

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

2021

Open Distance and eLearning Virtual Conference

MEDIATING OPEN DISTANCE
AND eLEARNING IN THE
ADVENT OF GLOBAL CRISES



ODeL Postgraduate Consortium

Conferences are not only platforms to promote and create awareness about ODL provision, but they are also aimed at strengthening the capacity of emerging researchers, academics and institutions to improve the quality of education delivery. In the spirit of growing sustainable capacity development in ODL-related fields, *the 2021 Open Distance and eLearning Virtual Conference* will provide a platform for postgraduate students to present their work through the Postgraduate Consortium stream. Therefore, the Conference will have a specific stream designated as the ODeL Postgraduate Consortium.

The intention of the ODeL Postgraduate Consortium is to support and inspire master's and doctoral students during their research efforts. The Consortium will provide a supportive forum where master's/doctoral students can present their ideas and receive constructive feedback from prominent scholars in the areas of open distance and e-learning (ODeL), open educational resources (OERs), massive open online courses (MOOCs) and technology-enhanced learning, as well as serving to build a cohort of emerging researchers in the identified fields.

It is envisaged that the Postgraduate Consortium will be able to accommodate 10-20 presentations (allowing 20 minutes for each presentation, including questions and discussions). Therefore, we suggest that each presentation be no longer than 10 minutes, followed by 10 minutes for questions from the audience and discussion of the candidate's presentation. The Consortium will form part of the parallel session during the *2021 Open Distance and eLearning Virtual Conference*.

Hence, Unisa is inviting master's and doctoral students who are conducting research in ODeL, OERs, MOOCs and technology-enhanced learning to participate in the consortium.

Who should apply?

- Candidates must be currently enrolled at any university. Therefore, they must not have earned a master's or doctoral degree, nor have officially submitted their thesis.

- Submissions must address the master's/doctoral by means of a specific research proposal and should include some preliminary work that has been done.
- Submissions must be made by a single author and should include a statement by the student's advisor/supervisor, indicating the benefit that the student would derive from attending the ODeL Postgraduate Consortium.

Format requirements for submissions

- Submissions must be typed in English, using Arial 11-point font, double line spacing and the APA referencing style. The first page must contain the title of the paper, the full name of the author, the institution and contact details, as well as an abstract of no more than 200 words and 3-5 keywords describing the main topics. The entire paper should be no more than 2000 words in length, including all figures and references.

The paper outlining the candidate's research should be in the form of an abbreviated dissertation proposal, as outlined below:

1. Problem statement	What is the problem that you are addressing?
2. Relevancy	Why is the problem important? Who will benefit if you succeed in conducting this research
3. Related work	How have others attempted to address this problem?
4. Research question(s)	What are the research questions that you plan to address?
5. Objectives	What do you want to achieve with your study?
6. Approach(es)	How are you planning to address your research questions?
7. Methodology	What types of methods have you used or are you planning to use for your study?
8. Preliminary results (optional)	Do you have any preliminary results that you would like to share?
9. Rationale	How is your suggested solution different from, new or better than existing approaches to the problem?

All proposals submitted will undergo a thorough reviewing process and the authors of those proposals that are selected will be invited to give a presentation at the Postgraduate Consortium which forms part of the conference programme.

A prize will be awarded for the best ODeL Postgraduate Consortium paper (as judged by the Postgraduate Consortium review committee).

Important dates

ODEL Postgraduate Consortium proposal submission deadline	Deadline extended 10 May 2021
Notification of acceptance of proposal for ODeL Postgraduate Consortium	31 May 2021
Preconference workshops	3 August 2021
Conference	4-6 August 2021

Attendance of the Open Distance and eLearning Virtual Conference, its Workshops and the ODeL Postgraduate Symposium is free of charge. **Registration is essential.**

Submission

ODEL Postgraduate Consortium submissions should be sent to Qakisme@unisa.ac.za

For more information to register: www.unisa.ac.za/2021OdelConference