Update to Members:
Delivering the ALT Strategy 2014-17

1 December 2015

Dear Members

Together with this year's ALT Annual Survey we are issuing an update on the progress we are making as an Association in delivering ALT's Strategy 2014-17.

In 2014 we set out an ambitious new vision for the Association based on feedback from members across sectors. This included not only new strategic aims for ALT but also a clear articulation of the values of the Association and its members.

This update shows examples of the progress we have made in delivering the strategy and highlights the contribution of the member community. It further sets out priorities for the third year of the current strategy and an update on the changing context we operate in. For each aim we have also included ways to get involved.

We also hope that this will help inform the feedback you provide via the Annual Survey this year which in turn will help shape activities for 2016.

This year we have welcomed over 500 new members and as our Association grows your engagement becomes ever more important in helping us strengthen our voice and increase our impact.

We thank you for your continued support.

Fiona Harvey
Chair

Maren Deepwell
Chief Executive

Strategy 2014-17 in brief

About the Strategy

We define learning technology as the broad range of communication, information and related technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching and assessment. Our community is made up of people who are actively involved in understanding, managing, researching, supporting or enabling learning with the use of learning technology. The fundamental strength of ALT is based on the experience and wisdom of our community of members.

The strategy sets out our key aims for the coming three years, together with our values and the context in which we operate. We aim to build on our strengths and tackle weaknesses. In order to make best use of our resources Trustees and staff will do so by actively working with members and partners, avoiding duplication of effort and using technology intelligently.

Our aims

1. Intelligent use of learning technology – promoting the intelligent use of learning technology, informed by pedagogy and evidence across learning contexts
2. Research and practice – strengthening learning technology research and practice through collaboration, sharing and networking, nationally and internationally
3. Strategy and policy – providing authoritative input to education leaders to help shape the development and use of learning technology
4. Representing members – listening to and representing our members as the authoritative voice on learning technology's central role in learning
5. Leadership and professional development – creating a supporting leadership and professional development in learning technology
6. Communication – providing clear information for members, partners, agencies, politicians and the public about ALT's aims and activities

Our values

The strategy sets out our values as follows:

- Participative, working with and for our members and encouraging them to take active roles in the Association
- Open to all learning and training contexts across the UK and internationally
- Collaborative and supportive
- Innovative, agile and responsive
- Welcoming and inclusive
- Independent and self-funded
- Transparent, democratic and fair

The strategy was adopted by ALT in its legal status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Registered charity number: 1160039) at the Annual General Meeting on 9 September 2015.

