Why the IDPE annual conference is a must for those working in development or alumni relations

Karen Hartshorn, Director of Development at Pangbourne College and IDPE Trustee, shares how invaluable the IDPE annual conference is to her, and why despite over 10 years' development experience, she always finds the time to attend the conference.

'I attended my first IDPE conference in 2011 and have been back every year since. For a couple of years, I was a plain old delegate, then a stream leader, then a conference co-chair, and now an IDPE Trustee. Even if I hadn't been that heavily involved, I would have made time to attend the conference each year.

Firstly, the conference presents a wonderful chance to catch up with colleagues, both to compare notes on the previous year and also tap other experienced brains for advice and insight. We all, for the most part, experience similar challenges, and I always value listening to how others have approached them and found solutions. The conference is the perfect way to do that – almost everyone from the sector is in a room at the same time, and development people are more than willing to share ideas!

More recently, with the conference expanding its provision for experienced delegates, I have attended lots of sessions which really spark thoughts and help my work beyond the nuts and bolts; these have included topics like creative writing, leadership, resilience and communication.

Finally, I'm looking forward to the new venue this year - I think the new layout will mean more high-quality and interactive sessions, and more opportunities to network with and learn from experienced speakers and my peers. I'm particularly looking forward to Sir Tim Smit's keynote, and of course the second IDPE Awards evening, when we will have the opportunity to celebrate and share the achievements of the sector.'

The **IDPE 2018 Annual Conference** is on **Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 June 2018** at the **Hilton Birmingham Metropole.**

Book now your place at the IDPE 2018 Annual Conference now.