

## Preface

The International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED; [icedonline.net](http://icedonline.net)) promotes educational and academic development in higher education worldwide. ICED is a network of networks with (currently) 26 members representing national and regional organisations focused on promoting good practice in higher education. The objective of ICED is “for the public benefit to advance education worldwide by promoting, sustaining and increasing individual and collective knowledge and understanding of all aspects of educational development in higher education.”

ICED aims to link networks and individuals with a common interest in academic development across the world. We do this in several ways, including an annual Council meeting attended by a representative from each member network and a conference held every second year. Unfortunately, like many of the individual member network conferences and events, the 2020 conference that was to be held in Zurich, Switzerland, was a casualty of the global pandemic.

The biennial conference is an opportunity not only to present our scholarship and practice but also to create the space for networking and conversations outside of the presentation sessions. It is an opportunity for academic developers from new and emerging networks to learn from more established networks on how to progress their networks and the work of their members. First time participants meet the leading scholars and practitioners whose work they have read and follow, in a friendly, welcoming and sharing atmosphere.

With the conference only being held every second year, participants eagerly look forward to this coming-together of colleagues from across the world. With the cancellation of ICED 2020 in Zurich, the four-year wait to meet up and share our scholarship feels like an eternity. While we have embraced new ways of conversing and maintaining connections, the personal conversations, networking and sharing that happens at conferences are vital to keep our community connected.

This publication, made possible by the 2020 conference planning committee, is a way to maintain those connections. It is an opportunity to share the practice, research and ideas that would have been presented at the conference. I encourage you to engage with the papers in the spirit of what a conference enables – extended conversations with the authors, networking, sharing, learning and collaboration. This publication also ensures that the work of the authors, the reviewers and the planning committee is recognised and applauded.

Despite language, cultural and higher education system differences, we all have a common goal, face very similar challenges and undertake our work informed by a common scholarship. We openly collaborate and share resources. The crisis in higher education that the pandemic has created has highlighted the value of academic development and the work of academic developers all over the world. Perhaps in this way, the pandemic will leave a positive, lasting legacy for academic development.

On behalf of the ICED Council and those who had planned to participate in Zurich 2020, I extend our thanks to the conference planning committee not only for making this publication possible and for undertaking all the work necessary to realise it, but also for all the work that went into planning what was shaping up to be an innovative and very successful conference. Your work is greatly appreciated and this publication is tangible evidence of that work.

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ICED President