The strategy for 2014-17 can be accessed at http://go.alt.ac.uk/1gP0aFx .
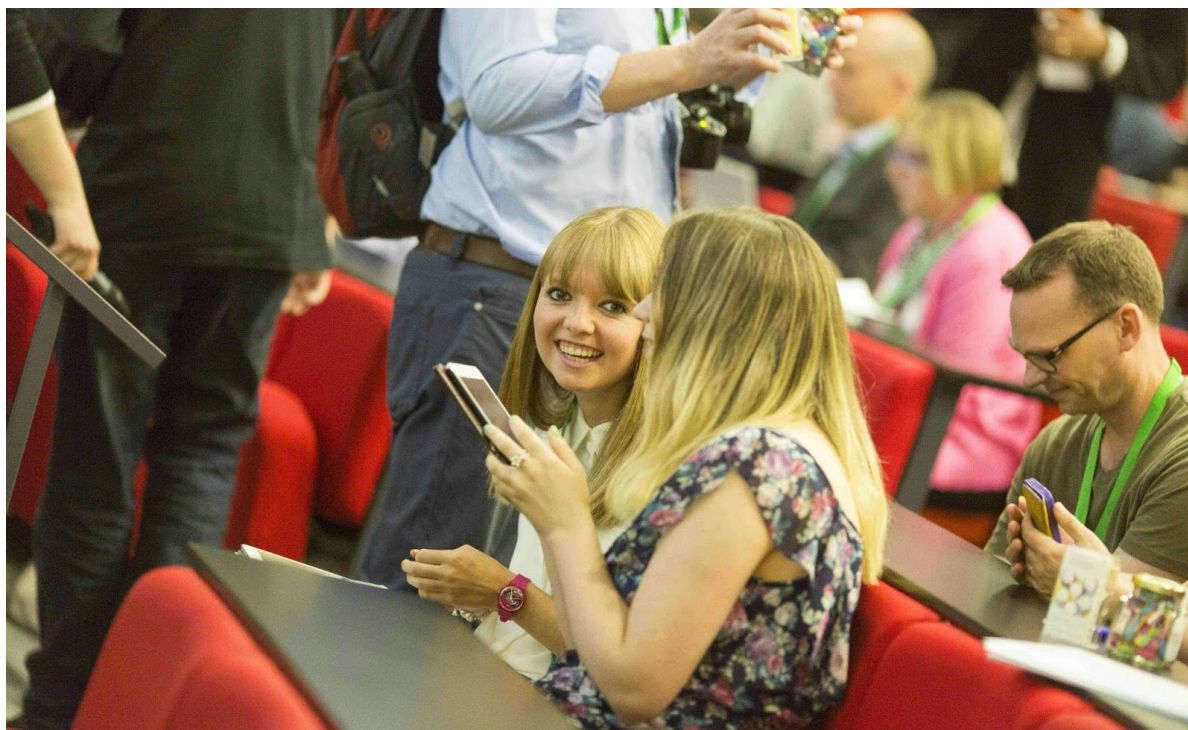
Aim 1: Intelligent use of learning technology

Promoting the intelligent use of learning technology, informed by pedagogy and evidence across learning contexts

2014-5 examples of activities	
	• [Annual Conferences](#) 2014 and 2015 with growing participation
	• Supporting the Open Education Conference 2015 in Cardiff #oer15
	• Webinars run by members for members
	• Steering group member of the Learning Futures programme funded by the Education and Training Foundation
	• Steering Group member of Innovate UK led by the Tinder Foundation
	• Working with Jisc and partners in the FELTAG Coalition
2016 priorities include	
	• [Winter Conference 2015](#): member-led programme
	• [Open Education Conference](#): Open Culture #OER16 in Edinburgh
	• Annual Conference 2016: Connect, Collaborate, Create
	• Webinars and community calls #altc
	• Strategic [project work](#) with partners such as Jisc and the Ufi Charitable Trust

Ways to get involved:
join the [Programme Committee](#), submit a proposal for [upcoming](#)

Aim 2: Research and practice

Strengthening learning technology research and practice through collaboration, sharing and networking, nationally and internationally

2014-5 examples of activities	• Research in Learning Technology: new editors joining the Editorial Team • Celebrating 10 years of the newsletter, now #altc blog • ocTEL - Open Course in Technology Enhanced Learning runs with 1000+ participants • Members draw up a CMALT and UKPSF mapping
2016 priorities include	• New strategy for Research in Learning Technology • Embedding the new publication route from the Annual Conference to the journal • Building closer links between the journal and the blog • Support member discussions from mailing lists to activities

Ways to get involved:
review or submit a paper for Research in Learning Technology, CMALT pilot for Blended Learning Essentials and the Members-only discussion list

Aim 3: Strategy and policy
Providing authoritative input to education leaders to help shape the development and use of learning technology

2014-5 examples of activities	• Further Education Technology Action Group (FELTAG): ALT had significant impact as a member of FELTAG, including running a survey and publishing a joint paper with the Association of Colleges • Education Technology Action Group (ETAG): as a member of ETAG and host of the ETAG online conversation ALT championed an open approach to policy consultation • Openness: ALT continues to champion openness, contributing to the Open Policy Network • Policy Board(s) to discuss current priorities • Strategic engagement: led by Trustees the Association is represented at a number of high level strategic groups for senior decision makers in different sectors.
2016 priorities include	• ALT Scotland Policy Board • Open Access policy making • Contributing to the Area Reviews • Consultation responses

