

RIGHT RESEARCH



EDITED BY CHELSEA MIYA
OLIVER ROSSIER AND GEOFFREY ROCKWELL



MODELLING SUSTAINABLE



RESEARCH PRACTICES



IN THE ANTHROPOCENE





<https://www.openbookpublishers.com>

© 2021 Chelsea Miya, Oliver Rossier and Geoffrey Rockwell. Copyright of individual chapters is maintained by the chapter's author.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the work; to adapt the work and to make commercial use of the work providing attribution is made to the authors (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Attribution should include the following information:

Chelsea Miya, Oliver Rossier and Geoffrey Rockwell (eds), *Right Research: Modelling Sustainable Research Practices in the Anthropocene*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0213>

Copyright and permissions for the reuse of many of the images included in this publication differ from the above. This information is provided in the captions and in the list of illustrations.

In order to access detailed and updated information on the license, please visit <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0213#copyright>. Further details about CC BY licenses are available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://archive.org/web>

Digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0213#resources>

Every effort has been made to identify and contact copyright holders and any omission or error will be corrected if notification is made to the publisher.

ISBN Paperback: 9781783749614

ISBN Hardback: 9781783749621

ISBN Digital (PDF): 9781783749638

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 9781783749645

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 9781783749652

ISBN Digital (XML): 9781783749669

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0213

Cover image by Leanne Olson, The Clay at Ryley, CC-BY-NC-ND.

Cover design by Emilie St-Hilaire.

18. 'Greening' Academic Gatherings

A Case for Econferences

Oliver Rossier, Chelsea Miya
and Geoffrey Rockwell

Traditional academic conferences that require participants to physically travel between locations have a large environmental footprint. That is why a growing number of researchers believe it is imperative to seek out more sustainable alternatives.¹ The following case study looks at the Around the World virtual conferences organized at the University of Alberta as an example of how to host sustainable research gatherings without the carbon cost of flying. The success of this online event, with its diverse range of topics and presentation formats (live, pre-recorded,

- 1 See, for example, Umair Irfan, 'Air travel is a huge contributor to climate change. A new global movement wants you to be ashamed to fly', *Vox* (November 30, 2019), <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/7/25/8881364/greta-thunberg-climate-change-flying-airline>; Caroline Levine et al., 'Reducing the carbon footprint of academic travel', *Inside Higher Ed* (April 18, 2019), <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2019/04/18/12-scholars-share-ideas-reducing-carbon-emissions-academic-travel-opinion>; Xavier Anglaret, Chris Wymant and Kévin Jean, 'Researchers, set an example: Fly less', *the Conversation* (February 13, 2019), <https://theconversation.com/researchers-set-an-example-fly-less-111046>; David Myton, 'The academic conference: flying into a storm of carbon emissions', *Campus Morning Mail* (July 25, 2019), <https://campusmorningmail.com.au/news/the-academic-conference-flying-into-an-environmental-storm-of-carbon-emissions/>; Malabika Pramanik, 'On the environmental impact of academic conferences', *The Wall Papers* (June 5, 2019), <https://pwias.ubc.ca/wall-stories/the-environmental-impact-academic-conferences/>; *No Fly Climate-Sci*, <https://noflyclimatesci.org/>; *We Stay on the Ground*, <https://westayontheground.blogspot.com/p/about.html>.

hybrid), shows that the econference format can be adapted to a wide range of needs. The results from the case study show how econferencing, while not without its challenges, can be a viable alternative to face-to-face conferencing that retains many of its benefits without the environmental cost.

Introduction

The Around the World (AtW) series of econferences that ran from 2012 to 2018 was a sustained experiment in developing alternative conference forms. AtW was organized by the Kule Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Alberta to show that econferences are a viable carbon-neutral alternative to face-to-face meetings and to develop a practical guide for running econference events that could be adapted by colleagues, both at the University of Alberta and at other institutes more broadly.

The AtW case study is part of a small but growing body of scholarship on econferences, which includes the chapters by Terry Anderson and Nick Byrd that appear in this collection. Academic institutions are starting to take notice of the environmental impact of conference-related air travel, as shown by the internal study conducted by the University of British Columbia in 2018.² Other notable online research gatherings include the Australia-based Follow the Sun conference;³ the Hawaii-based Teaching Colleges and Community (TCC) Worldwide Online Conference;⁴ the South Africa-based e/merge online conferences;⁵ the

-
- 2 See, for example, Seth Wynes and Simon Donner, *Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Business-Related Air Travel at Public Institutions: A Case Study of the University of British Columbia* (Victoria, BC: Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, 2018), https://pics.uvic.ca/sites/default/files/AirTravelWP_FINAL.pdf.
 - 3 Angela Murphy and Shirley Reushle, 'Following the sun: Sustainable conferencing in a climate of change', *29th Annual Conference of the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ASCILITE)* (Wellington, NZ, November 25–28, 2012), http://www.ascilite.org/conferences/Wellington12/2012/images/custom/murphy%2c_angela_-_following.pdf.
 - 4 Bert Kimura and Curtis Ho, 'Online conferences and workshops: Affordable & ubiquitous learning opportunities for faculty development', *Distance Learning and Internet Conference 2008* (Waseda University, November 19–22, 2008), pp. 61–65, <http://www.waseda.jp/DLI2008/program/proceedings/pdf/session3-1.pdf>.
 - 5 Tony Carr and Sten Ludvigsen, 'Disturbances and contradictions in an online conference', *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology*, 13.2 (2017), 116–140.

Nearly Carbon Neutral (NCN) series run by Ken Hiltner at the University of California at Santa Barbara;⁶ and the Library 2.0 series headed by Steve Hargadon and Sandra Hirsh at the School of Information at San José State University.⁷

The growth of econferences has reinvigorated a larger discussion about the academic potential of communications technology that dates back to the mid-twentieth century. At that time, many theorists optimistically projected that networked electronic communication would transform society for the better.⁸ Marshall McLuhan, one of the leading theoreticians to first look at the emerging information age, captured a part of the early optimism when he wrote about the electronic age. In his seminal 1964 work, *Understanding Media*, McLuhan said that the new technology would change the status of people so that we would become uncontainable and mutually engaged in each other's lives, regardless of race, age or gender.⁹ McLuhan introduced the concept of a global village with the electronic age, where ideas can be woven together at the speed of light.¹⁰ Many of McLuhan's predictions have proven relevant, as innovations like Wikipedia and open source software have created new capacities for nearly instantaneous knowledge co-creation and sharing.¹¹

However, the circumstances responsible for the sudden rise of remote work in 2020 could not feel further from the utopian connectivity envisioned by McLuhan. As pointed out in 'An Intro to Econferences' (Chapter 15 in this collection), despite advances in communications technology, it is only recently that online conferences have gained momentum, having been propelled from the margins into the mainstream by the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent restrictions on air travel. Quarantine has had a profound impact on academic life. As researchers scramble to find ways to gather and share knowledge

6 Ken Hiltner, *A Nearly Carbon-Neutral Conference Model: White Paper/Practical Guide* (n.d.), <http://hiltner.english.ucsb.edu/index.php/ncnc-guide/#intro>.

7 *Library 2.0*, <https://www.library20.com/>.

8 See Steven Bell, 'A conference wherever you are', *Library Journal*, 136.16 (2011), 28–31, <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=a-conference-whenever-you-are>; Claudia Goldin and Lawrence Katz, *The Race between Education and Technology* (Cambridge:Belknap, 2008).

9 Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994).

10 *Ibid.*

11 Vladimir Zwass, 'Co-Creation: Toward a taxonomy and an integrated research perspective', *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 15.1 (2010), 11–48.

online, many are diving (or rather being pushed) into e-conferencing for the first time. The following case study was conducted prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, and reflects the perspective of a vastly different, pre-pandemic world. Yet, it brings to light enduring questions about the practical challenges and potential benefits of organizing online events, which are more relevant than ever given the impact of the current health crisis on the research community. These questions include: How do you gauge the success of an online event? What essential supports should the organizer be responsible for? What strategies can you use to generate lively online discussions? How can online gatherings present an opportunity to include more diverse voices?

E-conferences can take myriad forms, and there is no single model or 'greenprint' that works for all. That said, we hope that this case study can familiarize academics with the process of running an online event, so that they can experiment with e-conferencing with confidence. The study itself is divided into two parts. The first section focuses primarily on a narrative overview of the AtW e-conference in 2013, documenting the experiences of organizers and highlighting key issues that carried through to subsequent years. The second section uses quantitative evidence, including website traffic and viewer data, to paint a clearer picture of presenter and participant engagement in the AtW series as a whole. The case study concludes with challenges and lessons learned, including suggestions for how to build better supports for e-conferencing into academic institutions, while also pointing to future avenues of research.

AtW Overview

The AtW e-conference series was organized and hosted by the Kule Institute for Advanced Study (KIAS) at the University of Alberta (UAlberta). KIAS's broad focus is to help build research potential in the social sciences, humanities and arts at the University of Alberta¹². In terms of an overall communications strategy, KIAS hypothesized that the AtW series could:

12 For more information please see: www.ualberta.ca/kule-institute/about.

1. Model and help build capacity to conduct affordable, accessible, and more environmentally friendly research dialogues;
2. Showcase UAlberta research strength, particularly in the social sciences, humanities, and arts;
3. Contribute to building KIAS's profile on the UAlberta campus as well as locally, nationally, and internationally.

Initiated in 2013, the AtW series has explored and modeled variations of econference design and implementation using live videoconferencing. The goal was to conduct research dialogues with lower financial and time costs as well as a significantly lower impact on the environment, while still being broadly accessible for participants. KIAS attempted to remove or reduce many of the economic and technical barriers and invite scholars' participation in as positive a manner as possible.¹³

The basic structure of AtW was to facilitate online research presentations using a live video stream hosted on a dedicated website where comments could be moderated online. The research presentations were then made accessible to a broader audience in a video archive. Essentially, KIAS created an online research channel centred on a particular digital culture topic, and past years' themes include privacy and surveillance in the digital age; digital media in the post-truth era; and libraries, archives, and public life.

Feasibility Test—AtW 2013

The first AtW in 2013 was originally conceived as an online conference that would move around the world from institute to institute in two-hour segments for twenty-four hours. Despite the fact that variations of econferences have existed for over two decades, organizing the plenary event proved to be a challenge. The first issue was to build up the administrative and technical capacities of local support staff who had little experience organizing online conferences. The second was to find a stable technical platform that the econference would run on. The third was to secure commitments from interested UAlberta scholars and

¹³ See Appendix 2 for a sample invitation letter.

international scholars who would be willing to present their material in this digital format.

