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The VetEd Conference: Evolution of an Educational Community of Practice

Authors:

Sarah Baillie PhD, PFHEA, MRCVS is Emeritus Professor of Veterinary Education, Bristol Veterinary School, University of Bristol, Langford House, Langford, Bristol BS40 5DU, UK. Specific interests include curriculum development, educational quality assurance, clinical skills, simulation and assessment. Correspondence about this paper should be addressed to sarah.baillie@bristol.ac.uk

Susan Rhind PhD, FRCPath, PFHEA, MRCVS is Director of Veterinary Teaching and Chair of Veterinary Medical Education at Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh, UK. Specific interests in assessment and feedback, employability/ graduate attributes, e-learning, student support and the student experience. Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Jill MacKay MSci, PhD, SFHEA is a Lecturer in Veterinary Education at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh, UK. Specific interests include research methodology, digital education, and student experience.

Leigh Murray MSc (Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare), BScHons (Zoology), BA (Hons) Graphic design. Interests include animal behavior and welfare, animal cognition, wildlife conservation and ecology.

Liz Mossop PhD, SFHEA, FRCVS is Deputy Vice Chancellor for Student Development and Engagement at the University of Lincoln, UK. Specific interests include professionalism and professional skills, portfolios and employability.

ABSTRACT

The conference 'VetEd' was developed with the aim of growing an [educational](#) community by providing an opportunity to share ideas, innovations, research and best practice in veterinary education in a friendly, affordable and inclusive environment. The annual conference has been hosted by the veterinary schools in the UK, Ireland and The Netherlands and became the official conference of Veterinary Schools Council (VSC) in 2017. The current study investigated the extent to which the development of the conference has contributed to the evolution of a community of practice. The conference proceedings abstracts were analyzed to identify trends in number, type and author information. This was complemented by oral histories exploring the impact of VetEd on developing the veterinary education community. The number of abstracts has increased from 40 (2010) to 137 (2018), and are predominantly posters, with the major themes being technology enhanced learning (TEL), clinical skills and assessment. The authors have been increasingly international, representing 8 countries in 2010 and 22 in 2018. Nine interviews were undertaken with those involved in organizing VetEd. Key themes that emerged were the inclusivity of the conference and the engagement of a wide variety of delegate groups. Concerns emerged around the organizational challenges and the potential for the conference to outgrow the founding principles in the future. VetEd has become a key event in the annual calendar and represents an initiative that has contributed to the ongoing development of the veterinary education community.

Key words: community of practice, veterinary education, conference, symposium

BACKGROUND

In recent decades veterinary medical education has emerged as a discipline in its own right. Academic roles have evolved to reflect these changes with more positions having a specific focus on education while leadership appointments have increasingly included full professorships in veterinary education. This trend has occurred in parallel with a more general shift in higher education to both recognize, and provide career paths for, faculty with a focus primarily on discipline specific education. The body of evidence is also expanding as more people engage in educational scholarship and research, for example the Journal of Veterinary Medical Education recently increased from four to six issues per year (AAVMC, 2019) and there is a growing commitment to publication (Root Krustritz and Nault, 2020).

[This 'challenges and issues' paper describes the formation of VetEd, a veterinary education conference, and charts its development, providing a rich insight into the evolution of a community of practice of broad relevance to veterinary educators.](#) In the early 2000s the opportunities for veterinary educators to engage in face to face meetings, nationally and internationally, were mostly limited to conferences in medical education e.g. International Association of Medical Science Educators (IAMSE) and Association for Medical Educators in Europe (AMEE), or as a theme in a veterinary conference e.g. the Association for Veterinary Teaching and Research Work (UK), or conferences on general higher education e.g. the Higher Education Academy (UK). These conferences provided valuable opportunities to learn about many areas of education but also presented some [issues-barriers](#) for veterinary educators. They did not all have a specific veterinary component, were attended by a relatively small number of veterinary educators and some were quite expensive.

