REPORT ON THE TEACH CONFERENCE 2022

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Revision 2023-05-16

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This report documents the organization, proceedings and evaluation of the TEACH conference in 2022.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE EVENT

BACKGROUND

To foster networking among educators, trainers, and personnel developers of the Helmholtz Association, the TEACH - Talk about Education Across Communities in Helmholtz conference was initiated in 2021. The report is published on Zenodo. The event took place 2022 a second time under the motto Open Up!. This time the conference contents focused on the topic open educational resources (OER) as a part of the Open Science movement. OER forms a crucial contribution to the goals of TEACH. Sharing materials can be a vital aspect of establishing collaborations and facilitate the reuse of existing and accelerated creation of new courses.

PROCEEDINGS

The second TEACH conference took place on November 9, 2022 via the online platform GatherTown. It opened with an overview about recent developments and future promises of open educational resources by keynote speaker Luca Mollenhauer (DIPF | Leibniz-Institut für Bildungsforschung und Bildungsinformation) (see keynote information). The talks and workshops, in total 10 by 14 contributors, were offered in parallel sessions. Furthermore posters were presented in a gallery which presented the Helmholtz platforms but also activities in open educational resources (for posters, slides and materials, see event website). Similar to the 2021 event, the President of the Helmholtz Association, Otmar D. Wiestler, endowed a support letter. The conference ended with an after-hours networking session.

TAKEAWAY MESSAGES FROM THE PROCEEDINGS

Refering to the takeaway messages from the last TEACH conference, there is still a great demand for improving the communication within the Helmholtz Society. Events like the TEACH conference can bring people together. But as developments in open educational resources point out there is also a demand for platforms, tools and workflows for collaboration. One example for this is the website Workshop Materials by HIFIS. It can be seen as an initial step in this direction. The goal is to create many points of contact in the Helmholtz Society to establish a culture of sharing and networking. A new focus at the second TEACH conference was placed on mental health this year. Often neglected in the past, its importance and an awareness thereof increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. This demand was recognized and addressed in the present teaching community. Here in particular an exchange between trainers among the Helmholtz Centres is necessary to develop concepts and implement further courses.

EVALUATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

The TEACH Conference was organized by a team of volunteers coming from the Helmholtz platforms HIDA, HMC and HIFIS and furthermore the Helmholtz Open Science Office and the Forschungszentrum Jülich. Because of the positive experiences from 2021 the HMC GatherTown space and the Indico instance provided by HIFIS for the event management were employed again. Within the team, the tool Mattermost was used for communication and for the documentation, the collaborative markdown editor HedgeDoc was employed. The latter is a HIFIS-Service provided by DESY. Openly accessible for all interesed persons, the slides of the contributions can be found via the event website.

FEEDBACK

The event took place successfully and the resonance of the participants was positive. GatherTown ran stable and was appreciated as a creative environment by the participants. A few general questions about GatherTown arose and were answered at the helpdesk.

LESSONS LEARNED

To improve the event, the team summed up the lessons learned from their personal point of view and the feedback of the participants. Internally the team members agreed on the point that there should be a better coordination of the tasks, reponsibilities, and time management. Additionally, the contributors should be involved more closely in the preparation process. During the event, running the poster session parallel to a workshop proved to be unfavorable. This led to too much dispersion of the participants.

The after-hours networking session was characterized through lively conversations but was lowly frequented. The goal to keep people in GatherTown and bring them into a conversation was not achieved as desired. Therefore, the concept for this exchange will be revised. Another important issue which arose from the external feedback was to revise the advertising strategy. The goals and benefits of the TEACH conference have to be transported more clearly. Furthermore, it should be taken into account to look for further cooperation partners with similar requests to join forces.

THANKS

The organizers of the TEACH conference want to thank all contributors and participants for their commitment in building up a community in the Helmholtz Society. Beyond that our thanks go to all people who gave us support, ran the services, and spread the word.