Engaging with Key Stakeholders

The AtW organizers mobilized experience, social capital and leadership to achieve the strategic partnerships and collaborations which helped make the first AtW possible. The KIAS Director, Geoffrey Rockwell, is a well-established digital humanities scholar who mobilized his extensive local, national, and international networks to solicit individual and organizational participation. Looking back at the communities of inquiry (CoI) conference model mentioned in 'An Intro to Econferences', it is conceivable that a significant portion of the receptivity of scholars to participate in the prototype 2013 conference can be attributed to Rockwell leveraging his leadership presence and his social capital as an experienced and innovative researcher.

To maximize interdisciplinary engagement, KIAS chose a broadly accessible theme: technology and culture. In order to encourage cross-institutional collaboration and build a network of like-minded academic leaders who believe in the value of the econference format, KIAS first focused on identifying and contacting prospective research partners at other institutes. These individuals were asked to commit to organizing a one to two-hour segment of the econference, often a panel or roundtable discussion. In this way, the AtW organizers hoped to both engage a set of strong research teams and distribute some of the responsibility for setting the tone of the conference and selecting content to other organizations. The focus on interdisciplinarity and cross-institutional collaboration was so successful that it was carried forward through subsequent AtW conferences, and in fact many of our research partners participated in the AtW event for multiple years.

Conference participants were recruited by direct email correspondence from the KIAS Director, followed by communications with an AtW project coordinator. In later iterations of the AtW conference series, the event information was also circulated through academic listservs and social media posts. The promotional materials made clear the environmental objectives of the AtW conference organizers, highlighting the carbon savings of past events, which proved to be an effective way to generate

enthusiasm and goodwill on the part of prospective participants. In the first year of the AtW series, approximately 74 invitations were sent to institute coordinators and researchers, including 16 researchers from UAlberta. The result of these recruitment efforts was that a total of 57 researchers (including 14 researchers from UAlberta) from 11 institutions in 6 countries participated in the first AtW econference. It would be an oversimplification to make a linear calculation of the response rate, for example, $60/74 = 81\%$ acceptance rate, as the invited researchers sometimes brought research collaborators who were previously unknown to the AtW organizers. However, the overall response to the 2013 AtW invitations proved that the econference modality could be attractive to a significant group of academics locally and internationally.

Econferences, while not requiring hotels or catering, are still labour and resource intensive. In fact, because many of the AtW participants had never taken part in an econference before, organizers needed to take an even more involved role in creating and communicating the conference protocols and establishing a workable online environment for hosting the event. KIAS committed the financial and personnel resources to support project management, communication, website design and hosting, video conferencing, streaming, recording, and creating an electronic archive of the conference. With these supports in place, participants could feel confident in focusing on their presentations and leave the heavy lifting to the AtW organizers and technicians.

Participants were also given broad flexibility in terms of the presentation format. In addition to the live vs pre-recorded option, of which more will be said in the subsequent section, participants could also choose from among different presentation styles, which gave them more control over the type of conference experience they hoped to create: formal (or conversational), structured (or fluid), less interactive (or more so). Among the accepted formats were panel discussions, roundtables, keynotes, slideshows with voiceover, and interviews. In the final year of the AtW event, whose theme was sustainable research, we even welcomed creative submissions. The panel on 'Art and/in the Anthropocene', whose speakers contributed a chapter to this anthology, included poetry readings and a live musical performance, and it turned out to be one of the conference's most electrifying and engaging segments.

Exploring Technical Design

The technical design of the AtW econference focused on an accessible website space, a social media conversation channel, a video conference system, a stable streaming platform, and creation of an archive of the research presentation videos. The livestream was embedded at the top of the website so that visitors could easily locate it and participate in the conference. A countdown clock gave participants a sense of immediacy. The presenters were asked to provide a simple biography and photo to allow presenters to see each other in advance as well as give audience members a better connection to the research backgrounds of the presenters. To highlight the internationality of the econference, the Speakers tab of the website was designed to sort presenters by country. Essential technical requirements for presenters were listed directly on the website, as well as links to more details and the technicians' contact information.

The key members of the UAlberta Arts Resource Centre (ARC) technical team who assisted with AtW 2013 were Clare Peters and Grant Wang, both of whom have won institutional awards at UAlberta for their excellent technical service. Social capital was again mobilized as Peters negotiated with another UAlberta department to allow KIAS to use the Clearsea/LifeSize platform for AtW 2013. Without this support, the cost of accessing professional-grade livestreaming would have been significant. KIAS continued to use the Clearsea/LifeSize platform for video-conferencing in subsequent years. However, in 2017, we experimented with livestreaming the AtW event on YouTube, hoping to take advantage of the platform's capacity for audience engagement vis-a-vis the comment and chat section. We also hoped to learn more about our audience through the YouTube Analytics report, which gives creators access to data about viewership.

The conference livestream was broadcast on the AtW website according to the conference schedule. However, as mentioned, not all presentations were 'live', as some speakers opted to pre-record their talks. The option for pre-recorded presentations was especially appreciated by international participants based in different time zones. These speakers might otherwise have had to present at extremely inconvenient hours, which may well have discouraged them from taking part in the

conference entirely. Similarly, participants without access to reliable internet connections were better served by the pre-recorded format.

In addition to the longer sessions, such as the panels and keynotes, UAlberta graduate students were also invited to submit short, pre-recorded 'lightning talks', which were interspersed throughout the conference schedule. These lightning talks not only afforded new scholars the opportunity to share their research, but also improved the programming. The clips were screened in-between the regular sessions, in order to transition from one livestream location to another, and could be rebroadcast in case of technical difficulties. The result was a much smoother, continuous series of presentations.

It should also be noted that pre-recording a session did not limit the possibility for audience interaction. Speakers could tune into the livestream of their talk and respond to viewers' questions in real-time, either in the chat or on Twitter, and in doing so achieve a type of 'dual presence'.

Creating 'Hallway Conversations'

A major challenge for econferencing is how to create engaging spaces for social conversations.¹⁴ Social presence is one of the key reasons academics attend traditional face-to-face (f2f) conferences.¹⁵ According to a major study of nearly 2000 academics, 'social media has become an important complementary channel for disseminating and discovering research'.¹⁶ Twitter is one of the most popular microblogging sites in the world and has been used during a variety of academic conferences, including the AtW series.¹⁷ The KIAS Twitter stream was embedded in

14 Lynne Anderson and Terry Anderson, *Online Conferences: Professional Development for a Networked Era* (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2010).

15 Anderson and Anderson (2010); Andrew Glover, Yolande Strengers and Tania Lewis, 'The unsustainability of academic aeromobility in Australian universities', *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 13.1 (2017), 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15487733.2017.1388620>; N. Jacobs and A. McFarlane, 'Conferences as learning communities: some early lessons in using 'back-channel' technologies at an academic conference—distributed intelligence or divided attention?', *Journal of Computer-Assisted Learning*, 21.5 (2005), 317–329, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2729.2005.00142.x>.

16 David Nicholas and Ian Rowlands, 'Social media use in the research workflow', *Information Services and Use*, 31.1–2 (2011), 61–83 (p. 61).

17 Denis Parra et al., 'Twitter in academic events: A study of temporal usage, communication, sentimental and topical patterns in 16 computer science

the AtW website, and over 400 Tweets were associated with each annual event.

Leading up to each conference, KIAS collected the Twitter handles of researchers and their host institutions. Participants were also encouraged to use specific hashtags, such as #UofAWorld and #AtW2016. Note, for instance, the following Tweet announcing the 2014 AtW conference by Susan Schreibman, Director of the Digital Humanities Centre at Maynooth University. Schreibman, who collaborated with KIAS on several AtW conferences, increased the visibility of the Tweet by tagging both keywords and prominent users in the post (see Fig. 1).

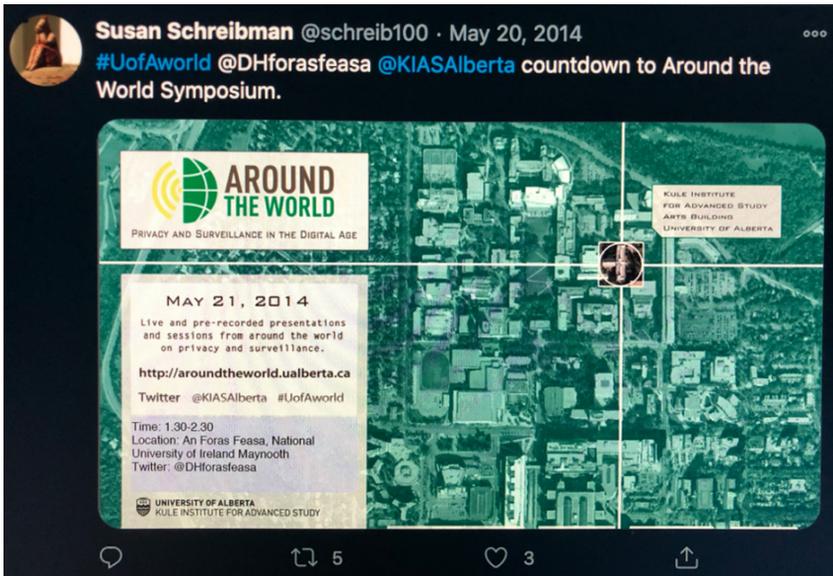


Fig. 1 Tweet by Susan Schreibman, May 20, 2014, <https://twitter.com/schreib100/status/468863538115919872?s=20>.

Hashtags not only boost the prominence of an event through the use of trending topics, they also help participants search for and locate conference-related questions, comments, and discussion; in this way, facilitating interaction and knowledge sharing.¹⁸ During the actual

conferences', *Computer Communications*, 73 (2016), 301–314, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comcom.2015.07.001>; Joanna Dunlap and Patrick Lowenthal, 'Tweeting the night away: Using Twitter to enhance social presence', *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 20.2 (2009), 129–135.

¹⁸ Parra, et al. (2016).

conferences, Rockwell and other organizers live-tweeted extensively with short comments or quotes from research presentations or links to relevant material online. Tweets can, in a sense, function like annotations that supplement and contextualize the main material, as seen in the following Tweet by Teresa Swist, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 Tweet by Teresa Swist, May 21, 2014, <https://twitter.com/teresaswist/status/469271382618931200?s=20>.

