Committees Contributing to the DLA Conference

Scientific Program Committee of DLA

Anhalt University of Applied Sciences has been organizing and hosting the annual Conference on Information Technology in Landscape Architecture for thirteen years. The growing international interest in this series of conferences, which focuses on the specific needs of applying and developing information technologies for the field of landscape architecture, has lead to the formal establishment of a Scientific Program Committee. Members of this committee have all been giving academic advice on the development of this conference for a number of years now and/or have served as very important reviewers in the blind review process.

The conference committee advises the Conference Director on essential long-term development issues such as

- the main theme of the annual conference,
- selection of the Local DLA Conference Chair and the location of the next DLA Conference,
- both the content and production of the call for papers and promotional posters,
- selection of relevant keynote speakers, and
- selection of editors of the peer-reviewed proceedings.

The conference committee also advises the Local DLA Conference Chair on

- the conference program based on the blind evaluations of the abstracts, and
- the resolution of conflicts among the evaluations of different reviewers.

The Local DLA Conference Chair rotates among members of the committee. Among the responsibilities of the Local Conference Chair are

- management of the review process,
- local logistic arrangements, and
- national fundraising for the conference.

The DLA 2011 conference was held in Dessau, Germany together with the LE:NOTRE / ECLAS Summer School on “Teaching in Landscape Architecture.” The DLA 2012 is being held in Bernburg and Dessau, Germany on “Landscape Visualization, 3D-Landscape Modeling and GeoDesign”. The DLA 2013 is scheduled in Bernburg and Dessau again and the DLA 2014 is scheduled to be held at the Science City Campus, Zurich-Hoenggerberg in Switzerland.
The Scientific Program Committee of the annual Digital Landscape Architecture DLA Conference currently includes the following members.

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Review Committee and Thank You from the Editors

Every paper accepted for this publication has been rigorously reviewed by at least two peers from an international panel of scholars. These proceedings combine the peer reviewed papers of the DLA conference 2011 and the DLA Conference 2012, both held in Bernburg and Dessau, Germany. The high standards of the reviewers have assured that the papers in this year's proceedings will advance the theory and application of digital methods in landscape architecture.

With fifty excellent reviewers from the different areas of IT in landscape architecture and an efficient online conference management system hosted by Prof. Joachim Kieferle, Rhein-Main Hochschule in Wiesbaden Germany, we have been able to continuously improve and professionalize the peer review process for the proceedings of the conference series DIGITAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE DLA. Reviewers were able to retrieve papers from a conference review system and submit commentaries and evaluations directly to a content management system.

For the first step of the blind review process, five blind reviewers were each asked to give an initial evaluation for each of the anonymous abstracts assigned to her/him and place it into one of the following six levels of evaluation:

1) Reject: Content inappropriate for the conference or has little merit
2) Probable Reject: Basic flaws in content or presentation or very poorly written
3) Marginal Tendency to Reject: Not as badly flawed; major effort necessary to make abstract acceptable but content already well-covered in literature
4) Marginal Tendency to Accept: Content has merit, but accuracy, clarity, completeness, and/or writing should and could be improved in time
5) Clear Acceptance: Content, presentation, and writing meet professional norms; improvements may be advisable but abstract is acceptable as is
6) Must Accept: Candidate for outstanding submission. Suggested improvements still appropriate

The reviewer was also asked to recommend the particular conference session most appropriate for that paper. Finally, reviewers were asked for written comments addressed to each author and/or the Conference Chair.

Abstracts with a less than average score of 4 were rejected, while those with an average score of 4 were accepted for short presentations.
For the second step, the blind review of the full papers, only two reviewers with in-depth knowledge of the subject matter were assigned per paper. These second reviewers were usually selected from the original group that had evaluated each initial abstract, and they were asked to consider any recommendations already made.

As a result of this review, each paper was placed into one of the following categories.

1. Reject for publication w/o complete reworking
2. Probably reject for publication w/o reworking
3. Marginal rejection for publication if not reworked
4. Marginal acceptance for publication with minor corrections
5. Accept for publication with minor corrections
6. Fully accept for publication in this form

In the written suggestions, the reviewers were also asked to check for
- missing references to the literature, and
- irrelevant or mistaken assertions.