Ways to get involved:
contribute to consultations, surveys and policy meetings
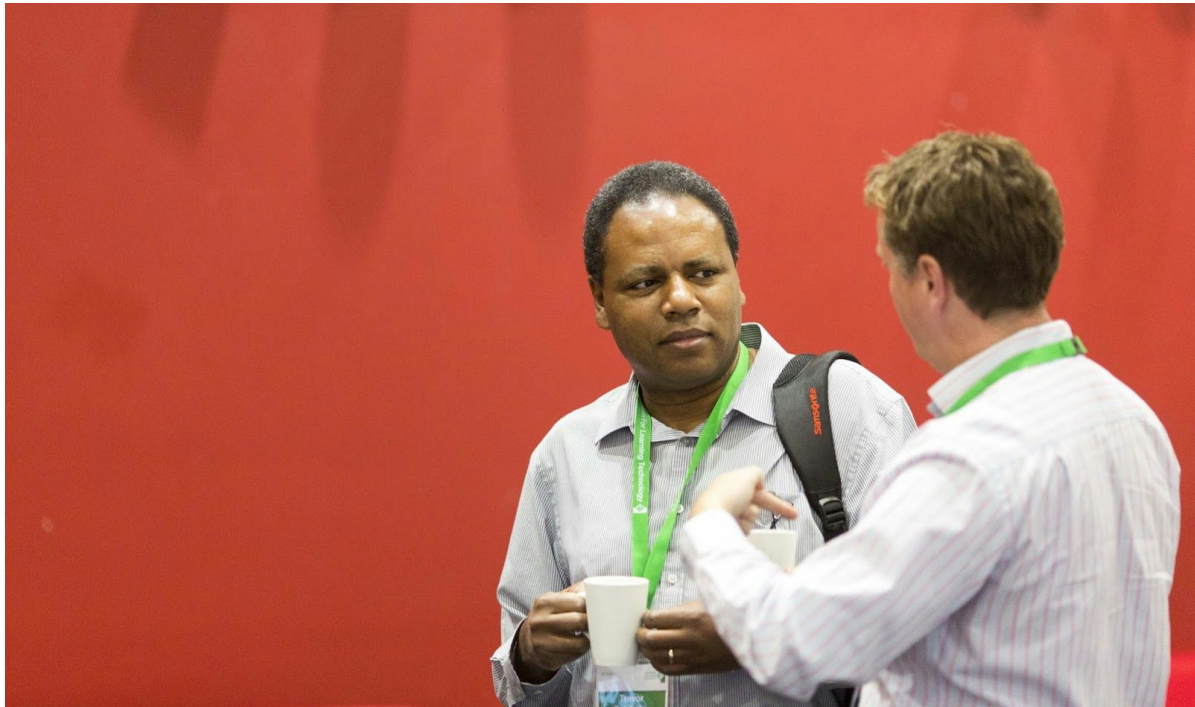
Aim 4: Representing members

Listening to and representing our members as the authoritative voice on learning technology's central role in learning.

2014-5 examples of activities	- Annual Survey: a new survey has been implemented and has provided important insights into the membership - Learning Technology in FE survey: led by Diana Laurillard - Member-led contributions: ALT Members contributed feedback on the new Jisc guide to learning analytics - Representing ALT members: for example at the Annual Meetings of sector bodies including Hefce and Jisc; at events such as the STOA, European Commission.
2016 priorities include	- Annual Survey 2015/6 - Consultation on the Higher Education Teaching Excellence Framework - Consultation on Digital Economy - Better support and more equal representation for ALT Members Groups across the UK

Ways to get involved:
join a Special Interest or ALT Members Group, complete the Annual Survey and contribute your views as a Member

Aim 5: Leadership and professional development
Creating a supporting leadership and professional development in learning technology