In recognition of these issues, a discussion at the AMEE conference in Prague in 2008 identified the need for a bespoke veterinary education conference that would encourage more colleagues to become involved in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). The key criteria that were considered important were that it should support growth of the community by, for example, being veterinary specific, affordable, accessible and fit for the community's purpose. These criteria map to the dimensions of a community of practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998). Wenger describes the 3 dimensions as joint enterprise, mutual

engagement and shared repertoire. The development of the conference was well aligned to the notion of joint enterprise being a 'negotiated response to (the) situation' (Wenger p77).

[CoP has multiple, sometimes conflicting definitions \(Li *et al.*, 2009\), but here we use Wenger's framework specifically to highlight where a CoP may emerge and provide a baseline for future work to build upon.](#)

The principles on which VetEd was established included being a friendly, community-owned conference in order to provide an opportunity to share ideas, innovations, research and best practice in veterinary education. The aim was to attract and support engagement from a wide range of delegates including faculty, clinicians (in university teaching hospitals and from practice), veterinary students, research students and members of technical and administrative teams. The intention was that the conference content would reflect the variety of work being undertaken, with themes emerging from the community rather than being dictated by a committee. An important consideration for the success of the conference and growth of the community was that it should be affordable, an issue that limited attendance at some other conferences (notably the large and well established medical education focused events) to those with primary education-focused leadership roles. Therefore, the conference was designed and planned such that it would rotate around the UK and Irish veterinary schools and would thus minimize costs by being hosted at the campus e.g. by reducing venue charges and providing student halls of residence as a cheaper option for accommodation. Such an approach was envisaged as having the additional benefit of the host school being able to showcase the local teaching facilities and innovations to delegates. Importantly, it would also encourage local faculty to attend an education conference, including those who would not necessarily have previously considered a conference with an educational focus or would prioritize their time and budget on their professional continuing education e.g. species or discipline specific veterinary medicine events. Another key aspect was support for the conference by all the heads of teaching of the veterinary schools in the UK and Ireland. As a group, these colleagues all communicated regularly, and in turn ensured buy-in from senior management in their schools. Ultimately the model would facilitate every school being able to encourage more delegates to attend at an affordable cost to their institution.

Establishing the VetEd conference and study context

VetEd was established as an annual conference with oversight from a group comprising the heads of teaching of all veterinary schools in UK and Ireland. It became the official conference of the newly formed Veterinary Schools Council (VSC) in 2017, at which point The Netherlands (Utrecht) became part of the VetEd group. The conference lasts for two days, usually also with a day for pre-conference workshops. The main conference format has involved two or three plenaries typically from leaders in the field of medical, veterinary or higher education. Abstracts are submitted for poster presentations and workshops. Posters are projected and delivered in an interactive format: 3 minutes to present and 2 minutes for questions. In 2018 the short communication format (10 minutes presentation and 5 minutes for questions) was added.

The current study aimed to reflect on the first decade of the conference, track the growth and evolution of the event and explore through the eyes of the organizers, the impact and value of the event together with aspirations for the future. In doing so, we aim to [surface the challenges and issues pertinent to development of such a community of practice within the context of veterinary medical education](#).~~address the research question to what extent the development of the conference has resulted in the evolution of an effective community of practice.~~

METHODS

This study utilized a mixed methods approach combining quantitative content analysis of the VetEd proceedings and qualitative interview data from organizers of VetEd conferences.

Ethical approval

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Human Ethics Review Committee at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Ref HERC 310_19.

Analysis of VetEd proceedings

The abstracts in the conference proceedings from 2010 to 2018 were analyzed using either electronic or paper copies. The number of abstracts, type of abstract (poster, short

communication, workshop), authors from the hosting school and author's country and veterinary school were counted. Just over 10% of the abstracts were initially reviewed by two authors independently (SB & SMR) and emerging themes were discussed until consensus was reached. The rest of the abstracts were themed by one author (SB) with discussion (SB & SMR) when potential new themes emerged.