As discussed in 'An Intro to Econferences', one of the benefits of econferences is that the conversations generated from the event can continue even after the event itself officially ends. The online commentary can also be preserved and even presented anew in a different format. Using the Storify application, for instance, AtW organizers were able to locate, compile, and archive a 'story' of the event. In this way, econferences create opportunities to preserve a record of research dialogues, which might otherwise be lost to the ether.

Overall, the use of Twitter helped to raise the profile of the AtW series. For example, the KIAS tweet announcing that the AtW 2017 events were archived on Storify received more than 2100 'impressions', which refers to the number of times a tweet has been seen, making it among the most visible tweets that KIAS made in 2017. Tweets about the presentations, which acted as online commentary, also had the advantage of being able to be preserved. However, we had less success using the social media platform to spark more lively and interactive discussions about the content; and this and other difficulties with the platform are discussed in more detail further on in the section on 'Challenges and Lessons Learned'.

With this narrative overview in mind, let us now review other data we used to assess whether the AtW model met key KIAS communicative goals.

AtW Data

Measuring Engagement

In a traditional conference, success can be measured by examining the levels of engagement in terms of the number and diversity of conference participants and the caliber of the presenters. For an econference, in addition to the aforementioned information, organizers can also use metadata gathered from the conference website and the video streaming applications to gain a clearer picture of the event's online presence.

Table 1 AtW overview of 2013–2018 presenters.

Year	Total # Presenters	International	Canadian (Other)	UAlberta (Tenured)	UAlberta (Early Career)
2018	43	20	11	9	3
2017	44	24	4	10	6
2016	21	9	4	2	6
2015	50	34	8	5	3
2014	45	35	3	4	3
2013	60	43	4	6	7
Total	263	165	34	36	28
Avg	44	28	6	6	5

Looking at Table 1, we can see that the number of presenters varied slightly over the years, particularly in 2016 when KIAS experimented with a very small conference format. Overall, the average number of presenters for each conference was more than 44. While there is no available data on the average size of an academic conference, Meeting Professionals International (MPI) has estimated the average number of

participants at private sector conferences to be 74.¹⁹ However, this data from the private sector found that only 5% of the business conference attendees were speakers, for an average number of between 3 and 4 speakers at these conferences.²⁰ In other words, an average of 44 presenters, particularly with an average annual representation from over 16 organizations in 13 cities, might be seen as a respectable threshold.

Building International Presence

Considering that there are nearly 200 countries in the world, having representation from an average of 8.2 different countries at each conference might not seem particularly impressive; however, to determine the overall participation in the conference, we should also look at website visitor and presentation viewer data in Table 3 and Table 4 below. Having a majority of presentations in English and being based in Canada, may have created conditions that led to a predominance of researchers from North America, Europe, and Australia. There was under-representation of researchers from developing countries, with presenters from only one country in Africa (Nigeria) and one country in South America (Brazil). Notably, however, the proportion of international participation far exceeds the baseline in the private sector. International participation rates in standard conferences is less than 7%.²¹ Overall, more than 66% of presenters in the AtW series were international researchers, demonstrating that it is possible to bring international researchers together via an econference.

Showcasing UAlberta Researchers

Does the data support the hypothesis that the AtW series could showcase UAlberta research strengths? Overall, nearly a quarter of the presenters—64 out of 263—were from UAlberta.²² The AtW econference

19 Meeting Professionals International (MPI), *Meetings Activity Profile Report Canadian Economic Impact Study 3.0 (CEIS 3.0), 2012 Base Year* (2012), https://www.mpiweb.org/docs/default-source/research-and-reports/meetings-activity-profile-report_ceis-3-0.pdf.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

22 See Appendix 1.

experience created unique opportunities for collaboration, such as in 2014 when four UAlberta researchers from the Faculties of Arts and Law engaged in an online discussion with Alberta's Information and Privacy Commissioner. Creating opportunities for research collaboration and career progression is one of the key elements of conference participation.²³ Of particular importance was the fact that over 10% of the total AtW presenters were early career researchers from UAlberta, including graduate students and pre-tenure academics. In terms of creating visibility for early career academics, at last count, two of the graduate student AtW presentations in 2014 were among the top 10 most viewed videos of all time on the KIAS YouTube channel.²⁴ Broadly speaking, the evidence suggests that the AtW series has successfully showcased both established and early career UAlberta researchers.

Enhancing the KIAS Profile

Showcasing KIAS and building its profile was another goal of the AtW series. KIAS employs several communications streams including a website, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. The KIAS YouTube channel is a repository of videos of visiting speakers and panel discussions hosted by KIAS. Looking at Table 2 below, we can see that the AtW series has provided seven of the top ten KIAS YouTube videos in terms of watch time.

Coordinating the AtW series also raised KIAS's profile on the UAlberta campus and abroad. KIAS used the AtW conferences as an opportunity to engage with 64 UAlberta researchers from 20 departments, 9 faculties, and several central areas. In addition, KIAS was awarded an Office of Sustainability 2016 Exemplary Green Spaces in a public ceremony

23 Jacobs and McFarlane (2005); Peter Kalmus, *Being the Change: Live Well and Spark a Climate Revolution* (Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 2017); T. Storme et al., 'Mobility and professional networks in Academia: An exploration of the obligations of presence', *Mobilities*, 12.3 (2017), 405–424, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2015.1116884>.

24 'Around the World 2014—UAlberta Michael Zajko', 8:01, posted online by KIASualberta, *YouTube* (June 12, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e22rZdAG3Ds&list=UU0Q1jEKGmaui8DMGE8BZWWw&index=50>; 'Around the World 2014—UAlberta Ajay Sandhu', 12:51, posted online by KIASualberta, *YouTube* (June 3, 2014) https://youtu.be/ZuMNUgVR_gU.

Table 2 Top 10 KIAS YouTube videos (to September 1, 2020).

KIAS Rank	ATW	Video Title	Views	Watch Time (Hours)
1		Donna Haraway—SF: String Figures, Multispecies Muddles, Staying with the Trouble	19,949	4,731
2	ATW 2017	KIASualberta Livestream	381	146
3	ATW 2018	ATW2018 Livestream—Sustainability in Practice: Revolutionary Ideas to Change How we Live and Learn	305	56
4	ATW 2018	ATW2018 Livestream—Art and/ in the Anthropocene: A Debate on Sustainability and Ecology	232	48
5		Kimberly TallBear: Decolonizing Science and Technology	1,039	48
6	ATW 2018	ATW 2018 Livestream—Sustainability and the Public	189	39
7		Responses to the Refugee Crisis: Reflections from Government, Community and Academia	221	36
8	ATW 2018	ATW2018 Livestream—Green Philosophies: Re-Defining our Sustainable Past (and Future)	243	35
9	ATW 2016	Frank Tough: 'The Great Digital Transformation: Enclosing the archival commons'	276	28
10	ATW 2016	Guylaine Beaudry: Academic Libraries, Digital Culture, Spaces, and Public Life	317	24

attended by a range of staff, students, and institutional leaders.²⁵ UAlberta academic leaders, including Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, and Vice-Presidents attended AtW events, contributing social capital and presence to KIAS.

²⁵ University of Alberta, 'Campus sustainability leadership awards: Award recipients' (2016), <https://www.ualberta.ca/sustainability/about/leadership-awards/winners>

Hybrid Model

One of the most engaging formats that emerged was the hybrid of f2f and online streaming. The video recording of Donna Haraway's keynote speech, 'SF: String Figures, Multispecies Muddles, Staying with the Trouble', whose viewing data is represented in Table 2, is an excellent example of a hybrid model. A KIAS-supported research team, led by Natalie Loveless, brought Haraway to UAlberta for a well-coordinated series of academic events in 2014. Haraway's keynote presentation was viewed by a live audience of over 200 people who overflowed the room. Since the talk was made available online, it has been viewed nearly 20,000 times.

Hybrid presentations were also conducted during AtW eferences by research teams at Trinity College Dublin and Western Sydney University. Interestingly, members of these teams became among the most consistent collaborators both in terms of participation and the number of researchers who engaged with each topic. The University of Haifa in Israel also frequently used the hybrid model, beginning in 2014.

KIAS once more replicated its previous successes with the hybrid model with the 'An evening with Edward Snowden' event in 2018.²⁶ In this case, the speaker was streamed in virtually, while the audience gathered live at two separate locations at the North and South University of Alberta campuses. The Snowden event is a particularly good example of how virtual conference technology can be used to overcome geographic and political barriers, which can otherwise make presenting impossible. The enthusiastic response to the event, with over 700 students, faculty and members of the public in attendance, shows that virtual presentations can still generate an audience and prove just as engaging.

As each of these examples demonstrate, the flexibility of hybrid presentations, which can involve f2f and digital aspects in both delivery and reception, allows them to reach wider audiences. What is more, in the case of keynote or special presentations, because of the compact running time and the focus on a single speaker, the added benefits of a

26 University of Alberta, 'An evening with Edward Snowden on security, public life and research', *Kule Institute for Advanced Study*, <https://www.ualberta.ca/kule-institute/snowden-ualberta>.

digital presence can often be achieved with little additional cost or effort in comparison to an entirely f2f event.

Estimating Participation: Viewers and Visitors

Measuring engagement and participation in econferences is much more nuanced than with traditional f2f conferences, and this is even more true of hybrid models. Consider the viewership and website visitor data presented in the following two tables (Table 3 and Table 4).²⁷

Table 3 Viewer analytics: YouTube and ClearSea/LifeSize.

Year	Topic	Estimated Total Views	LiveStream Views	YouTube Views	Watch Time (Hours)
2018	Sustainable Research	1,765	n/a	1,765	226.53
2017	Digital Media in a Post-Truth Era	2,912	n/a	2,912	261.88
2016	Libraries, Archives and Public Life	3,474	273*	3,201	190.52
2015	Big Data	2,049	444*	1,605	63.02
2014	Privacy and Surveillance	2,907	552*	2,355	85.05
2013	Technology and Culture	780	251*	529	20.50
Total		13,885	n/a	12,367	847.50
Avg		2,315		2,061	141

Estimating the number of online attendees presents numerous challenges. On one hand, there is a risk of overcounting. For instance, a single person can be responsible for repeat visits to the websites and/

²⁷ The YouTube data was taken directly from the YouTube Analytics page, while the livestream view data was provided by the technician running the livestreaming software LifeSize 2013–2016.

or multiple video views, inflating the results. On the other hand, there is also the possibility of undercounting. Viewer data can be lost in the process of re-uploading a video, as often happens when breaking down a continuous livestream into shorter clips of each individual speaker or panel. Views can, moreover, continue to accumulate after the event has officially concluded. There is also the added complexity of hybrid events. As mentioned, a number of AtW sessions were attended by a live audience in addition to the online viewers. Because we lacked the house data from these hybrid sessions, the total number of spectators may have been higher.