2014-5 examples of activities	• [CMALT portfolio review](#) enabling all CMALT Holders to review and update their portfolio regularly and renew their accreditation • [ALT Open Badges](#): introduced first for ocTEL, the Open Course in Technology Enhanced learning, with 1000s of ALT Open Badges issued • [Blended Learning Essentials](#): As a lead partner in the consortium of the Blended Learning Essentials course ALT is leading on the pathways to credit for the course • ALT was a partner in the HEFCE funded [Changing the Learning Landscape](#) • Work with the Online Learning Consortium
2016 priorities include	• CMALT: [Celebrate our 300th Certified Member](#) • CMALT in Vocational Education and Training: Provide a [new accreditation route](#) and pilot group for participants in the Blended Learning Essentials course • Open Badges for CMALT and other activities: Launch CMALT Open Badges for all CMALT Holders

Ways to get involved:
[Register for CMALT](#), get an ALT Open Badge or take part in [Blended Learning Essentials](#)

Aim 6: Communication

Providing clear information for members, partners, agencies, politicians and the public about ALT's aims and activities

2014-5 examples of activities	• Stakeholder engagement: Trustees undertook a general review of stakeholders
	• The new partner member category was introduced in 2014
	• Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): ALT and the Irish Learning Technology Association (ILTA) entered into a new Memorandum of Understanding in 2014;
	• New consistent look websites and expanded conference sites
	• Updated branding guidelines
2016 priorities include	• Improving communications support for ALT Special Interest and Members Groups;
	• More direct ways from all our platforms to join and support ALT;
	• Continuing to support use of #altc
	• Engage, not broadcast
	• Transition to CIO complete
	• Improve the Annual Report
	• Develop the digest

Ways to get involved:
Get connected #altc, write for the #altc blog, participate in events online and help spread the word about ALT

How we are putting our values into practice
Here we reflect on the shared values articulated in the strategy and some of the tensions that they face

Participative, working with and for our members and encouraging them to take active roles in the Association	The way we describe this seems to have become more common across sectors, with a desire to share accountability by encouraging engagement. We continue to follow our approach to enable members not only to engage, but shape, decide and lead on activities. More members are now in active roles within ALT including organising major events, publishing the #altc blog and the growing number of Special Interest and Members Groups.
Open to all learning and training contexts across the UK and internationally	ALT's context-agnostic approach means that members often have only their interest in learning technology in common and as the membership grows it becomes more distributed and diverse. Learning technology is becoming more integral to different professional roles than before and it prompts us to reflect on our common definitions of learning technology and learning technologist.
Collaborative and supportive	Our economic and political context does not encourage this approach as competition and uncertainty face more individuals and organisations. Often we see initiatives to 'solve problems' for particular groups without regard to the value they may have for others. Yet within our own community we see daily examples of collaboration and support. The shared expertise and knowledge that our membership brings together is the lifeblood of the Association.

Innovative, agile and responsive	We have made great progress putting this value into practice, not only in external activities but increasingly reflected in internal processes and technology. This value really reflects the need for us to embrace the evolving nature of learning technology in everything we do.
Welcoming and inclusive	As the scale of our community grows and new generations of members join we face many different expectations. We must combine technology and community to ensure that newcomers and established members alike feel that ALT is welcoming and inclusive.
Independent and self-funded	Trustees' financial strategy to develop key revenue streams including membership, CMALT and events is beginning to deliver results and aims to ensure not only ALT's continued independence from central funding but also deliver the best possible value for members.
Transparent, democratic and fair	The new constitution for ALT as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation follows the Association model, ensuring that members will continue to have the same voting rights as before. We continue to publish minutes from the Central Executive and Operational Committees alongside our policies and the response to open calls for vacancies grows year on year. We have also started holding the Annual General Meeting in a blended format. ALT's governance model enables a diverse range of members to take an active part in its operations.

[Photo credit: All images in the report were taken by C Bull at the ALT Annual Conference 2015, CC-BY-NC-SA ALT]