Interviews

Given the small size and perceived closeness of the VetEd community, an oral history approach was used to explore the perceptions of key events in the VetEd timeline by core members of the community. Oral histories do not seek to characterize an objective telling of events, but instead are concerned with the opinions and reflections of event participants (Hajek, 2014). [A semi-structured interview format was used to collect this data to minimize potential biases, and the interview structure is included as an appendix \(Appendix 1\). It should be noted however that this approach aims fundamentally to characterize perspectives to provide a grounds for future research on these issues.](#) The organizers of previous VetEd conferences were contacted by [author](#) JM and invited to take part in the study. JM has been an attendee of VetEd since 2013, and was known to some interviewees, but not all. JM considers herself as embedded within veterinary education research, and thus able to bring 'insider' knowledge to the interviews, with an understanding of how VetEd operates in recent history. Semi-structured interviews were conducted [by JM](#) via telephone or Skype and recordings were transcribed by a third party.

Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

The abstract data from the proceedings were collated in Microsoft Excel, tagged with primary and secondary themes (subthemes) and sorted using filters. The change in prevalence of some themes over time was explored via two-sided tests of equal proportion with a 95% Confidence Interval and applying Yates' continuity correction. These analyses were conducted in R version 3.6.0 (Planting of a Tree, R Foundation 2019)

Interview transcripts were imported into NVivo (QSR International Pty Ltd., Version 12, 2018) and explored for recurring themes in a form of thematic content analysis (Silverman, 2015) by [author](#) LeMu. LeMu had not previously attended a VetEd conference and was

naïve to the data prior to conducting analysis. The themes were discussed with the rest of the authorial team who concurred with the thematic summary. [A-The](#) semi-structured approach was ~~used~~ [adopted](#) to attempt to standardize questions, and thus mitigate any bias due to the interviewer (JM) being familiar with the conference. In addition, the majority of the analysis was performed by LeMu, who was naïve to the project and the community.

RESULTS

Analysis of VetEd proceedings

A total of 823 abstracts were analyzed. The abstract numbers have risen steadily from 40 in 2010 to 137 in 2018 (Figure 1). The predominant format was poster, with an increasing number of workshops (from 8 in 2010 to 24 in 2018) and short communications were introduced in 2018 (n = 33).

Figure 1: Abstract numbers and types at VetEd from 2010 to 2018.

Author data demonstrated representation of an increasingly global community, with the number of countries ranging from 8 in 2010 to 22 in 2018 (Figure 2). The number of veterinary schools represented amongst the abstract authorship has also increased, ranging from 13 (2011) to 40 (2018). The proportion of abstracts with a host school author (Figure 1) has averaged 24%, ranging from 3% (2015) to 73% (2010).

Figure 2: Abstract author numbers by country and veterinary school at VetEd 2010 to 2018.

The themes emerging from the abstracts are presented in Figure 3. The largest individual theme was 'Technology enhanced learning (TEL)' (160) and referred to abstracts that were primarily about the technology regardless of topic or context. The types of technology were varied and the main subthemes were tools for creating virtual patients (24), uses of social media (17), uses of TEL in anatomy (13), flipped classroom (9), open educational resources (9), wikis (8), audience response systems (7) and lecture capture (6). Other sizeable distinct themes were 'Clinical skills' (84) of which 54 were about models and 18 the clinical skills lab, and 'Assessment' (83) with subthemes including OSCE (21), MCQ (15) and feedback (15).

Other themes relating to topics or areas of the curriculum included 'Professional skills' (66, of which 27 were about communication skills), 'Subjects prior to final year' (77, of which the largest subthemes were anatomy (18) and animal welfare (15)), 'Final year' (41), 'Approaches to teaching/learning' that were not TEL (53, of which 22 were peer assisted learning (PAL)), and 'Clinical reasoning' (29). Veterinary public health 'VPH' (17) was a subtheme across all years of the curriculum.

