

**5th European Conference on Games-Based Learning**  
**The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece**  
**20-21 October 2011**  
**Keynote speech outline**

**The Gamification of Life: Building social communities through games**

Professor Sara de Freitas, Serious Games Institute, University of Coventry, UK

This speech will consider the grand challenges that face us today in a 21st century globalized society, and explore how gamification may provide a solution for some of those challenges. The speech will include an overview of the work of the Serious Games Institute including video clips from the games developed and present some of the research challenges that we face in relation to a defined research agenda. The speech will also have an emphasis upon social communities and gamification as supporting research hypothesis testing and consider immersive learning as a potentially new paradigm for future learning.

**About the speaker: Professor Sara de Freitas**



*Sara de Freitas*

Sara is Director of Research and Professor of Virtual Environments at the [Serious Games Institute](#) at the University of Coventry where she leads an applied research team working closely with industry. Sara holds a visiting fellowship at the University of London, is elected chair of the Lab Group and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. She is also the Scientific Coordinator for the EU GALA network of excellence in Serious Games. Voted the Most Influential Woman in Technology 2009 and 2010 by US Fast Company, Sara also chairs the IEEE Serious Games and Virtual Worlds conferences (VS-Games) and is a regular speaker at international conferences. Sara currently holds 12 funded projects, funded through European, regional and national agencies. She sits on 31 programme committees for journals, books and conferences, has chaired 6 international conferences and has given over 80 presentations and lectures in the UK and abroad. Her research includes e-learning innovation, multimodal interfaces, experience design and perceptual modelling in games and virtual worlds. Sara publishes widely with over 90 publications (reports, journal articles, conference papers and books) in the areas of: pedagogy and e-learning, change management and serious games and virtual worlds for supporting training and learning. Her latest books: [Rethinking Learning for a Digital Age](#) (edited with R. Sharpe and H. Beetham) is published by Routledge and [Digital Games and Learning](#) (edited with P. Maharg) is published by Continuum Press.