. having access to expert's feedback.*

Presenters and Facilitators

The research school was facilitated by senior researchers and leaders including:

- **Prof Margaret Bearman**
Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE), Deakin University
- **A/Prof Chris Campbell**
ASCILITE President; Sub-Dean (Learning Technology) and Faculty of Science and Health Business Partner Charles Sturt University
- **Prof Phill Dawson**
Associate Director, Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE), Deakin University
- **Prof Sue Gregory**
ASCILITE Exec and Life member, Head of School, School of Education, University of New England
- **Prof Michael Henderson**
ASCILITE Life member, Professor of Digital Futures and Director of Educational Design and Innovation (HEDI), Monash University
- **Prof Dominique Parrish**
ASCILITE Life member, Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching, Macquarie University
- **Prof Petrea Redmond**
ASCILITE Exec member, Professor of Digital Pedagogies University of Southern Queensland

We are planning the next Research School which will be conducted by Charles Sturt University in 2023.