



Conference report

# AlterConf London

**What makes an  
accessible conference?**

# code of conduct

code of conduct

**wheelchair accessibility**

code of conduct  
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**gender-neutral bathrooms**

code of conduct  
wheelchair accessibility  
gender-neutral bathrooms  
**professional BSL interpreters**

code of conduct  
wheelchair accessibility  
gender-neutral bathrooms  
professional BSL interpreters  
**speech-to-text captioning**

code of conduct

wheelchair accessibility

gender-neutral bathrooms

professional BSL interpreters

speech-to-text captioning

**content warnings on talks**

code of conduct  
wheelchair accessibility  
gender-neutral bathrooms  
professional BSL interpreters  
speech-to-text captioning  
content warnings on talks  
**affordable ticket prices**

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**pronouns on badges**

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**speakers are paid**

code of conduct  
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**free childcare**

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**financial aid**

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**quiet room**

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quiet room

**and more!**

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and more!

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and more!



**Language  
Technology  
Mental health**

# Language



**“The way we speak is  
today’s children’s  
default.”**

— **Egga Hartung**

There are No Safe Spaces  
(she/her)

# Language

# Language

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# Language

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- They/them is a safer default

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- Pronouns: ask, don't assume
- Ableism: words like “crazy”, “mad” and “insane”
- Be wary of “guys”



**“Guys is not a gender-neutral term. If you think it is, consider why you might not be hearing from people who feel otherwise.”**

— **Jon Cowie**

@jonlives  
(he/him)

# Language

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# Language

- Male is not the default
- They/them is a safer default
- Pronouns: ask, don't assume
- Ableism: words like “crazy”, “mad” and “insane”
- Be wary of “guys”
- Robots to the rescue!



**“Language is hard. So  
we can use computers  
to help us.”**

— **Charlotte Spencer**

Open Open Source  
(they/them)



**johndoe**

What a crazy idea!



**slackbot**

Words like "Insane" and "Crazy" are poor choices for a general-purpose intensifier in a Slack where so many people have faced mental health issues. How about "shocking," "incredible," "ridiculous," or something thoughtful about the specific thing you're discussing?

# Language

# Technology

# Technology

- Bots are cool!



**Thinkpiece Bot**

@thinkpiecebot

# Have We Misjudged The Decline In Post-Industrial Rock?



**glitch[FETA] ~(=^..^)**

@storyofglitch

\*takes up ur whole bed like u  
don't wanna lay down right  
now\*



**Not New Scientist**

@NS\_headlines

**Is Australia a simulation?  
Probably not**



**“Software reproduces  
oppression unless  
explicitly designed not  
to do so.”**

— **Aanand Prasad**

Fantastic Bots and Where To Find Them  
(he/him)

# Technology

- Bots are cool!
- Software should punch up, not down

# Technology

- Bots are cool!
- Software should punch up, not down
- What about recommendation algorithms?



**“Output reflects the  
preferences & values  
of the implementer,  
not the user.”**

— **Anna-Livia Gomart Cardin**

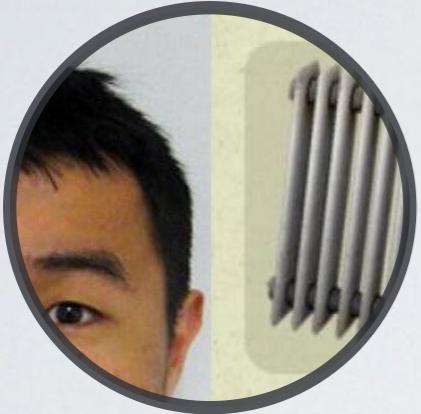
Learning How to Cook: a Call for DIY Recommendation Algorithms  
(she/her)

# Technology

- Bots are cool!
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# Technology

- Bots are cool!
- Software should punch up, not down
- What about recommendation algorithms?
- Gaming as a form of escape and therapy



**“What if we made games  
about these fantasies:  
- enjoying company of others  
- people being glad to see you  
- being proud of someone”**

— **Robert Yang**

@radiatoryang  
(he/him)



**“We all have small & interesting stories that are worth sharing.”**

— **Vaida Planktye**

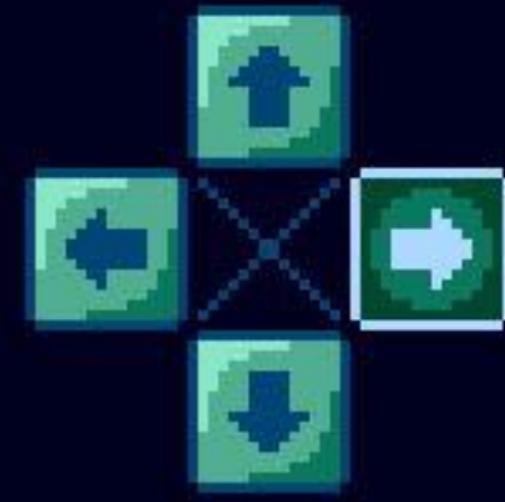
Let's Get Personal! (About Games)  
(she/her)



Perhaps we're the first of the season  
to come mushrooming here?



—journal—  
It's  
hard  
to say  
we're\*



# Technology

- Bots are cool!
- Software should punch up, not down
- What about recommendation algorithms?
- Gaming as a form of escape and therapy
- Accessibility tech is *awesome*

# Technology

# Mental health

# Mental health

- Mental health issues are common in tech



**“Trying to have a  
normal mental health  
appearance is tiring.  
Pretending to be  
neurotypical is hard!”**

— **Chad Gowler**

Trapped by the Trappings  
(they/them)

# Mental health

- Mental health issues are common in tech
- Your working environment has a big impact on your mental health



**“There is no line in my  
timesheet for panic  
attacks.”**

— **Chad Gowler**

Trapped by the Trappings  
(they/them)

# Mental health

- Mental health issues are common in tech
- Your working environment has a big impact on your mental health
- Things to do: mental health sick days, meeting-free days, quiet spaces, workplace evaluation, varied social events, ...

# Mental health



**Language  
Technology  
Mental health**

**Everybody  
is learning**



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