Other smaller distinct themes were 'Wellbeing' (49), 'Graduate competences' (35), 'Admissions' (24), conducting 'Educational research' (13), 'Academic support' (13), interprofessional education 'IPE' (10), veterinary 'History' (7) and 'Student clubs' (7). Most abstracts referred to undergraduate veterinary students but some related to 'Veterinary nurses' (28), 'Faculty development' (27) and other 'Postgraduate' courses or training (20). There were a few other small subthemes within or in addition to the major themes and some abstracts could not be classified and were tagged as 'Other' (13).

Figure 3: Abstract themes from VetEd proceedings from 2010 to 2018. The surface area of the bubble is representative of the number of abstracts classified under each theme and subtheme.

There was no difference in the proportion of abstracts that were identified in the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) ($\chi^2 = 9.125$, $df = 8$, $p = 0.3318$), Clinical Skills ($\chi^2 = 9.918$, $df = 8$, $p = 0.2709$), Assessment ($\chi^2 = 6.032$, $df = 8$, $p = 0.6436$), or Wellbeing ($\chi^2 = 14.39$, $df = 8$, $p = 0.07223$) themes across the years (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Difference in proportion across selected themes in VetEd from 2010 to 2018.

Interviews

Nine interviews were conducted with an organizer from each VetEd from 2010-2018. An overview of the themes identified in the interviews is shown in Table 1. Alongside the practical aspects of coordinating a VetEd conference, there was widespread agreement regarding a key theme of the conference's inclusivity, and its ability to welcome those without educational research background, be they clinicians, technical staff, learning technologists, or student co-creators.

Table 1: Description of themes across 9 interviewees.

Key themes

As demonstrated in Table 1 there was diversity across the themes, with different organizers having different priorities, particularly across their recollection of the abstract topics and how they planned and organized their respective conferences. This reflects the independence that each organizer has, and their unique reflections on the conference. The two themes that the majority of interviewees returned to repeatedly were that of the conference's inclusivity and the drive to build engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. This overlapped with the accessibility concerns in organization. [This is the key finding in terms of how a CoP forms around a community-owned conference. Its notable that many interviewees struggled to reconcile the desire to stay friendly and accessible with the conference's growing scale. This would be one of many avenues for further study, as others explore how CoPs can support a discipline.](#) Interviewees also recognized the opportunistic nature of the VetEd Conference as it rotated around the schools.

VetEd is seen as a really informative, friendly, very sociable, supportive environment...and so people come along. – Interviewee 1

there's a low barrier for people to engage and to attend in the conference so it's a friendly atmosphere and where people can share their best practices and feel confident to share their best practices at the VetEd and there is a lot of discussion and people have, in my opinion, people have respect for each other and respect each other's efforts in trying to improve veterinary education, and that's what I like about VetEd. – Interviewee 4

But alongside this recognition comes a concern that the conference may outgrow its accessible foundations. As part of this concern, interviewees wondered how the improved recognition of the veterinary education field could be balanced alongside maintaining a friendly community of practice.

Yeah, it's difficult because every year I've gone to VetEd the numbers attending has been creeping up every single time and it's kind of moving from the sort of little friendly conference and it is starting to move towards something that is a bit more of

a beast. It's probably means to be BSAVA, it's kind of, it's massive and it's quite sort of impersonal I think but again I don't know if it would be better for VetEd to get bigger – Interviewee 6

I don't want it to turn into another AMEE, it won't clearly, I love AMEE but it is quite a daunting environment and it's never going to be that big but I think it comes back to it's got to stay within a size whereby a vet school can host it. Well does it? If it doesn't it loses something and each school then may have to think about how they manage that. – Interviewee 9

Links with abstract topics

Generally, interviewees found it challenging to identify any specific topics of the conference they organized, often observing that for them, their own experience of the conference they hosted was frenetic and consumed with the organizational aspect. Four interviewees were able to identify clinical skills topics, although this may be due to their own particular interests. 'Wellbeing' was the least discussed topic, and most often integrated with general shifts in consideration of veterinary education.

