Special Issue for the International Journal of Game Based Learning

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Welcome to this special issue of the *International Journal of Game-Based Learning*, which contains selected research, originally presented at the 5th International Conference on Games and Virtual Worlds for Serious Applications, VS-Games 2013. This conference took place in Bournemouth, UK in September 2013, between the 11th and the 13th of that month. VS Games is already an established forum for researchers in the area of serious games, with previous outings of the conference having taken place all over Europe, starting from Coventry, UK, where the first one took place back in 2009.

Serious applications that employ the technology of computer/video games and virtual worlds are becoming increasingly relevant, with prominent context areas emerging such as training, education and edutainment systems. The articles included in this issue here address diverse topics and contemporary challenges that the now considerably cross-disciplinary communities involved in the creation of virtual worlds and games for serious applications are currently faced with. As a result of this, we firmly believe that the research work presented is of value to both academic and non-academic audiences with an interest in the topic.

On behalf of the VS-Games 2013 conference committee we would like to thank the authors for providing extended and improved versions of their work for this special issue. We would also like to extend our thanks to all the reviewers for their efforts and expertise that have helped in the production of these articles.

We now present you the articles selected for this special issue and hope that you will find them both interesting and inspiring. "A Rating Tool to Encouraging Uptake of Serious Games in Europe" discusses work forming part of the European Commission-funded EduGameLab project which focuses on the adoption of serious gaming for educational purposes in a school setting, via the production of a collaborative informational application. In the article "Identifying Student Types in a Gamified Learning Experience", the authors

describe techniques used to create a gamified Masters-level engineering course and then identify the performance characteristics of different types of students in this aforementioned course. "Balancing Fun and Learning in a Serious Game Design" describes Sustain City, an effort the authors have concentrated on which serves as a platform for using serious gaming for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) subject education. "Providing Career Guidance to Adolescents through Digital Games: A Case Study" focuses on the MeTycoon online serious game and a self-reported survey attempting to investigate the usefulness of this. Finally, the article "Critical Transport: A Serious Game to Teach the Recommendations for the Transport of Critically Ill Patients" presents the development of the Critical Transport game, a serious game addressing the education of correct practices for a very specific healthcare situation, and its subsequent evaluation with real-world medical students.

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