

Preface

The Games and Learning (GALA) Conference reached its fourth edition in the beautiful setting of the cloister by Giuliano da Sangallo, at the Sapienza University in Rome. The conference took place during December 9–11, 2015, in Rome, Italy, and was organized by the Serious Games Society and The University of Genoa.

The conference provides the opportunity for meeting and discussing the main and emergent topics within a community of experts on serious games, which is growing year after year and involves academic, industrial developers, teachers, and corporate decision makers. Participants from four continents gave talks and organized workshops promoting knowledge share, technology transfer, and business development.

This year, the number of submissions has significantly grown along with the quality of the talks and the papers.

It was an honor to have Dr. Marco Marsella (EC) and Prof. Jung Hyun Han (University of Korea) as keynote speakers. Dr. Marsella, as representative of the European Commission, presented the new opportunities of research in the field of serious gaming and the new ICT calls in the framework of the H2020 program. Professor Jung Hyun Han opened the second day of the conference presenting the status of research on serious games in Asia and introducing a new frontier of collaboration.

The conference featured five different sessions of paper presentation and four workshops/tutorials.

The workshops/tutorials, held during the first day of the event, covered the following topics: games for health, games for mobility, pervasive gaming, and urban mobility. The Games for Health Workshop was organized by the University of Milan (Laura Anna Ripamonti and Dario Maggiorini) and built upon the increasing relevance of applied gaming approaches and gamification techniques for health and rehabilitation. The Games for Mobility Workshop, held by the University of Genoa (Francesco Bellotti and Riccardo Berta), analyzed and discussed the latest achievements and trends in the field of serious games and gamification for mobility and intelligent transportation systems. The Pergamon Workshop, held by professor Jacqueline Cawtson (DMLL-COVUNI), presented pervasive games as direct networking opportunities for creatives, academics, entrepreneurs, and game developers to expand into the serious games market. The Proto World Tutorial, held by Dr. Jannicke Baalsrud Hauge (BIBA), provided hands-on experience with a simulation game environment to model and plan urban mobility.

The paper sessions concerned such topics as: serious game design, tools, analytics and decisions making, pedagogy, and health. Beside these, the conference hosted two poster sessions collecting short papers related to serious games and their applications.

As in 2014, the selected best papers of the GALA Conference will be published in a dedicated special issue of the *International Journal of Serious Games*, the scientific journal managed by the Serious Games Society, which is a great reference point for

academicians and practitioners to publish original research work on serious games and to be informed about the latest evolutions in the field.

The next GALA conference event will be held in Utrecht during December 5–7: <http://www.galaconf.org/2016/>.

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