

Epic Lessons

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DESCRIPTION

Epic Lessons follow the format of the Epic Fails sessions that were run for three conferences starting with eResearch Australasia 2011, and again in 2012 and 2013 but focuses on success stories that emerged from sometimes rewarding and sometimes salutary painful lessons. Epic Fails was very well attended and generated a great deal of interest and discussion, resulting in a number of requests for the format to be run again but with a positive slant suiting national infrastructure projects that have matured significantly in the intervening period. As in previous years Epic Lessons is being formally supported by AeRO, the Australian eResearch Organisation, a consortium of Australian eResearch service providers with the intention of exploring lessons in eResearch further and building the discussion and learnings.

The proposed length of the panel is 40 minutes. The first two paragraphs of the Abstract below can be used for the short abstract.

ABSTRACT

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.” Colin Powell

Those involved in research understand that success arising from a series of lessons is par for the course. Indeed, those from the Popper school of scientific theorising hold that the possibility of failure and subsequent lessons learned is a necessary condition for science[1]. eResearch is maturing rapidly through trial and error and its successes are all a results of lessons learned by ourselves and others. While it is unlikely that we will have lessons that match the pyrotechnics of Ariane 5, we as eResearchers have the capacity for many and varied epic lessons.

The purpose of this session is to provide a forum for a free and frank discussion of our, as eResearch organisations, most epic of lessons leading to success from the brink of uncertainty. We will laugh, cry, and most importantly learn from our mistakes.

Attendees should bring:

- a description of a project, service or process that has succeeded as a result of lessons from past projects;
- the lessons they have learned from their outcome;
- a sense of self-deprecating humour.

The goal of the session is that:

- we have the chance to learn from one another’s mistakes; and
- we have a chance to learn from the insights of others regarding our mistakes;

WHO SHOULD ATTEND, AND WHY

This session is open to any and all people working for eResearch service organisations. Attendees should attend because it is quicker than having to live everyone else’s mistakes for yourself. In all seriousness: to establish a culture of excellence within eResearch (or anywhere) it is vital that the community performs ongoing, frank, self-assessment. This is incredibly difficult and sometimes painful to achieve. A supportive group with shared experiences has been shown to be effective in allowing these types of self-analyses to be executed.

OUTLINE

We will begin with the traditional approach to panel sessions, namely three speakers who are willing to air their dirty laundry. Each will have 10 minutes, including questions. As has been the case over the past two years, neither the identity of the speaker nor the identity of the lesson project/service will be identified. A very brief outline

will include.

1. Epic lesson in software development. 10 minutes
2. Epic lesson in service delivery. 10 minutes
3. Epic lesson in infrastructure delivery. 10 minutes

The second half-hour will be a Donohue-style guided discussion, where audience members are encouraged to comment, vent, or confess to their own failures.

REFERENCES

1. Logic of Science and Discovery. **Popper, K. 1934.**

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Dr Joe Thurbon (Convenor)

Joe Thurbon is the Member Services Manager at Intersect, as well as the eResearch Analyst at Southern Cross University. He has a research background in logic and diagrammatic reasoning, and has practiced software engineering for almost 20 years. For the eight years prior to joining Intersect, Joe worked at CISRA, Canon's Australian R&D company, researching and developing machine learning approaches to image processing problems. Joe has a BSc (Hons) from the University of Sydney in Computer Science and Psychology, and a PhD in Computer Science from the University of New South Wales.

Rob Cook (Convenor)

Rob Cook is the CEO of QCIF (the Queensland Cyber Infrastructure Foundation), a not-for-profit company established by the Queensland universities to provide high performance infrastructure and services. His consulting company, Pangalax, has been active in the research sector helping with the establishment and development of major research and research infrastructure facilities including several Cooperative Research Centres. Prior to Pangalax, Rob spent several years in North America leading Astracon, a start-up company providing broadband network provisioning software to the telecommunications industry and before that CiTR – a telecoms software company in Brisbane.

Other speakers' resumes will be supplied later.