Presenter Guidelines: Lightning Talks

The following guidelines provide suggestions and helpful information on the presentation of your Lightning Talk at the ICDE World Conference on Online Learning. Please read this information carefully so that you are fully conversant with the length, format and requirements so there are no technical difficulties or unwelcome surprises when you arrive to present your Lightning Talk in the assigned breakout session.

About Lightning Talks
A Lightning Talk allows you to present a very brief synopsis of your work in a fast and snappy style. Drawing on an Irish tradition we will be adopting a Gasta format where you only have a few minutes to provide a quick account of your work. The term Gasta is a Gaelic word for a fast, quick, clever, smart or snappy presentation that shares an activity, innovation or piece of research in a brief rapid-fire style. This presentation format is ideally suited to showcasing an innovation, promoting a new development or reporting a line of research inquiry that may be of wider interest to conference participants. Please note that the conference language is English and you only have a maximum of 5-minutes to present your Lightning Talk. This means that you will need to limit the number of slides in your presentation if you do not wish to run out of time.

Suggestions for Designing Your Lightning Talk
There is no standard presentation template for Lightning Talks at the ICDE World Conference. This means you are free to use your own template but we recommend that you do so using a 16:9 ratio in PowerPoint (or PDF), as the room assigned for Lightning Talks is equipped with a computer and projector capable of widescreen display. Before starting your slide-deck you should read the title and abstract you submitted to ensure your presentation is generally consistent with what was approved by the International Review Panel. We appreciate your thinking may have further developed since your original submission but remember that most delegates will have chosen to participate in your session on the basis of what appears in the conference programme.

You should then aim to prepare your presentation for no longer than 5-minutes. Accordingly we recommend that your slide-deck contain a maximum of 10-slides. Talks given with only limited number of slides or even with no visual aids whatsoever can be extremely refreshing in the Gasta style. While Internet access is available on the computer provided in the room allocated for Lightning Talks we strongly recommend that you do not attempt to link out to the web. Instead you should embed screenshots in your presentation if you wish to demonstrate your innovation. Please be aware that the software on which you develop your slide-deck may not be the same as the version on the computer in Lightning Talk room, which means you may lose any unique fonts or special effects. The best way to avoid this problem is to convert your presentation so that it can be displayed in a PDF format.

As a general principle ‘less is more’ with your slides containing just enough information or a well chosen image to enhance your talk rather than acting as your ‘notes’ of what you are going to say next. In other words displaying an image and/or three key words on a slide in a large font is far more effective than listing several sentences under bullet points. In this represent the Gasta format is supposed to be fun and a little entertaining for the audience so we suggest you keep the amount of written text to a minimum. Also please practise your Lightning Talk so you know that you can do justice to what you want to cover in the short amount of available time. Feedback from colleagues during practice can be invaluable in helping you refine your slides in order to convey the key points. If you intend to share the talk with another presenter, then make sure you practice together and understand how long each of you have for your section of the Lightning Talk.

Lastly, to promote follow up discussion after your talk, and beyond the breakout session, we suggest that you conclude your presentation with a single question or thought for delegates to ponder. Ideally this question or your concluding thought should refer back to one of the sub themes and/or relate to the overarching conference theme of “transforming lives and societies”.

Ensuring an Effective Lightning Talk on the Day
The rapid and fast-paced nature of Lightning Talks means that we require your presentation slides before the start of the ICDE World Conference. We need to ensure that all the presentation files for each lightning talk session are ready, working and available in a single folder before the start of the event as the intention is to live stream and record your presentation in order to fully maximise the impact of your contribution to the event. Therefore please note that the final date to submit your accompanying slide-deck is Monday 28th October. Failure to submit your digital file by this date will risk our ability to guarantee that your Lightning Talk slides will be available to accompany your talk on the day. Once you have completed the slides for your Lightning Talk, the next stage of the process is to name your file (first author Surname followed by Lightning Talk, i.e., Brown_Lightning_Talk) and then send your slide-deck as an email attachment to:

<judy@happeningconferences.com>
We will then confirm your submission, check that your slides meet the requirements and, if everything is ok, upload to the presentation network provided by Convention Centre Dublin (CCD). Please note that it is not possible to bring your Lightning Talk slides with you on the day and insert them using a USB stick.

To avoid a last minute technical glitch we recommend you test your presentation on the computer in the room during one of the refreshment breaks. We also encourage you to visit the room that your Lightning Talk is scheduled to take place in so that you can familiarise yourself with the equipment and layout. Make sure that you check the latest version of the conference programme so you know the precise time and room location of your talk. There is a chance that some Lightning Talks may need to change due to unforeseen circumstances and it is your responsibility to check any updates to the programme. Technical assistance will be available but due to the short duration of Lightning Talks you do not want to spend part of your allocated time fixing a glitch.

As soon as possible before your Lightning Talk you should introduce yourself to the session Chair. You should plan on arriving in the Lightning Talk room at least 10-minutes before the start of the session. All Lightning Talk presenters are expected to sit in the front row so they can come to the stage with a limited break between presentations. Your Chair plays a key role in the successful presentation of Lightning Talks as they are responsible for setting the tone, introducing speakers, keeping each contributor to their allocated time and the overall smooth running of this unique format. A time clock will display the remaining time so there is no confusion and we expect contributors will stop when asked to do so by the Chair. A clicker will be available to advance slides, which means there is no reason for presenters to be podium bound. At the end of the Lightning Talk session Chair will help to facilitate discussion and bring the Gasta to a satisfactory conclusion for both you and participants. The name of your Lightning Talk chair will be listed in the conference programme and they can be contacted via email or through the conference app ahead of your session.

You may wish to support your Lightning Talk with giveaways or hand-out materials, including treats from your Country but be warned that such bribes are unlikely to earn you more time! You may wish to follow up your Lightning Talk with a link to your uploaded presentation slides and any supporting notes via the conference app, Google Drive, Slideshare, etc., or through some other social media channel using the hashtag #WCOL2019. Please note that we expect you to attribute any images you embed in your presentation and strongly encourage you to include licensing information on your slides using a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence.

Final Remarks
In summary, your audience will attend many presentations during the course of the ICDE World Conference and the Lightning Talk format using the Irish tradition of Gasta is intended to allow you to present your work in a fun, fast and snappy way. Once again we encourage you to carefully design and practise your Lightning Talk so that it really does justice to your work. Therefore make your Lightning Talk count so you grab attention, raise awareness of your work and generate a high-level of interest and follow up conversations, which hopefully extend well beyond the conference. One final point, we expect all Lightning Talks during the ICDE World Conference will be guided by our Principles of Conference Participation to ensure a courteous and respectful professional learning environment. We look forward to seeing you in Dublin and wish you well in designing a truly memorable and impactful presentation. If you have any questions about the lightning Talk format, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Example of Lightning Talk Room