More constitutionally but also different approaches of mentoring so the transition from Teacher centred curricular to a more Student centred outcome based curricular I think that's the biggest change of the last 10 years which brings all kinds of changes to our profession and to veterinary education. — Interviewee 5

Planning and organization

As discussed, many of the interviewees' main impressions of VetEd were of the logistical challenges surrounding the organization of the conference, particularly as attendance grew. Interviewees were aware of conflicts surrounding giving the conference attendees the opportunities for social interactions and networking with interested colleagues while keeping costs down, especially for those delegates who may have a burgeoning interest in educational research. It was important to all interviewees that even delegates with limited experience in educational research, or those who would find it challenging to obtain enough money to attend a more expensive educational conference, were able to attend a VetEd conference.

It was definitely in the back of my mind that people would have to fly or get the ferry and that would add expense because I know one of the ethos of the initial set up of the conference was to keep the cost as low as possible and really open to people with small budgets so that they can really make it. – Interviewee 3

AMEE registration . . . you don't get much change out of £1,000-£1,500 per person which medical schools can probably afford but most vet schools are not going to be able to afford. – Interviewee 7

DISCUSSION

Since its first conference in 2010, VetEd has grown to become a well-recognized international event and is now the official conference of the recently formed Veterinary Schools Council (VSC). From its humble beginnings, the data we present demonstrates a conference that is thriving both by quantitative and qualitative measures [and demonstrates convincing evidence of success in addressing the challenge of developing a meaningful and effective community of scholars in veterinary medical education.](#)

Abstract submission, countries represented, and schools involved have all grown considerably. We would argue that these data in themselves are evidence of a successful and thriving community of practice. Furthermore, reflecting on one of the key design features of the event i.e. to rotate the event around veterinary schools to 'draw-in' new members to the community, the data showing a significant number of submissions from the host school across almost all years suggest this element has also been a success. This element of inclusivity was highlighted in the qualitative data both in terms of diversity of roles of those able to attend and the opportunity to showcase different institutions. The theme of inclusivity also aligns well with the notion of legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991: Situated Learning Legitimate Peripheral Participation) where individuals new to a community can engage with more experienced colleagues as a potential precursor to moving toward full participation in that community. Furthermore, for some colleagues, the community can support the transition from scholar to educational researcher as the sharing of educational research practice encourages a discourse beyond that of simple evaluation [and creates a network of colleagues engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning.](#)

In contrast to some other conferences which call for abstracts based around key themes, it is also useful to reflect on the VetEd approach which has been to solicit abstracts of interest from delegates regardless of the topic or theme, very much as part of an ethos of a conference that is 'community owned'. Again, our data would suggest that this approach has been successful to date but as the discipline continues to grow, will be an area for future organizers to reflect on annually.

Against these positive themes and reflections, it is important to consider to what extent the event has the potential to become a victim of its own success. It is interesting to compare the evolution of VetEd to Association for Medical Education in Europe (AMEE) – and indeed to acknowledge that AMEE provided the impetus for veterinary educators to conceptualize then implement the VetEd model. AMEE's first conference was in 1973 (Wojtczak, 2010) and was attended by 40 delegates from 10 countries. By 2009, the conference was attended by more than 2300 delegates representing approximately 80 countries. The logical consequence of this growth is that increasingly fewer venues are able to accept the conference and as Wojtczak reflects, in this context appears to be "the price of a rapidly growing interest in medical education." As we discuss below, this growth, whilst unlikely to be as extreme in the context of our much smaller discipline of veterinary education, is nevertheless emerging as a concern within the community. Our data highlights this cautionary note – *'it is starting to move towards something that is a bit more of a beast'; 'it's got to stay within a size whereby a vet school can host it'*.