One also has to consider how sustained the level of audience engagement is. How many hours are virtual participants tuning in for? Do they attend multiple sessions? We found that most website visitors and video viewers were not spending long periods on the website. From this, we can speculate that econferences attract more viewers and visitors, but for shorter periods of time in comparison to traditional f2f conferences.

Table 4 AtW website visits annual totals.

Year	Topic	Countries	Cities	New Users	Sessions
2018	Sustainable Research	52	289	1,122	1,935
2017	Digital Media in a Post-Truth Era	47	205	801	1,383
2016	Libraries, Archives and Public Life	47	199	745	1,247
2015	Big Data	56	354	1,402	1,844
2014	Privacy and Surveillance	31	173	663	1,192
2013	Technology and Culture	22	160	651	1,038
Total				5,384	8,639
Avg		43	230	897	1,440

There are undoubtedly difficulties with estimating the size of a virtual audience. That said, according to the metadata gathered from YouTube

and the AtW website, over the entire course of the AtW series the event garnered 4,262 new website visitors and 13,885 livestream and video views. Each annual econference event attracted an average of 2,315 livestream and YouTube views, while the average number of website visitors was 897. The yearly fluctuations in views and visitors might be attributed, at least in part, to discrepancies in data gathering practices. Still, if even half of the livestream and YouTube viewers were unique, that would represent over 1,000 virtual attendees. While more research on how to accurately assess online participation is needed, this is nonetheless promising evidence in support of econferencing as an effective mode of hosting academic conferences.

AtW Accessibility

In addition to reaching a broad audience, the results from the AtW series are also an indication of how econferences can help to overcome the barriers to participation in f2f conference, which were outlined in 'An Intro to Econferences'. On average, researchers from 17 different cities in 8 different countries took part in each AtW econference event (see Table 5). Examples of international speakers include Omolara Kikelomo Owoeye and colleagues from Ekiti State University in Nigeria in 2014 and 2015, Marcus Bastos and colleagues at Pontifical Catholic University in Brazil in 2015 and Oren Meyers and colleagues at the University of Haifa in Israel. There were also presentations from Canadians researchers based in northern communities, such as Amy Amos in Inuvik and Jean Polfus in Tullit'a, both as part of the AtW 2018 panel on sustainable research initiatives in the North. In all these examples, the financial, temporal and environmental costs of flying would have been prohibitive for a f2f conference. For instance, Amos estimated that it would have cost over \$4,000 for her to fly to Edmonton, Alberta, where the KIAS institute is headquartered. Furthermore, it would have required three days of travel and emitted over 0.54 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e).²⁸ For Owoeye, the flight from Ado Ekiti, Nigeria would have cost approximately \$2,350, required between 32–46 hours of flying time,

28 'ATW 2018 (Edited): Sustainability in Practice—Revolutionary Ideas to Change How we Live and Learn', 2:10:28, posted online by KIASualberta, *YouTube* (May 30, 2018), https://youtu.be/Ph5JpLfj_aY?t=5086.

and emitted over 3 metric tons of CO₂e.²⁹ Overall, the distribution of AtW presenter locations suggests that the model allowed a diverse range of research perspectives to be shared, or, at a minimum, that geographical access issues were not a major barrier to participation.

Table 5 AtW Presenter Distribution by Institutions, Cities, Countries.

Year	Total # Presenters	Institutions	Cities	Countries
2018	43	20	18	4
2017	44	15	11	6
2016	21	13	10	6
2015	50	18	20	12
2014	45	20	15	11
2013	60	14	9	6
Total	263	100	83	45
Avg	44	17	14	8

Communication accessibility is another area that e-conferencing shows promise in, due to the availability of manual and automatic closed captioning technology. From the experience of the AtW organizers, archiving presentations in a dedicated YouTube section of the website helped to make the conference material accessible in a number of ways.³⁰ After the conference material was broadcasted live on the website homepage, the video was immediately archived on the site and available to be rewatched. Later, the full video was broken down into shorter clips of each individual presentation and uploaded to the KIAS YouTube channel. One benefit of using YouTube for the AtW video archive was that it afforded KIAS free automatic closed captioning, greatly improving the accessibility of the content for academics who are, for example, deaf or hearing impaired.

29 Flight cost based on round-trip economy airfare in spring 2018, using the Flight Hopper application; CO₂e estimate based on round-trip Economy airfare using the Carbon Footprint Calculator.

30 'Around the World, Category: Archive', <http://aroundtheworld.ualberta.ca/category/archive/>.

The same technology also allowed researchers the ability to present in languages other than English. Given the overwhelming dominance of English in academia, econferences have the potential to improve language diversity and fight against the 'marginalization' of 'non-English research'.³¹ For instance, at the 2013 AtW conference, a Brazilian research team from Federal University of Espírito Santo pre-recorded their presentation in Portuguese and added English subtitles. Likewise, Montreal-based research teams, such as the Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur les humanités numériques, gave bilingual and French presentations. Even so, overall, very few AtW speakers chose to present in non-English languages. Further work could be done to promote language diversity at econferences and avoid defaulting to English, especially when it comes to collaborative, multi-institutional and multinational events. For instance, organizers might, at a minimum, make the opportunity to present in non-English languages explicit in the conference material and facilitate video captioning with the option for presenters to edit and/or submit their own captions.

The econference format can work to challenge other biases within academia, including gender bias. The gender imbalance in academia is well-documented. A research team at the University of Berkeley found that women are less likely to get tenure-track jobs and to be promoted.³² The same study showed that while there are more women in visible leadership positions, there are also more women in lower-paying part-time and adjunct jobs.³³ For these reasons, one can conclude that female scholars are more likely to face economic and social barriers to conference travel. Econferences, by comparison, might be more conducive to inclusivity, which appears to be supported by the AtW case

31 Adam Huttner-Koros, 'The hidden bias of science's universal language', *The Atlantic* (August 21, 2015), www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/08/english-universal-language-science-research/400919/; Matt Pickles, 'Could the dominance of English harm global scholarship?', *BBC News* (January 20, 2016), <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-35282235>.

32 Mary Ann Mason, Nicholas H Wolfinger and Marc Goulden, *Do Babies Matter?: Gender and Family in the Ivory Tower* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2013), p. 84.

33 Mary Ann Mason, 'In the ivory tower, men only', *Slate* (June 17, 2013), <https://slate.com/human-interest/2013/06/female-academics-pay-a-heavy-baby-penalty.html>; Mason, Wolfinger and Goulden (2013), p. 36.

study findings. 45% of the UAlberta presenters in AtW conferences were female, which compares favorably to the overall UAlberta context in which only 34% of tenure track positions are held by women.³⁴ However, further research on this subject is needed, and much more work needs to be done to figure out how econferencing can be mobilized to strengthen diversity and inclusion in research.

AtW Affordability

Affordability is an accessibility issue on an individual level and a sustainability issue on an organizational level. Financial constraints can make traditional f2f conferences inaccessible to many vulnerable populations, including early career academics. Despite the fact that hosting traditional conferences can be a financial challenge for organizations, there are both strong pressures and motivations for universities to organize conferences.

In the AtW series, KIAS wanted to model a type of conference that reduced the financial burden on organizations and research teams. The budget for conducting the AtW conferences was \$12,500 CAD per year. To put this into perspective, a presenter travelling from Paris, France to Edmonton, Canada might estimate \$2,500 CAD for flights, accommodation, meals and ground transportation. In other words, the entire AtW econference budget was comparable to bringing five presenters from Europe to Canada. The AtW budget covered all aspects of conference coordination, technical support, video editing, archiving, and website design and hosting. As shown in Table 6, the estimated savings in flight costs alone for the AtW presenters was \$236,000 CAD in total, for an annual average of just under \$40,000 CAD. Considering the other potential travel costs of accommodation, food, and ground transportation it is clear that KIAS was able to conduct legitimate conferences at less than one-quarter of the cost of flying and hosting all of the presenters to a physical location.

34 Academic Women's Association, 'The diversity gap' (June, 2016), <https://uofaawa.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/awa-diversity-gap-professors-gender-diversity-intersectionality.jpg>.

Table 6 AtW presenter flight distances, costs and CO₂ by year.

Year	Flight Distance (Return) (1)	Flight Cost Estimate (2)	CO ₂ e Avoided (3)	CO ₂ e with Radiative (3)
2018	342,028	\$36,470	25.31	47.86
2017	331,276	\$26,150	23.99	45.39
2016	152,906	\$14,310	10.98	20.76
2015	689,572	\$53,770	50.15	94.73
2014	619,552	\$50,270	44.7	84.46
2013	776,880	\$55,230	55.97	105.86

(*1) Travel distances calculated using www.greatcirclemapper.net

(*2) Based on round-trip Economy airfare estimator using the Hopper app available at www.hopper.com

(*3) Based on round-trip Economy airfare using the Carbon Footprint Calculator at www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx

Modelling Sustainable Research Practices

One of the KIAS goals for initiating the AtW series was to model sustainable research practices. Table 6 shows that the carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) that the AtW conferences avoided was between 211 and 399 metric tons of CO₂e. This chapter will not enter into the debate about whether or not the radiative forcing of high-altitude flights should be factored into CO₂e estimates.³⁵ The average of the two CO₂e estimates for the AtW econferences is over 300 metric tons, which is more than sufficient to demonstrate the impact made. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency website, 300 metric tons of CO₂e is equivalent to the annual energy use of 32.4 homes, or

35 See, for example: Borgar Aamaas and Glen Peters, 'The climate impact of Norwegians' travel behavior', *Travel Behaviour and Society*, 6 (2017), 10–18, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2016.04.001>; Duncan Clark, 'The surprisingly complex truth about planes and climate change', *The Guardian* (September 9, 2010), <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/blog/2010/sep/09/carbon-emissions-planes-shiping>; Piers Forster, Keith Shine and Nicola Stuber, 'It is premature to include non-co2 effects of aviation in emission trading schemes', *Atmospheric Environment*, 40.6 (2006), 1117–1121, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.atmosenv.2005.11.005>; A. Gettelman and C. Chen, 'The climate impact of aviation aerosols', *Geophysical Research Letters*, 40.11 (2013), 2785–2789, <https://doi.org/10.1002/grl.50520>.