English language proof-reading was done continuously throughout this period by Jeanne Colgan and, in 2012, Judith Mahnert assisted in the final English editing of this publication.

Each author received the comments of the reviewers and additional comments by the editors for revising the full paper. When necessary, papers were returned to authors for revision until accepted by both reviewers. In some cases, additional anonymous reviewers were also asked to comment.

During the 2011 peer reviewed paper review forty-four entries were reviewed by forty-five reviewers. Twenty-six papers were accepted for peer reviewed publication in 2011.

During the 2012 peer reviewed paper review, sixty-two entries were reviewed by forty-nine reviewers. Thirty-eight papers were accepted for peer reviewed publication in 2012.

Sixty-four groups of authors from the 2011 and 2012 DLA conferences received a final confirmation letter that their contribution would be published in the peer-reviewed proceedings; Buhmann/Pietsch/Ervin (Eds.) (2012): Peer Reviewed Proceedings of Digital Landscape Architecture 2012, Anhalt University of Applied Sciences. Wichmann Verlag Berlin/Offenbach, Germany, May 2012. We are pleased that nearly all positively reviewed authors managed the rigid time schedule to submit the full paper for publication.

We are also happy that eight authors of contributions to the 2011 DLA Conference were invited to publish their papers in gis.SCIENCE – Zeitschrift für Geoinformation, 24. Jahrgang 4/2011, and 25. Jahrgang 1/2012 by Wichmann VDE Verlag Berlin/Offenbach. Three of these papers therefore appear only as abstracts in these proceedings, while the other authors submitted updates of their papers for this publication.

The more than 600 peer-reviewed pages of this publication (only the introductory chapter and the Invited Contributions are, because of their nature, not peer reviewed) will be distributed to all libraries of landscape architecture schools. All professional journals in landscape architecture, urban design and environmental planning will receive an evaluation copy.
We would like to give special thanks to all our colleagues who helped serve on the DLA Review Board to further develop the level of presentations of this conference and the scientific standards of peer-reviewed proceedings of this conference. We thank all of them for the extensive time spent in reviewing the abstracts and the papers for these proceedings.

The quality of the peer-reviewed papers benefits greatly from the extensive advice given in comments by the blind reviewers to the anonymous authors. We are very flattered by the academic support given by our DLA reviewers.

We hope that the reviewers listed below will also find time for the upcoming reviews.

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ECLAS and LE:NOTRE Committee on Digital Technology

Since its founding in 2002, the European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools, ECLAS, has benefited enormously from the activities of the LE:NOTRE Thematic Network and its spiritual father Prof. Richard Stiles from the Technical University of Vienna. With the help of LE:NOTRE, a strong network, a common internet platform, and numerous meetings have all helped to develop a link between the fast growing numbers of landscape architecture schools in Europe and worldwide. Within LE:NOTRE, working groups have been established. In order to assure continuity after the LE:NOTRE project funding comes to an end, ECLAS has established a subcommittee to follow up these working groups, the ECLAS Committee on Digital Information. All fifty members of the former LE:NOTRE IT working group are being asked to continue in this new committee. At the moment, LE:NOTRE is still offering the “Channel Information Technologies” of the LE:NOTRE platform for communication of this committee.

In 2009, Prof. Erich Buhmann was voted as Chair for the newly established Committee on Digital Technology of the European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools ECLAS. The main objective for ECLAS Committee on Digital Technology is the Improvement and further development of Teaching & Learning with Digital Methods & Tools in Landscape Architecture. This was also the main conference theme of the DLA 2011 in Dessau, Germany.

The annual conference DIGITAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE DLA will be an important asset for the work of this committee. Further objectives are being discussed. Besides meetings with the Vitero conference system as needed, a second regular personal meeting is provided by the annual ECLAS conferences.
The contents of past and upcoming DLA conferences are stored on the homepage of the Anhalt University homepage www.digital-la.de or http://www.kolleg.loel.hs-anhalt.de/landschaftsinformatik/dla-conference.html.

The project group “Digital Landscape Architecture Conferences” of the ECLAS / LE:NOTRE Committee on Digital Technology has been established as a communication platform at www.le-notre.com; http://www.le-notre.org/pg/pg_details.php?pg_id=112.