Additionally as reported by one organizer, while the 'low barrier' to entry supports the agenda of inclusivity, friendliness and building community, it could be argued that there may be tension here with the quality of the research being presented. As the discipline matures, this may become an issue, especially in relation to credibility of the discipline which can sometimes be challenged by colleagues operating within a more traditional veterinary science context. Education research conducted by subject specialists is often criticized as being a weaker version of 'pure' educational research (Svinicki, 2012), due to a lack of understanding of the fundamentals of educational research. This may be more challenging in science and medical fields, which encourage practitioners to adopt highly positivist epistemologies, often at odds with the underlying epistemologies of educational research (MacKay, 2020). Although it is also argued that this is evidence for more

interdisciplinary working between fields (Fraser, 2016). Within discipline knowledge exchange, between undergraduates and practitioners, researchers and the public, and between scholars of learning and teaching and dedicated subject specialists, is an essential component of modern research (Healey, 2000).

Returning to our research question of to what extent the development of the conference has resulted in the evolution of an effective community of practice (CoP), the data reported in this study - including the key themes of conference inclusivity, appeal to a broad range of stakeholders, significant opportunities for networking and sharing, all map well to Wenger's 'joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire.' Furthermore, the emergence of themes from the community due to the open approach to abstract submission aligns well with the notion of a shared repertoire.

Beyond veterinary education, CoPs have been studied in relation to faculty development. A systematic review explored the role of CoPs in this context and concluded that CoPs can provide opportunities for application of knowledge and skills as well as the important linked aspect of building social relationships (Abigail, 2016). The study highlights however the lack of evidence in relation to whether the existence of faculty development CoPs actually translate to improved performance in teaching. This evidence of impact was similarly not explored in our study and would be an interesting area to investigate in future work.

In a recent article by de Carvalho-Filho *et al.* (2020), a series of 'Tips' for implementing a community of practice for faculty development are presented. Although in a different (albeit closely related) discipline of medical education, it is interesting to explore these tips in the context of the evolution of the VetEd conference. Table 2 reflects on the extent to which these aspects have been met during the evolution of the VetEd CoP. This retrospective analysis of the VetEd CoP in relation to these areas demonstrates a strong alignment and whilst certain aspects may have been serendipitous rather than planned from an evidence informed perspective, this alignment is further evidence of a model that is based on sound principles. The fact that this alignment to these best practice principles exists should ensure moving forward a CoP that is both long-lasting and continues to be successful.

Table 2: Alignment of the VetEd Community of Practice to de Carvalho-Filho *et al.*'s Twelve tips for implementing a community of practice for faculty development (2020).

A final relevant point relates to sustainability – both in terms of costs but also the environmental impact of ‘in person’ events (Spinellis and Louridas, 2013; Catalini *et al.*, 2020). A move to more online events has also been necessitated by the current COVID-19 pandemic, and best practice guidelines and benchmarks for virtual conferences are being developed in this context (Rubinger *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, online networks can be developed beyond the more focused context of conferences as demonstrated by the successful NOVICE collaboration which facilitated the sharing of experience and knowledge between ICT experts and veterinary educators and also provided a vehicle for connecting and fostering inter-institutional collaboration (Baillie *et al.*, 2011).

Limitations

The VetEd conference data that were available to us for analysis were not preserved with the intent of future analysis, and so there were ‘gaps’ in the available information. For example, it was not possible to determine the numbers of delegates, delegate experience, or delegate place of work. It would be interesting to explore how networks of research arise through conference attendance, but this would need to be done prospectively with future events, allowing participants full rights to withdraw their data from research purposes, etc. Similarly, we were not able to classify abstracts in granular detail, for example, to what extent the authors adopted various methodologies or featured interdisciplinary working. Given the concerns raised in the themes regarding research quality, future research work in this area may wish to use a framework to establish research validity, such as the AXIS tool (Downes *et al.*, 2016) or the NOS tool (Palmeri *et al.*, 2016) to critically appraise various research approaches.

