

GUIDE ASSOCIATION: CONFERENCES RESULTS AND NEW PROJECTS

Laura Ricci, Alfredo Trovato, *GUIDE Association, Rome, Italy*

The VIII edition of Guide International Conferences concluded with great success in November 2014 in Aracaju (Sergipe-Brazil). Continuing the debate focused on the evolution of Distance Education in Latin American Countries, the Brazilian conference “Science and Technology, Management and Quality: the future of distance education in Brazil and around the world” provided a critical analysis on the role played by instructional technologies in promoting socio-cultural progress, cultural Identity, educational equality and inclusive citizenship.

Many of the papers presented during the three-days conference reflected on the importance of technological innovation and higher education reform as engine for the cultural and economic growth and socio-economic development of low and middle-income countries.

As highlighted by different economists along the last decade, access to higher education in Latin America still represents one of the main societal challenges, especially at a level of educational policies which are not providing an effective response to the demands of population. The allocation of financial resources as well as the analysis of the distribution of costs between private and public sector still affects the policy agenda of Brazil as well as of other Latin American Countries. In this regard the implementation and improvement of distance education programs and online resources may represent a concrete solution to reduce costs and facilitate equal access to higher education.

The Brazilian conference offered a sketch on the state of the art of Distance Education at worldwide level and a comparative perspective on crucial themes such as higher education accessibility, quality assurance and applied and theoretical research analyzed starting from the experiences of different countries: Asia, Europe, North and South America, India, Jordan and Turkey.

Scholars from USA and Canada as well as representatives from the business sector, Brightspace, Grupo A, Future Learn, Maplesoft, TelTec, Starline, Veduca, contributed to improve the debate, discussing best practice and quality processes for further development of Distance Education in the corporate and academic context.

Forthcoming events

The IX International GUIDE Conference “Online Education and Society: The Challenges of the Digital Era” to be held on May 7-8, 2015 at the Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina¹, will provide a critical framework for the analysis of the impact of the digital revolution on society, higher education institutions and student and teacher behavior. The Call for Papers is already open and it is possible to submit proposals by filling out the form within the deadline.

The X International GUIDE Conference “Optimizing Higher Education for the Professional Student: A balance of flexibility, quality and cultural sensitivity”, will be held on September 23-25, 2015 at the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien (Vienna)², Austria’s largest technical university of applied sciences that offers both traditional and distance degree programs. The conference aims to promote discussion on improving higher education, bringing to light the needs of the evolving 21st century student and proposing new pedagogical strategies and technologies for meeting those needs.

1. http://www.guideassociation.org/9internationalconference_2015/index.php/en/ and http://www.guideassociation.org/9internationalconference_2015/index.php/en/registration-form

2. http://www.guideassociation.org/10internationalconference_2015/index.php/en/