Role description for Director of scientific quality

Director of Scientific Quality (DSQ)

Immersive Learning Research Network (iLRN)

Private Codex Definition — Board & Executive Use

Role Purpose

The Director of Scientific Quality (DSQ) serves as the principal steward of scholarly rigor, epistemic coherence, and disciplinary legitimacy across the Immersive Learning Research Network. The role exists to cultivate, safeguard, and advance the scientific credibility of immersive learning as a field, while respecting its inherently interdisciplinary and practice-embedded nature.

This role should be understood less as a “quality controller” and more as a field architect—someone who shapes shared standards, vocabularies, and evaluative sensibilities across heterogeneous communities of inquiry.

Strategic Mandate

The DSQ is responsible for defining and evolving what scientific quality means in immersive learning, across research, design-based inquiry, evaluation, and scholarly practice. This includes:

- Establishing criteria for rigor that are pluralistic, not monolithic
- Ensuring coherence across computer science, learning sciences, HCI/UX, psychology, design research, cultural heritage, and applied domains
- Supporting the network’s transition from “conference organizer” to recognized epistemic authority in immersive learning

The DSQ operates at the intersection of scholarship, governance, and field formation, not day-to-day editorial logistics.

Core Responsibilities

1. Definition of Scientific Quality (Field-Level)

- Articulate and maintain iLRN's working definitions of scientific quality, including:
  - Methodological rigor across qualitative, quantitative, mixed, and design-based research
  - Validity and trustworthiness in immersive and experiential research contexts
  - Appropriate evidence standards for exploratory, emergent, and translational work
- Develop and periodically revise quality criteria frameworks aligned with immersive learning's epistemic diversity.

2. Stewardship of Interdisciplinary Integrity

- Ensure that interdisciplinary work within iLRN:
  - Avoids methodological dilution or "category drift"
  - Makes disciplinary assumptions explicit
  - Respects domain-specific standards while enabling synthesis
- Advise leadership on tensions between:
  - Innovation vs. rigor
  - Practice-based insight vs. generalizable knowledge
  - Technical novelty vs. learning relevance

The DSQ should actively normalize productive disagreement about rigor rather than enforcing premature consensus.

3. Advisory Oversight of Scholarly Processes

- Provide high-level guidance to:
  - Publications and proceedings leadership
  - Program Chairs and track leads
  - Scientific Quality Assurance Officers and review teams
- Review and advise on:
  - Peer review guidelines and reviewer calibration
  - Acceptance thresholds and revision standards
  - Ethical and methodological edge cases
- Serve as an escalation point for scientific integrity concerns, not as an adjudicator of routine disputes.

4. Capacity Building & Prestige Cultivation

- Mentor emerging scholars, reviewers, and track chairs in:
  - Evaluative judgment
  - Scholarly writing and argumentation
  - Field-appropriate rigor

- Help position iLRN outputs (proceedings, reports, repositories) as:
  - Credible
  - Citable
  - Influential beyond the immediate community

- Contribute to shaping iLRN's reputation with:
  - Universities
  - Research councils
  - Standards bodies
  - Allied scholarly societies

5. Codex & Knowledge Infrastructure Contribution

- Guide the development of Codex-hosted scientific standards, including:
  - Quality rubrics
  - Review heuristics
  - Pattern-level insights about immersive research

- Ensure that scientific quality criteria are:
  - Transparent internally
  - Appropriately abstracted for public-facing use
  - Evolvable over time

Scope of Authority

The DSQ:

- Defines standards, not outcomes
- Advises decision-makers, rather than replacing them
- Shapes culture, rather than managing workflows

The role does not:

- Directly manage publication pipelines
- Conduct individual paper reviews
- Enforce compliance through punitive mechanisms

Required Expertise & Standing

- Recognized scholarly credibility in one or more immersive-learning-adjacent disciplines
- Demonstrated experience with interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research

- Strong grounding in:
  - Research methodology
  - Epistemology of applied and design-based research
  - Scholarly ethics
- Ability to operate comfortably in ambiguity and contested terrain

Intellectual humility and field-level perspective matter more here than disciplinary dominance.

Relationship to Other Roles

- Works closely with:
  - Scientific Quality Assurance Officer(s)
  - Director of Publications
  - Program Chairs and Track Leads
- Advises:
  - Executive Committee
  - Board of Directors
- Serves as a connective figure between:
  - Scholars
  - Practitioner-researchers
  - Emerging research communities

Measures of Success (Private)

- Increased coherence and clarity in how iLRN defines rigor
- Improved reviewer confidence and consistency
- Stronger external perception of iLRN as a serious scholarly body
- Productive scholarly debate that strengthens, rather than fragments, the field

Role Ethos

The Director of Scientific Quality is a custodian of standards without dogma, a champion of rigor without exclusion, and a builder of a field still coming into focus.

Next Steps

- A public-facing, distilled version of this role
- A RACI overlay mapping DSQ authority relative to Publications and Program Chairs
- A first-year agenda for operationalizing scientific quality through the Codex

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