

LIBRARIES IN THE DIGITAL AGE (LIDA) CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR 19TH
-22ND MAY 2020 IN DUBROVNIK, CROATIA POSTPONED TO 17TH-21ST APRIL 2021.

As LIDA Conference Co-Directors, we have been closely monitoring and evaluating the situation concerning the novel coronavirus COVID-19 including its global reach, widespread travel restrictions, and the international responses of health organizations, universities and schools. It has become clear that it is no longer logistically feasible or ethical for us to hold the LIDA conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia as planned from the 19th-22nd May, 2020. COVID-19 has created understandable concerns about the personal wellbeing and health of our LIDA community. Many participants have contacted us to let us know about travel restrictions, health concerns or concerns about having to be isolated before returning home because of the COVID-19 epidemic. Although Croatia is currently not as badly affected as some other regions, there is a risk that the situation can change rapidly. We want all to be well and safe.

We recognize that we are dealing with a fluid situation, and to reflect this changing environment we have made the decision **to postpone the LIDA conference to the 17th-21st April 2021 to be held again at the Inter-University Center in Dubrovnik, Croatia.** With LIDA held every two years, postponing enables us to deal more effectively and expeditiously with registration, venue, travel and hotel arrangements that are already in place. We have worked quickly to ensure the conference venue is available in Dubrovnik for 2021.

This also enables us to retain an on-site conference mode rather than go into a virtual mode, as the LIDA participants over many years have expressed how they value the real-time community, face-to-face interaction, and the collective fellowship and friendship coming together in beautiful Croatia. This is what has made LIDA such a success over the past 20 years. While we are still working through the details, and some modifications are to be expected, we hope that it will be possible to provide the program as planned for 2020, with the suite of already accepted papers, panels, posters and workshops. We believe that the conference themes and papers accepted for the 2020 conference will have vitality and appeal with the later date of April 2021.

We know that some participants will be concerned about their paid registration for the May 2020 conference. With postponing the conference rather than cancelling it, we are seeking to minimize consequences for the conference budget, and consequences for participants due to cancellation fees. Therefore, for all participants who decide TO PARTICIPATE in the LIDA 2021 conference, registration fee will be rolled over. On the other hand, the participants who decide NOT TO PARTICIPATE in LIDA 2021 will be reimbursed their paid registration fee (less a 30 EUR handling fee).

Since many of you have already booked accommodation and made travel arrangements, and we were informed that airlines/hotels may be unwilling to reimburse, we have drafted an official letter that you can use when seeking reimbursement, if needed.

We know that many participants who are presenting papers and panels are substantially in progress with the preparation of their full-text manuscripts to be considered for publication in the peer-reviewed scholarly journal *Education for Information* (Efi) (<https://www.iospress.nl/journal/education-for-information/>). Despite the fact that the conference itself is being postponed, all the work regarding publication of full papers will be carried out as planned. However, in order to provide authors with some extra time for the preparation of their manuscripts it has been decided that the submission deadline will be moved to 30th September 2020. We believe that despite this extension, the special issue of *Education for Information* with LIDA papers will be published prior to the April 2021 conference.

In order to act swiftly, please complete the following brief questionnaire (available at <https://bit.ly/2w3wCTC>) by 31st March 2020 to let us know:

1. whether you are able to participate in LIDA in April 2021 (and want to roll over the registration) or whether you would like to cancel your participation and require a refund,
2. whether you need an official letter from conference organization to be used for reimbursement purposes, and
3. whether you plan to submit a full paper by 30 September 2020 to be considered for publication in *Education for Information* (all details about submission process are available at our website).

We will continue to update information via the LIDA conference website <http://lida.ffos.hr>

We look forward to seeing all of you in April 2021 and send everyone our warmest wishes for the best of health. Take care and be well.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us:

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