64.2 passenger vehicles driven for one year.³⁶ In other words, the carbon footprint avoided by the AtW econference model was equivalent to nearly one-quarter of AtW all presenters not driving their passenger cars for a year.

Between 2014 and 2018, the AtW series served as a model for several important UAlberta initiatives. Olenka Bilash, from the Faculty of Education, engaged the growing econferencing expertise of ARC staff to host the Contemporary Ukraine Research Forum (CURF) in 2014. Initially hesitant, Bilash was impressed by the number of participants and viewers that CURF garnered and went on to use the econference model for the Research Initiative on Democratic Reforms in Ukraine (RIDRU) conferences in 2015 and 2016.³⁷ Elizabeth Turner, from the Faculty of Arts, and Ivan Fair, Faculty of Engineering, are two of the lead organizers of Mysterious Barricades, an across-Canada concert to raise awareness for suicide prevention. Turner and Fair modelled Mysterious Barricades on the AtW econference concept, conducting a site visit during the 2016 AtW. They used the hybrid model of having musicians play to live audiences in each city and livestreaming the presentations to online audiences.³⁸ Fair suggested that the Mysterious Barricades project would not have been possible without the capacity-building work that KIAS had done over the previous years at UAlberta.³⁹

Perhaps the clearest success of modelling sustainability is the econference toolkit,⁴⁰ which KIAS co-produced with the Office of Sustainability in the spring of 2018.⁴¹ The primary audiences for this document are tenured academics and conference organizers who

36 United States Environmental Protection Agency, 'Greenhouse gas equivalencies calculator' (December 2018), <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>.

37 Olenka Bilash, Conversation with Oliver Rossier (2018).

38 Lianne Faulder, 'Mysterious barricades: Edmonton-based national concert raises awareness of suicide', *Edmonton Journal* (September 8, 2016), <http://edmontonjournal.com/entertainment/music/mysterious-barricades-edmonton-based-national-concert-raises-awareness-of-suicide>.

39 Ivan Fair, Conversation with Oliver Rossier (2016).

40 Available at <http://aroundtheworld.ualberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/E-Conferencing-Toolkit.pdf>.

41 Trevor Chow-Fraser, Oliver Rossier and Chelsea Miya, *Moving Ideas without Moving People: How to Econference at the University of Alberta* (2018), <https://aroundtheworld.ualberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/E-Conferencing-Toolkit.pdf>.

can immediately influence change. There was some urgency to this initiative given that UAlberta had set a goal of reducing the university's greenhouse gas emissions to 17% below 2005 levels by 2020.⁴² The hope is that the toolkit will continue to encourage researchers at UAlberta to purpose more sustainable, online versions of traditional conferences.⁴³ In fact, another one of the outcomes of the AtW series was the creation of a Kule Institute-funded econference grant, which gives colleagues the opportunity to run econference events of their own.⁴⁴

Challenges and Lessons Learned

There were many lessons learned over the course of planning and organizing the AtW series, and the next section summarizes our key takeaways.

Technical Support/Training. A number of the obstacles addressed in AtW 2013 and in the subsequent years required experienced technical personnel to navigate. The availability of freely available video conference platforms like Skype and Google Hangouts, and recent livestreaming options like YouTube Live and Facebook Live, might make it seem like econferences should be easy to set up and organize. However, just as we engage architects to design the safe and secure flow of people in physical spaces, we need to involve experts to design secure and stable online conversation spaces. For example, in 2013 we had a research team who did not realize that their presentation had started streaming as there was a fairly significant delay between when the video stream was processed and then re-streamed out. They had turned down the volume on the communications channel from our technician. Without an audio connection, the only way we could communicate with them was through the video feed. One of our team wrote: 'You are now live!' in large font and held the message up to the video camera so they could see it. The researchers quickly realized that

42 University of Alberta, *Sustainability Plan 2016–2020: Building a Sustainable Future* (2016), <https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/sustainability/1-about/sustainability-plan/sustainabilityplan2016202020170317singlesoptimized.pdf>.

43 Chow-Fraser, Rossier and Miya (2018).

44 University of Alberta, 'Kule econferencing grant call for proposals', *Kule Institute for Advanced Study* (2019), <https://www.ualberta.ca/kule-institute/funding/kule-econferencing-grant>.

they were streaming and began their presentation. Afterwards, the AtW technicians were able to edit the final version of the presentation to remove the awkward initial portion of the presentation. In future iterations of the conference, we created 'cheat sheets' or technical guides for our participants to consult.⁴⁵ Scheduling 'test runs' with speakers prior to the event, so that they could familiarize themselves with the software and we could have an opportunity to identify and debug any issues, also proved essential. Other econferences, like the Nearly Carbon Neutral Conference and Library 2.0, opt for online training, using instructional videos and livechats to teach participants how to do things like: record and upload presentations, use software, and join live sessions.⁴⁶

Scheduling. Hosting synchronous online conferences can be difficult, particularly when engaging a global set of researchers, and Hiltner makes a strong case for moving to asynchronous online conferencing. During the AtW series, the challenges of having presenters from a wide range of time zones was addressed in several ways. We set up a Google Sheet to manage scheduling (see Appendix 4). Key information included: local time in Edmonton, presentation format (live or pre-recorded), local time for presenters, name of the institution, contact information (access to a cell phone number was vital), and any special notes about the research team. Early in the 2013 planning we had indications that teams from the University of Western Sydney, Trinity College Dublin, and the University of Tokyo were interested in participating. We immediately locked down the best potential time periods that would be convenient for them, even though that meant that our own workday might be very stretched. Indeed, the 2013 conference ran for seventeen straight hours and was physically challenging for the AtW organizers and technicians to conduct. All subsequent conferences were scheduled to be twelve hours or less.

Another key finding for conducting econferences is the importance of having short pre-recorded sessions ('pre-records') readily available. If the presenter does not have access to a reliable internet connection,

45 See Appendix 5.

46 'Tips for speakers for recording your talk', *Climate Change: Views from the Humanities*, http://ehc.english.ucsb.edu/?page_id=12523; 'Training', *Library 2.0*, <https://www.library20.com/page/training>.

it is better not to risk a livestream and instead request a video file in advance. The pre-record option can also be used to accommodate scheduling issues and even as a backup to be re-aired in case of technical difficulties.

Stimulating Online Dialogue. One of the most important aspects of participating in conferences is social networking. However, as organizers, we found it challenging to maintain a sense of shared presence and conversation online. Indeed, while many of the participating researchers and organizers had Twitter handles, a significant number were not very active on the platform. Very few specific questions delivered via Twitter were content-related and interactive. Most tweets were instead focused on building an audience, summarizing key presentation quotes, or congratulating the presenter.

Drawing on Eisenstein's observations of the persistence of the past, it should be apparent that academics who have become accustomed to the f2f interaction of traditional conferences will not simply and suddenly transition to econferences with social media.⁴⁷ How then to generate online dialogue? One model we briefly tried in 2016 was to have prepared papers and designated respondents, an approach also used by the Minds Online philosophy conference.⁴⁸ Designating responders ensures an audience, which is important in econferencing; there is no risk of talking into the void. However, this approach might discourage unexpected connections between participants. The conversation could risk becoming forced and insular, with commentary dominated by the assigned reader(s).

In 2018, KIAS also tried using comments on the conference website, along the lines of NCN and Minds Online, to create more flexible communicative opportunities. The level of engagement appeared to slightly improve. However, in our case, the commentary was now spread out over multiple platforms (the website, YouTube, Twitter). A better approach might be to stick to a single platform, in order to streamline the conversation as much as possible, and to find creative ways to engage participants with using the platform early on in the conference process.

47 Elizabeth Eisenstein, 'The end of the book?: Some perspectives on media change', *The American Scholar*, 64.4 (1995), 541–555.

48 See Chapter 17 for more on Minds Online.

Participation Data. Another lesson learned is the value of developing a plan for evaluating econference participation. Though the improvement of video conferencing technology has aided the mainstream appeal, the academic community has been hesitant to recognize the value of the econference medium for nurturing scholarly discourse. Reliable data helps make the case that organizing econferences is indeed serious academic work, which can, in turn, be used to secure institutional funding and other supports.

However, online events can take place across multiple platforms, each of which have their own processes and protocols for data capture and analysis, which makes gathering and aggregating user/viewer data a challenge. For instance, the ClearSea/LifeSize platform, which was used for the livestream, only retains data during the actual transmission. As a result, any interruptions in internet connections will result in data loss. Similarly, YouTube analytics can be easily lost if any of the video's core identifying information is changed, which can happen when retitling a video or splitting a long video into shorter segments. In other cases, the application itself can become obsolete. Storify appeared to be a useful system for archiving Tweets. However, the application was shut down in 2018, five years into the AtW series, and all of the 'stories' collected from these past events had to be promptly saved or they would have been deleted. Streamlining the event to focus on a single platform can simplify the information gathering process, in addition to streamlining (and energizing) the dialogue, so that participants gather in a single space for discussion.

The importance of the data also plays a role in the project management strategy. The AtW technical team was, naturally, much more focused on maintaining the flow of communication than preserving viewing data. To make matters more complicated, our technicians were able to negotiate our use of a livestreaming software subscription through other parts of the campus at a reduced rate. While this reduced costs, it created a situation where KIAS was dependent on an external group for data and in the end, there was data loss due to communication issues with partners and lack of understanding of YouTube analytics protocols.

The process of experimenting with technology will inevitably lead to some data loss. However, this can be mitigated by developing a concrete and robust strategy and system for capturing participation metrics. This

may involve alternative means of evaluating conference engagement, such as post-conference surveys to reach out directly to participants.

Hybrid Model. Econfereencing need not, and almost certainly will not, replace f2f conferencing.⁴⁹ However, hybrid modes of presentations and online discourse can augment f2f conferencing and give important alternatives to flying all participants and presenters to a single location for a synchronous meeting. Hybrid models include having local or regional f2f meetings connected by econference. In the case of the AtW series, several research teams hosted local events at their institutions as part of the larger, multi-institutional and multinational conference dialogue. Hybrid events create opportunities for both the interaction of f2f presence and the sustainability benefits of hosting the extended dialogue online. We need to try more variations of hybrid formats.