Future Work

The timeframe of this review has allowed a reflection on the launch and subsequent evolution of this key event in the veterinary medical education calendar. [Several other veterinary educational conferences have emerged in parallel in recent years, including the Veterinary Educator Collaborative \(VEC\) in North America and International Veterinary Simulation in Teaching \(InVeST\).](#) Whist [#our study](#) provides valuable baseline data over this time period [in the context of one conference](#), as the discipline continues to mature and the landscape of the profession and veterinary education evolve further, it will be interesting to

monitor and review developments [more broadly](#) in the next 5-10 year period. The VetEd model is already finding traction in other continents, with the first 'VetEd Down Under' taking place in 2018 (using the same principles and approaches as the original VetEd), and a 'VetEd Asia' is planned for the near future. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, this may also be a pivotal moment to observe and study the nature of any changes to ~~the~~ VetEd [and other veterinary education conferences](#) that may be a consequence of this hugely significant global crisis. [We hope that this challenges and issues paper provides an evidence basis for future studies exploring the impact of VetEd Conferences and similar initiatives. This detailed background on the VetEd Conference can also be used to support the development of other communities, particularly in regions with growing veterinary education fields.](#)

Conclusions

In conclusion, we demonstrate robust quantitative and qualitative evidence of a thriving Community of Practice which is valued by participants as an inclusive and engaging landmark in the community's annual calendar. The development and evolution of the event has paralleled the evolution of the discipline of veterinary medical education in the United Kingdom and beyond.

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TABLES

Table 1: Description of themes across 9 interviewees.

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Description</u>
Inclusive	A key theme considered an important aspect of the VetEd conference, reflecting academic freedom to explore topics of interest and experiencing a safe and friendly community to develop those ideas. Diversity of attendees including academics/faculty, clinicians, technical staff, and students reflecting positively, alongside the rotating nature of the hosts and being able to showcase different institutions thought to make the conference more accessible and affordable.
Engagement	The wider veterinary community interactions with the VetEd conference, including stakeholders and parties within the hosting institution, and broader investment such as students, practice partners.
Abstract Themes	Discussions of the key themes that occurred within abstracts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General curricula including wellbeing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Skills
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Enhanced Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment
VetEd Experiences	Reflections and commentary on how interviewees organized their VetEd and what they may have done differently, with characterization of underlying VetEd ethos', recognition of the field, and the reputation of the hosting institution.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection & Hindsight
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of networking and social events
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation for hosting VetEd
Planning & Organizing	The practical aspects of hosting a VetEd conference, featuring challenges of structuring the program, accounting for regional differences in school holidays, the logistics of social events, and the positives and negatives of the flexibility that is perceived as a core value of the conference.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associated challenges/ balancing the conference
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from previous conferences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethos & Core Values
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting and advertising the conference
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing costs of travel and accommodation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking ownership of the conference
The future of VetEd	Interviewee hopes and concerns regarding the future of the conference, how it expands, and how it develops the field of veterinary education.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of field, academic respect and conference legacy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining accessibility with conference growth

Table 2: Alignment of the VetEd Community of Practice to de Carvalho-Filho *et al.*'s Twelve tips for implementing a community of practice for faculty development (2020).

Tips	de Carvalho-Filho <i>et al.</i> (2020)	VetEd Conference
1	Gather a core group to launch the process	Core group gathered at an early AMEE conference
2	Articulate the goals and value of the CoP	Sharing, communication and involvement through all the teaching leads at the veterinary schools
3	Start with a specific task or project—make it problem-oriented	Aim to provide a veterinary education focused event was clear
4	Keep the CoP open	Rotating venue and encouragement of broad faculty engagement
5	Intentionally invite members with expertise (memory) and fresh ideas	Ensuring medical education and higher education expertise
6	Choose a facilitator—“primus inter pares”	Although more directed at specific sessions, in the context of VetEd this would relate to involvement of medical education and higher education experts in plenary sessions
7	Make it worthwhile for members and the institution	Conference feedback positive
8	Work to ensure institutional support	Senior management buy-in ensured
9	Promote sustainability	Low cost, rotating model designed to meet this
10	Communicate success	Evaluation and publicity. Model extending to other international contexts
11	Go online	Not specifically addressed to date and an area for future consideration (although see Baillie <i>et al.</i> , 2011)
12	Evaluate the CoP	Purpose of present study