

Knowledge Café at the SAICSIT conference 2021

SAICSIT The Next Step?

Focus of the Knowledge Café

SAICSIT has evolved over the years from its humble beginnings. We now as a community have another opportunity to reshape SAICSIT.

This interactive Knowledge Café will facilitate a knowledge network of academics with the aim to creatively understand how we can reshape SAICSIT. The Knowledge Café will address the following question:

How should we as a community reshape SAICSIT?

Background to a Knowledge Café

One of the ways in which knowledge is shared is through constructive and correctly directed conversations. Such conversations don't just happen. They need to be instigated and one of the most effective ways of doing this is through the Knowledge Café. A Knowledge Café may be defined as a gathering of individuals with a common interest who are prepared to explore ideas surrounding a topic through conversation in order to obtain a more complete understanding of the issues involved.

In effect, a Knowledge Café can be understood as a networking opportunity for bringing together a group of people who have a common interest and who will be able to benefit from talking and listening to each other. The individuals who will benefit from a knowledge café need to have an open mindset, have a common objective and have similar shared values and be people who like to collaborate in their working relationships.

The operation of a Knowledge Café operates on dividing a group of people into smaller groups and allowing them to converse openly about a topic. There are a few rules about how they converse which are related to the fact that they are encouraged to listen to others before expressing their point of view.

This works through having a Knowledge Café facilitator who gets the event going. After a period, normally between 60 to 90 minutes the groups are called back together and their insights are shared. The group then creates a summary statement as to what they have learnt from the shared conversations.

Why is this interesting for SAICSIT?

Knowledge café can open up people's horizons. They can produce levels of cooperation that the organisation has not seen before. Once the organisation has picked up the cultural issues involved they are relatively straight forward to run and can be used in conjunction with or to reinforce special interest groups or communities of practice.

Knowledge café organiser:

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