Avoid remediating the traditional conference. It is tempting when designing an econference to remediate the f2f conference, but there is no reason to stick to the continuous, intensive two to five-day conference model. For AtW 2018, we split the conference into two-hour sessions, which ran over five days. Similarly, other conferences like the Minds Online series are spread out over a week or more. One can also have local events that tie into the larger conference. As mentioned in 'An Intro to Econferences,' the online format also offers the opportunity to think outside of the traditional hotel venue and experiment with various digital platforms, from social media platforms like YouTube to game-based virtual environments, which can in turn attract new audiences and create new possibilities for interaction and dialogue..

Sustainability: Plates vs Planes. Ironically, KIAS was in jeopardy of not receiving a campus sustainability recognition certificate for the AtW 2017 conference based on the use of an ineligible type of paper plate. To put this in perspective, the estimated CO₂ output from each paper plate used in 2017 was 3.8 g.⁵⁰ The total estimated CO₂ emissions avoided by not flying presenters to Edmonton that year was 44.17 metric tons. In other words, AtW 2017 was saving the CO₂ emissions equivalent to over 11.6 million paper plates, but the sustainability program used a

49 Storme, et al. (2017).

50 Winnie Chan and Kevin To, 'A life-cycle and economic analysis: Paper versus ceramic plates in the barn restaurant' (UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Student Reports, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.14288/1.0108084>.

methodology which did not recognize the environmental benefits of e-conferencing. The carbon cost of conference travel is less visible than other forms of waste on campus, which is perhaps why it has, until recently, been easy for the academic community to ignore. Shifting our flying habits requires a shift in mindset. Fortunately, communication efforts allowed KIAS not only to help bridge this knowledge gap at UAlberta, but also set the stage for broader collaborations with the Office of Sustainability.

Building E-conferencing Infrastructure. Though there have been significant strides in the efforts to focus attention on the climate impacts of conference travel, there is much more that can be done, both on an institutional and individual level. In terms of immediate action, academics can advocate for e-conference and hybrid options inside their home departments and institutions, as well as when they are invited to give research talks at remote locations. Conference organizers can likewise add digital participation to the set of options available to presenters and participants; and major conferences, like the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, can and should take the lead in creating incentives for e-conference capacity-building.⁵¹ When it comes to granting, national funding agencies like SSHRC should include online hosting as an alternative to f2f conferencing. Finally, department heads must make it clear that e-conferences are legitimate forms of scholarly research dissemination and ‘count’ just as much as traditional conferences when it comes to hiring and promotion, and issue statements to that effect.

Conclusion

The AtW case study demonstrates that e-conferencing can be an effective communicative tool for knowledge dissemination and academic discourse. One of the greatest challenges we face as a society is climate change.⁵² Academics are uniquely situated to model behaviour that will

51 Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, *Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences 2019* (2019), <https://www.congress2019.ca/>.

52 United Nations, ‘Climate change: A global issue’, *Research Guides* (2019), <https://research.un.org/en/climate-change/introduction>; Gwynne Dyer, *Climate Wars: the Fight for Survival as the World Overheats* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2010); Barack Obama, ‘Barack Obama on food and climate change: “We can still act and

help mitigate the amount of air travel, and concurrent CO₂e emissions, associated with research conferences.⁵³ Given the importance of reducing CO₂e emissions generally and the unsustainable impact of academic flying in particular, demonstrating viable sustainable research alternatives is vital. We simply cannot continue as before and must confront our unsustainable practices. The AtW econference series contributes to a growing body of practice that uses technology to mobilize global academic discourse without relying so heavily on face-to-face meetings, and we have an indisputable climate imperative to do so.

Afterword

The need for academics to have econferencing options became very apparent during the coronavirus pandemic travel disruptions of 2020. Conferences either moved online or were cancelled. Significantly, a national survey of post-secondary instructors and staff in Canada, which was conducted in wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, found that two-thirds of the respondents were doing less research, or none at all, and the primary reason given was that they were not able to attend or host conferences.⁵⁴ Clearly, there are many opportunities for academics and conference organizers to explore using econferences in order to regain research momentum, and we hope this case study provides a useful model in this regard.

it won't be too late", *The Guardian* (May 26, 2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/may/26/barack-obama-food-climate-change>.

53 Glover, Strengers and Lewis (2017); Hiltner (n.d.); Holden, Butt, Plein, Stringer and Chadès (2017), Academic conferences urgently need environmental policies. *Nature ecology & evolution*, 1(9), 1211–1212; Nevins, Joseph, 'Academic jet-setting in a time of climate destabilization: ecological privilege and professional geographic travel', *The Professional Geographer*, 66.2 (2014), 298–310.

54 Canadian Association of University Teachers, 'What impact is the pandemic having on post-secondary teachers and staff?' (August 2020), https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/covid_release-impacts_of_pandemic-en-final-08-19-20.pdf.

Bibliography

- Aamaas, Borgar, and Glen Peters, 'The climate impact of Norwegians' travel behavior', *Travel Behaviour and Society*, 6 (2017), 10–18, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2016.04.001>
- Academic Women's Association, 'The diversity gap' (June, 2016), <https://uofaawa.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/awa-diversity-gap-professors-gender-diversity-intersectionality.jpg>
- Anderson, Lynne, and Terry Anderson, *Online Conferences: Professional Development for a Networked Era* (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2010).
- Anglaret, Xavier, Chris Wymant and Kévin Jean, 'Researchers, set an example: Fly less', *The Conversation* (February 13, 2019), <https://theconversation.com/researchers-set-an-example-fly-less-111046>
- 'Around the World, Category: Archive', <http://aroundtheworld.ualberta.ca/category/archive/>
- 'Around the World 2014—UAlberta Ajay Sandhu', 12:51, posted online by KIASualberta, *YouTube* (June 3, 2014) https://youtu.be/ZuMNUgVR_gU
- 'Around the World 2014—UAlberta Michael Zajko', 8:01, posted online by KIASualberta, *YouTube* (June 12, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e22rZdAG3Ds&list=UU0Q1jEKGmaui8DMGE8BZWWw&index=50>
- 'ATW 2018 (Edited): Sustainability in Practice—Revolutionary Ideas to Change How we Live and Learn', 2:10:28, posted online by KIASualberta, *YouTube* (May 30, 2018), https://youtu.be/Ph5JpLfj_aY?t=5086
- Bell, Steven, 'A conference wherever you are', *Library Journal*, 136.16 (2011), 28–31, <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=a-conference-whenever-you-are>
- Bilash, Olenka, *Conversation with Oliver Rossier* (2018).
- Chan, Winnie, and Kevin To, 'A life-cycle and economic analysis: Paper versus ceramic plates in the barn restaurant' (UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Student Reports, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.14288/1.0108084>
- Canadian Association of University Teachers, 'What impact is the pandemic having on post-secondary teachers and staff?' (August, 2020), https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/covid_release-impacts_of_pandemic-en-final-08-19-20.pdf
- Chow-Fraser, Trevor, Chelsea Miya and Oliver Rossier, *Moving Ideas without Moving People: How to Econference at the University of Alberta* (2018), <https://aroundtheworld.ualberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/E-Conferencing-Toolkit.pdf>

- Clark, Duncan, 'The surprisingly complex truth about planes and climate change', *The Guardian* (September 9, 2010), <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/blog/2010/sep/09/carbon-emissions-planes-shipping>
- Dunlap, Joanna, and Patrick Lowenthal, 'Tweeting the night away: Using Twitter to enhance social presence', *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 20.2 (2009), 129–135.
- Dyer, Gwynne, *Climate Wars: The Fight for Survival as the World Overheats* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2011.628072>
- Eisenstein, Elizabeth, 'The end of the book?: Some perspectives on media change', *The American Scholar*, 64.4 (1995), 541–555, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230374515_19
- Faulder, Lianne, 'Mysterious barricades: Edmonton-based national concert raises awareness of suicide', *Edmonton Journal* (September 8, 2016), <http://edmontonjournal.com/entertainment/music/mysterious-barricades-edmonton-based-national-concert-raises-awareness-of-suicide>
- Fair, Ivan, *Conversation with Oliver Rossier* (2016).
- Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, *Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences 2019* (2019), <https://www.congress2019.ca/>
- Gottelman, A., and C. Chen, 'The climate impact of aviation aerosols', *Geophysical Research Letters*, 40.11 (2013), 2785–2789, <https://doi.org/10.1002/grl.50520>
- Glover, Andrew, Yolande Strengers and Tania Lewis, 'The unsustainability of academic aeromobility in Australian universities', *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 13.1 (2017), 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15487733.2017.1388620>
- Goldin, Claudia, and Lawrence Katz, *The Race between Education and Technology* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2008), <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760x.2010.529086>
- Hiltner, Ken, *A Nearly Carbon-Neutral Conference Model: White Paper/Practical Guide*, <https://hiltner.english.ucsb.edu/index.php/ncnc-guide/>
- Hiltner, Ken, 'Opening remarks', *Climate Change: Views from the Humanities—A Nearly Carbon-Neutral Conference* (UCSB, 2016), <http://ehc.english.ucsb.edu/?p=13550>
- Holden, Butt, Plein, Stringer and Chadès (2017), Academic conferences urgently need environmental policies. *Nature ecology & evolution*, 1(9), 1211–1212, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-017-0296-2>
- Huttner-Koros, Adam, 'The hidden bias of science's universal language', *The Atlantic* (August 21, 2015), www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/08/english-universal-language-science-research/400919/
- Irfan, Umair, 'Air travel is a huge contributor to climate change. A new global movement wants you to be ashamed to fly', *Vox* (November

- 30, 2019), <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/7/25/8881364/greta-thunberg-climate-change-flying-airline>
- Jacobs, N., and A. McFarlane, 'Conferences as learning communities: some early lessons in using 'back-channel' technologies at an academic conference—distributed intelligence or divided attention?', *Journal of Computer-Assisted Learning*, 21.5 (2005), 317–329, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2729.2005.00142.x>
- Kalmus, Peter, *Being the Change: Live Well and Spark a Climate Revolution* (Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 2017).
- Kimura, Bert, and Curtis Ho, 'Online conferences and workshops: Affordable & ubiquitous learning opportunities for faculty development', *Distance Learning and Internet Conference 2008* (Waseda University, November 19–22, 2008), pp. 61–65, <http://www.waseda.jp/DLI2008/program/proceedings/pdf/session3-1.pdf>
- Kimura, Bert, and Curtis Ho, 'The TCC worldwide online conference: Twenty years of affordable, timely professional development', *International Journal for Educational Media and Technology*, 10.1 (2016), 18–25.
- Levine, Caroline, et al., 'Reducing the carbon footprint of academic travel', *Inside Higher Ed* (April 18, 2019), <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2019/04/18/12-scholars-share-ideas-reducing-carbon-emissions-academic-travel-opinion>
- Mason, Mary Ann, 'In the ivory tower, men only', *Slate* (June 17, 2013), <https://slate.com/human-interest/2013/06/female-academics-pay-a-heavy-baby-penalty.html>
- Mason, Mary Ann, Nicholas H. Wolfinger and Marc Goulden, *Do Babies Matter?: Gender and Family In the Ivory Tower* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1353/jhe.2015.0011>
- McLuhan, Marshall, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994).
- Murphy, Angela, and Shirley Reushle, 'Following the sun: Sustainable conferencing in a climate of change', *29th Annual Conference of the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ASCILITE)* (Wellington, NZ, November 25–28, 2012), http://www.ascilite.org/conferences/Wellington12/2012/images/custom/murphy%2c_angela_-_following.pdf
- Myton, David, 'The academic conference: flying into a storm of carbon emissions', *Campus Morning Mail* (July 25, 2019), <https://campusmorningmail.com.au/news/the-academic-conference-flying-into-an-environmental-storm-of-carbon-emissions/>
- Nevins, Joseph, 'Academic jet-setting in a time of climate destabilization: ecological privilege and professional geographic travel', *The Professional*

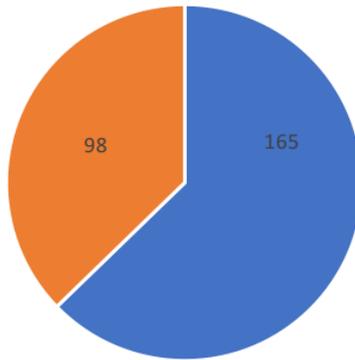
- Geographer*, 66.2 (2014), 298–310, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00330124.2013.784954>
- Nicholas, David, and Ian Rowlands, 'Social media use in the research workflow', *Information Services and Use*, 31.1–2 (2011), 61–83, <https://doi.org/10.3233/isu-2011-0623>
- No Fly Climate-Sci*, <https://noflyclimatesci.org/>
- Obama, Barack, 'Barack Obama on food and climate change: "We can still act and it won't be too late"', *The Guardian* (May 26, 2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/may/26/barack-obama-food-climate-change>
- Parra, Denis, et al., 'Twitter in academic events: A study of temporal usage, communication, sentimental and topical patterns in 16 computer science conferences', *Computer Communications*, 73 (2016), 301–314, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comcom.2015.07.001>
- Pickles, Matt, 'Could the dominance of English harm global scholarship?', *BBC News* (January 20, 2016), <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-35282235>
- Pramanik, Malabika, 'On the environmental impact of academic conferences', *The Wall Papers* (June 5, 2019), <https://pwias.ubc.ca/wall-stories/the-environmental-impact-academic-conferences>
- Storme, T., et al., 'Mobility and professional networks in Academia: An exploration of the obligations of presence', *Mobilities*, 12.3 (2017), 405–424, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2015.1116884>
- University of Alberta, *2012 Comprehensive Institutional Plan* (2012), <https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/ualberta/office-of-the-provost-and-vice-president/cip/cip2012.pdf>
- University of Alberta, *2013 Arts Awards Night* (May 9, 2013), <https://www.ualberta.ca/arts/faculty-news/2013/may/2013artsawardsnight>
- United Nations, 'Climate change: A global issue', *Research Guides* (2019), <https://research.un.org/en/climate-change/introduction>
- University of Alberta, 'An evening with Edward Snowden on security, public life and research', *Kule Institute for Advanced Study*, <https://www.ualberta.ca/kule-institute/snowden-ualberta>
- University of Alberta, 'Campus sustainability leadership awards: Award recipients' (2016), <https://www.ualberta.ca/sustainability/about/leadership-awards/winners>
- University of Alberta, *For the Public Good: Institutional Strategic Plan* (2016), <https://www.ualberta.ca/strategic-plan>

- University of Alberta, 'Kule e-conferencing grant call for proposals', *Kule Institute for Advanced Study* (2019), <https://www.ualberta.ca/kule-institute/funding/kule-e-conferencing-grant>
- University of Alberta, *Sustainability Plan 2016–2020: Building a Sustainable Future* (2016), <https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/sustainability/1-about/sustainability-plan/sustainabilityplan2016202020170317singlesoptimized.pdf>
- United States Environmental Protection Agency, 'Greenhouse gas equivalencies calculator' (December 2018), <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>
- We Stay on the Ground*, <https://westayonthe-ground.blogspot.com/p/about.html>
- Wynes, Seth, and Simon Donner, *Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Business-Related Air Travel at Public Institutions: A Case Study of the University of British Columbia* (Victoria, BC: Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, 2018), https://pics.uvic.ca/sites/default/files/AirTravelWP_FINAL.pdf
- Wynes, Seth, and Kimberly Nicholas, 'The climate mitigation gap: Education and government recommendations miss the most effective individual actions', *Environmental Research Letters*, 12.7 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/aa7541>
- Zwass, Vladimir, 'Co-creation: Toward a taxonomy and an integrated research perspective', *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 15.1 (2010), 11–48, <https://doi.org/10.2753/JEC1086-4415150101>

Appendix I: Charts of Overall AtW Presenters

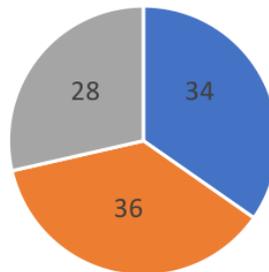
ATW Presenters 2013-2018

■ International ■ Canadian



ATW Canadian Presenters

■ Other Canadian
■ UAlberta (Tenured)
■ UAlberta Early career (Assist Prof & Grad)



Appendix 2: Call for Expressions of Interest in 2013

The Kule Institute for Advanced Study (KIAS) at the University of Alberta would like to invite your research team to participate in an international Around the World Symposium on Technology and Culture.

At this stage we're looking for expressions of interest from key institutes around the world. The idea is that among us we would organize a symposium that travels around the world, with each institute being responsible for approximately 1 to 2 hours of internet conferenced talks on a common theme. Imagine a 24-hour conference that winds its way around the world bringing together institutes with recognized strengths in the area of culture and technology!

The specific theme and date would be something that we, the participating centres and institutes, would decide. KIAS has funding to support the project management and promotion, as well as the conferencing technology, recording the talks and archiving the conference.

Right now all your institute will have to do is commit to is the local organization of a tightly curated 1–2 hour panel, made up of faculty, fellows, researchers or graduate students working on projects related to the theme we decide on.

Are you interested? If so, please send me (and CC the coordinators) an email and we will send you more details. We hope you will join us in this research symposium experiment.

Yours,

Geoffrey Rockwell

Interim Director of the Kule Institute for Advanced Study
University of Alberta

Coordinators:

Justine Gill

Oliver Rossier

Appendix 3: AtW 2013 General Invitation and Schedule

The Around the World Symposium on Technology and Culture is an innovative forum that will bring together scholars from around the world to talk about digital culture! The entire Symposium will be livestreamed worldwide and archived after the event.

The theme is Digital Culture. This event will be livestreamed on May 30th, 2013.

Hosted by the Kule Institute for Advanced Study, with partner institutions from around the world, the Symposium presents live panels or pre-recorded content over a 24-hour period.

Imagine a full-day conference that winds its way around the world bringing together leading institutes in the digital humanities! Imagine a sustainable conference that is global in scope!

Visit this web site on May 30th or later and catch the talks and panels that interest you. Be a part of this exciting experiment!

Join us at any time during the Symposium. Comment through Twitter or by using this site! #UofAWorld

UAlberta reception and panel

May 30—11AM MST

3-26 Arts & Convocation Hall

Please join us in person, online, or both!

Program: <http://aroundtheworld.ualberta.ca>

The following represents a *tentative* schedule of events for MAY 30, 2013.

All events can be streamed on this site—Click the 'Stream Online' tab, above.

- 06:00 – 07:00 MST – USA, U.Virginia, Scholars' Lab their Neatline Tool
- 07:00 – 08:30 MST – Ireland, LongRoomHub
- 08:30 – 08:45 MST - Canada, UofAlbarta: David Holmes
- 08:45 – 10:30 MST – Brazil, DH at Vitoria, Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo

- 10:30 – 10:40 MST – Canada, UofAlberta: Pipelines Project (Dr. Heather Zwicker, ErikaLuckert, Dr. Kisha Supernant); part of the KIAS family
- 10:40 – 11:00 MST – Canada, UofAlberta: Shannon Lucky
- 11:00 – 11:15 MST – Canada, UofAlberta: Dr. Natalia Kononenko
- 11:15 – 11: 30 MST – Canada, UofAlberta: Dr. Russell Cobb
- 11:30 – 11:50 MST – Canada, UofAlberta: Dr. Scott Smallwood
- 12:00 – 14:00 MST – Canada, UofAlberta: Dr. Geoffrey Rockwell, Dr. Maureen Engel, Dr. Julie Rak, Dr. Ofer Arazy
- 14:00 – 16:00 MST – USA, U.Virginia and the Innovation in Pedagogy Summit
- 16:00 – 17:30 MST – USA, IDHMC at Texas A&M: IDHMC, Dr. Laura Mandell
- 17:30 – 17:45 MST – Canada, UofAlberta: Dr. David Kahane
- 18:00 – 18:30 MST – Canada, York University and Institute for Research on Learning Technologies: Dr. MaryLeigh Morbey; Maureen Senoga; Dennis York
- 19:00 – 20:00 MST – Japan, University of Tokyo: Dr. A. Charles Muller (University of Tokyo); Dr. Toru Tomabechi (International Institute for Digital Humanities); Mr. Kiyonori Nagasaki (International Institute for Digital Humanities)
- 20:00 – 22:00 MST – Australia, DH at University of Western Sydney

Appendix 4: AtW 2017 Scheduling Notes

Edmonton Time	Length	Local time	Institution	Organizer	Contact Email, Phone	Panelists	Other contact info (ie: cell phone, IP or ClearSea)	Notes
7:30	5 min		UAlberta	Geoffrey Rockwell				
07:35 - 08:45	55 - 70 min?	LOCAL TIME IRELAND: 2:30 PM GMT	National University of Ireland Maynooth	Neale Rooney		Speakers: Gavan Titley, Jane Suiter, Andrea Martin, Peter McGuire, Chris Brunson Chairs: Neale Rooney, John Chambers, Susan Schreibman		**May need more grad, or other video
08:45 - 9:00	15 min	**Depends on Ireland						
09:00 - 10:00	60 min	LOCAL TIME MONTREAL: 11:00 EST	Université de Montréal	Michael Sinatra		Speakers: Marcello Vitali-Rosati, Servanne Monjour, Enrico Agostini		
10:00 - 10:45	45 min (vid. 50:48)	LOCAL TIME HAIFA: 7:00 PM	Haifa University (sending via FTP wed. night)	Ofer Arazy		Speakers: Oren Meyers, Roi Davidson, Noa Lavie		**Length of video is 50:48... May need to fade out after 45? (Full video will be on website)
11:00 - 11:45	45 min		UAlberta Panel 1	Julie Rak		Speakers: Sourayan Mookerjee, Carrie Smith-Prei, William Anselmi, Steve Patten, Dania Mounsef Chair: Julie Rak		
11:45 - 12:15	30 min (vid 19 min)	LOCAL TIME MALTA: 7:45 PM	University of Malta	Marc Koscijew		Solo Presentation: Marc Koscijew		**May need more grad, or other video
12:15 - 1:00	45 min		UAlberta Panel 2	Geoffrey Rockwell		Speakers: Tami Oliphant, Jennifer Chesney, Gerald Beasley Chair: Geoffrey Rockwell		
1:00 - 1:30	27 min	LOCAL TIME NEW YORK: 15:00	Fordham University	Shira Atkinson		Panelists: Shira Atkinson, Kinra Becker-Redd		
1:30-1:55	25 min	LOCAL TIME SAN FRANCISCO: 12:30 PDT	Internet Archive	Roger Macdonald		Q&A with Roger Macdonald Moderator: Geoff Harder		
1:55-2:05	10 min		Grads or Short talk					
2:05-3:00	55 min	LOCAL TIME TEXAS: 3:05PM CDT	Texas A & M	Laura Mandell		Speakers: Heidi Campbell, Sandra Braman, Laura Mandell		
3:00-3:30	30 min (vid. 28 min)	LOCAL TIME CALIFORNIA: 2:00 PM	UC Irvine	Peter Krapp		Speaker: Peter Krapp Moderator: Catherine Liu		
3:30-4:40	68 min	LOCAL TIME SYDNEY: 7AM	Western Sydney University	Rachel Hendery		Speakers: Hart Cohen, Jason Ensor Chair: Rachel Hendery		
4:40	5 min		UAlberta Closing Words	Geoffrey Rockwell				

Appendix 5: Technical Details for AtW

For Pre-Recorded Video Submissions

We would like to have the video in 16:9 format if possible, shot in landscape (not portrait) orientation. In order to ensure the high-quality video for web-streaming, we would prefer it to be in **720P resolution**. File format for the video is something we can be fairly accommodating on but preferences will be MP4 and then Apple Quicktime's .MOV or Microsoft's .WMV but we can also accept AVI or MPEG.

If you are shooting with a cell phone please attach it somehow to a stand or tripod so it is solidly anchored.

If you are using slides but are unable to edit the slides into the presentation, we have found the best way to overcome this issue is to stand in front of the projector screen (so that both you and the slides are visible). If you are using a presentation clicker or your computer to change slides, make sure the screen is not being blocked.

Tips for Uploading Large Video Files

We will send you a link to a GoogleDrive folder where you can upload your video. GoogleDrive supports free storage of video files up to 5TB. However, it can sometimes take awhile to upload large video files. Here are a few tips:

- **Upload from your university, not from home:** home networks often have fast download but very slow upload times.
- **Compress the video for web-streaming:** If the file is very large (eg. several GB), it is also helpful to compress it for web-streaming. This will help achieve a higher quality video with a much smaller size.
 - **Using Quicktime (for mac users):**
 - ◇ Open the video in Quicktime.
 - ◇ Choose File > Export > ipad, iphone, ipad touch & apple TV > and choose the **second option (up to 720p)** *It should list under each option how large the final compressed file will be.

*Click here for more detailed instructions.

- **Using Adobe Media Encoder (for mac or windows):**
 - ◇ Under System Presets scroll to Web Video and choose YouTube HD preset settings. For this conference, you would want to choose the **YouTube HD settings in 720p** HD format (not 1080p HD). Leave the other settings as is (with the YouTube HD settings the target and maximum bitrate are both automatically set to 16 which is what you want).

*Click here for more detailed instructions.

For Live Streamed Presentations

- **Option one: use a video conferencing room**
 - The best option is for you to find a video conferencing room at your institution and make arrangements to use it for the times you are 'On Air' with us here at the University of Alberta.
- **Option two: use a laptop/computer, requirements:**
 - Laptop/Computer
 - Preferred wired LAN connection
 - External Webcam and microphone (if possible)

Downloaded software app (<https://call.lifetimesizecloud.com/download>)

If it is not possible to use a video conference room, you can also stream from your laptop/computer by connecting to our conference using the Lifesize app (similar to Skype but with better quality video and audio that requires a higher standard of bandwidth). The Lifesize app also gives you the ability to screen powerpoint presentations and maintain a live video of you doing the presentation at the same time. ****You will need to practice this so we set aside time to do test calls with all participants.****

If you are using your own computer, we would prefer that you **use an external webcam** with a good quality microphone (e.g. a Logitech C930). The reason we ask for this is that the camera and mic on your laptop

are basic equipment offerings and are really not meant for a broadcast situation. In order to ensure better quality streaming (with less chance of accidentally dropping the call), we also ask that you **connect your laptop directly to your internet modem** using an LAN cable (see here for instructions). If possible, it is also best to **do your presentation from your institution** rather than from home. Home networks are typically not capable of uploading enough bandwidth to do video conference properly (that is why Skype calls need to be reconnected often), so if you can do the presentation from your institution you will be attached to a much higher bandwidth network.

****If you are using tech support, it might be easier to have our tech team to coordinate with yours directly. Send us your tech member's contact info and/or contact us with any questions****

Appendix 6: AtW 2017 Invitation to Research Institutes

Dear (XXXXX),

The Kule Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Alberta is again organizing a livestreamed world-wide conference, this year on the topic of **Digital Media in a Post-Truth Era**. The Around the World Conference is an annual event sponsored by KIAS that brings together research institutes and researchers from around the world for a dialogue without the environmental and other costs of traditional conferences. The full-day internet event will be held on **Thursday, May 4, 2017**.

I am pleased to invite you and your colleagues at XXXXX to participate in this year's Around the World Conference. Would you be interested in getting involved in this event by organizing a panel of speakers on this subject?

Why the theme of 'Digital Media in a Post-Truth Era'?

The unfolding of recent political events in the United States has sparked much debate around 'fake news', disinformation and trustworthiness on the web. We hope to use these developments as a starting point for a broader discussion of how digital media has challenged and/or unsettled our notion of truth. The conference theme of 'post-truth' is loosely-defined and we welcome considerations of this topic from a wide range of perspectives: from the algorithmic to the philosophical. We welcome, as well, discussion of 'post-truth' as a notion reflecting a certain insularity and how questions of the 'truthiness' and the web resonate differently across the world.

On the day of the event, participants will be asked to give a short presentation, either streamed live or a pre-recorded video clip. The presentation will be followed by a live discussion with fellow panelists.

The Around the World Conference organizers pride ourselves in making sustainable and inclusive practices part of our core mandate. For this reason, we would especially like to reach out to members of institutions for whom international travel can be a barrier. We are also happy to accommodate presentations from non-English speakers.

We ask each participant in the conference to:

- email interest to the project manager, Chelsea Miya, by Friday, February 24;

- submit a brief abstract and biography as well as a photograph by Friday, March 31;
- help to publicize the event at your home institution and participate on the day.

KIAS will:

- support all the technological requirements in association with your tech support contact;
- create the schedule and event infrastructure, including the pre-recorded talks;
- advertise online and locally;
- digitally archive the event and host the talks for future use.

If you would like to take part in the Around the World Conference on Digital Media in a Post-Truth Era, contact the Around the World project manager Chelsea Miya by Friday, February 24.

We hope you will join us in this research symposium and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours,

Geoffrey Rockwell
Director, KIAS

Appendix 7: eConferencing Presentation Guides⁵⁵

Choose a format—or invent your own!

Both live presentations and pre-taped videos can be used with any of the following delivery modes.

1. **Traditional conference:** a live audience interacts in-person with presenters.
2. **Livestream:** a single camera captures a presentation and broadcasts to the world. There may be a live audience interacting with presenters.
3. **Video conference:** interaction is between two or more locations connected over video stream.
4. **Hybrids:** may combine aspects of all three of the options above. Hybrids can be very technically complex and require careful planning.

Comparing livestreaming and video conferencing:

Livestreaming includes YouTube Live, Facebook Live, Vimeo Live, IBM Ustream and Livestream. These services broadcast a one-way video feed to a worldwide online audience. There is no limit to the number or geographic location of this audience. Unlike video conferencing, interaction is possible using messaging or comments on the livestream, but not by two-way voice or video.

Because the video stream isn't interactive, livestreaming can incorporate a slight delay and provide higher quality video. Most of these services will also provide low bandwidth versions so that viewers can tune in on a tablet or smartphone. After broadcasting, most services save your video and you can choose to keep it private or to publish it for later viewers to watch.

Video conferencing includes Skype, Google Hangouts, LifeSize, Zoom and BlueJeans. Video conferencing enables conversation between two or more screens, including meeting spaces and individual computers. Live, real-time interaction between presenters and participants is possible. The maximum number of participants varies. Free services

55 Reprinted, with permission, from Chow-Fraser, Miya and Rossier (2018).

can reliably handle 2–4 participants, but may have trouble if they are on different continents. Paid services can handle 10–25 participants or more without trouble.

Since video conferencing is interactive, it is typically more technically advanced than livestreaming. Dedicated video conferencing facilities using subscription services can help mitigate the technical challenge. These facilities tend to have more dependable connections and their picture quality can be close to HD, which is important if the feed is being projected onto a large screen (for an auditorium audience, for instance).