How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

Credits

Contributions ::· TeachMeet participants worldwide

Cover image ::· Drew Buddie

Ewan McIntosh, on stage with TeachMeet hosts Dawn Hallybone and Dughall McCormick at BETT, London ExCel, January 2016, inviting participants to share their stories of impact.

Data analysis, summary, presentation ::· Mags Amond

Data generation and collation ::· Ewan McIntosh

TeachMeet10 by TeachMeet Collective is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

Introduction

TeachMeet was born in Scotland in 2006¹, swiftly becoming a global grassroots phenomenon. It has been described as an unconference form of professional learning event, and characterised from the start as ‘by teachers, for teachers’; Liz Bennett has been aptly dubbed it ‘guerrilla CPD’². The format of a TeachMeet event blends the focussed informality of the Open Space³-inspired Barcamp with the lightning ‘nano’ presentation style of Pecha Kucha. Social media tools are harnessed for organisational and promotional purposes, and utilised during the events to connect to those who cannot attend in person. It is no coincidence that TeachMeet and Twitter are twins. According to co-founder Ewan McIntosh, the four pillars of TeachMeets, are “keep it simple, random, short, social.”

The distinctive font of the classic TeachMeet logo is a Mac font called crackhouse; but where did the name come from?

“What to call this thing”
ScotEduBlog wiki conversation, 2006

The discussion about “What to call this thing” mostly took place on the Scotsedublog wiki. On 8 June 2006, Ewan created a page titled newtechmeet and posed the question:

*We need a name. Not something too bloggy, not too techy. Suggestions?*

DavidDMuir Jun 11, 2006

I posted a whole pile of suggestions - mostly for my own amusement rather than as serious suggestions.

The other one I like is TeachMeet. I saw that Ewan called this page “newtechmeet” and remembered that a wise man once said, “It’s not the tech, it’s the teach!” So I came up with TeachMeet… which almost rhymes.

ewanmcintosh Jun 29, 2006

With five people liking the TeachMeet concept, and four of us liking the bbbs or at least mention of blogs, I’ve popped up the ‘winner’. I hope it suits. At least its intentions are clear, with both teach, tech, blogs and the fun element included. Thanks for your help in getting it honed down.

#teachmeet
A majority of TeachMeet events are advertised online using social media platforms, websites and event management engines. By 2016, between January and June, there were 216 instances of TeachMeets recorded in the UK and Ireland⁴. About one third were generic in nature, two thirds were on a specific theme or sector (eg STEM, humanities, arts, language).

Locations of TeachMeets recorded online between Jan-June 2016, highlighting data for the TeachMeet arranged to mark the 10th anniversary at the same location as the first event in 2006. 
(Source: Amond, Johnston & Millwood)⁵
Invitation

To mark the tenth birthday of TeachMeet, Ewan McIntosh made a call at the BETT 2016 TeachMeet for folk to share their stories of the impact TeachMeet has had on them.

This is not the first time the community has put itself under the microscope. Reflective and critical conversations began as far back as 2009, when TeachMeet was a mere toddler to the teenager it is now. In Scotland, John Connell blogged a question about whether it was “Time For A TeachMeet Alternative?” which drew many responses, some of which are relevant still, and well worth the journey into the vaults of The WayBack Machine for a reminder. In 2013, in England Mark Anderson asked in his blog post “What is a TeachMeet Anymore?”, generating dozens of replies, and a critical conversation among the TeachMeet tribe which is also still relevant. In 2014, the Australian TeachMeet community held a strategic analytical workshop based on Starfish:Spider theory, discussing the merits and demerits of the current non-hierarchical structure of TeachMeet, concluding broadly that the advantages outweighed the limitations. Their articulation of what they valued and aspired to in TeachMeet – “the sense of ownership and freedom they have; not being a traditional formal organisation, not politicised or held hostage to a broader agenda” - is strongly echoed by what the 2016 respondents say has had the most positive impact. Co-founder John Johnston’s submission sums it up really well: “People expressing their own views, organising themselves from the bottom up, democratic, without hierarchy … ideas of sharing, creative commons, openness and fun … doing it for ourselves, owning our own spaces and sharing freely”.

This 2016 invite differs in being the first targeted global invitation, and it garnered a bank of responses from a range of participants whose collective lived experience covers a decade of involvement at every level from self-confessed “enthusiastic lurker” to serial presenter to founding organisers.
The form was published online posing one central question:

“How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?”.

Responses came back over the next few months from over 60 people across the world - the UK, Ireland, Turkey, Canada, USA, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand - varying in length from a single sentence to pages long, referring to events online and offline. across the ten years of TeachMeet to date. Answers came from passive participants, active participants, presenters, organisers, and many of the tales tell of progression through those roles. The stories of impact range from the immediate gut reaction to the atmosphere – ‘fun’, ‘sharing’ – to the far-reaching and transformational – ‘developing connections’, ‘new networks’, ‘building a community’. By far the most common remark was one form or other of ‘thanks’, with much of the thanks directed at named individuals who had introduced them to or influenced them in some way. The list of people mentioned in these thanks is far longer than that of the respondents. One comment, from Ian Usher, that probably best sums up many of the others is: “I owe TeachMeet”.

A simple word cloud analysis of the reports generated this snapshot …
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

TeachMeet's 10! Tell your story

How has TeachMeet changed your teaching or learning? What is the one memorable talk or conversation you had? What is the most profound change you've seen in your classroom? Tell us here, and be part of the TeachMeet 10th Birthday book!

The book will be given away on a Creative Commons licence, with donations to a children's charity encouraged. We want to help more teachers than ever benefit from the TeachMeet community.

*Required

Name *
Everyone who contributes will see their name as an author of the book

Your answer

School or Organisation

Your answer

City or Town *

Your answer

Country *

Your answer

Your First TeachMeet *
Please give us the Location and rough date (e.g. TeachMeet Glasgow 2007)

Your answer

How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world? *
Tell your story. Be passionate. Who influenced you? Who did you meet? What was the result in your learning or teaching further down the road?

Your answer

SUBMIT
Analysis

The submissions in reply to this question were analysed to see what, if any, themes were occurring and recurring among the TeachMeet community. The method of analysis (I.P.A.⁹) chosen consisted of reading and re-reading the anonymized submissions, noting common themes, concepts, statements, gleaning the collective consciousness of those who offered their tale of impact.

All of the respondents were, in one way or another, educators; most are currently practicing teachers. The questions posed asked about “your world”. The answers suggest there were ever-wider layers in the world of the respondents – their personal world, their classroom, their professional world and their teaching community. The comments in the answers fell into four categories – descriptive comments about the TeachMeet event and those participating others, and reflective and narrative comments about impact on the self and the community.

The impact of TeachMeet: individual stories, collective themes

The answers were submitted individually but for this analysis they were anonymised and read (and re-read many times!) as a collective, in a sensemaking exercise which involved noting and interpreting each lived experience reported as both that of an individual and as part of the experience of group as a whole. The comments, stories, tales and anecdotes thus fell into four broad categories or themes (summarised in the table on p.11), ranging on a continuum from external and immediate factors to the more personal and transformational issues:

- about the event itself;
- about the others encountered there;
- about the person themselves;
- about the community – the classroom, the teaching profession.
Observations about the TeachMeet event

These fell into three sub-categories – descriptions of the atmosphere in the venue, the actions of other that were witnessed, and comments on how the event was organised … the most common word seen in this category is sharing.

The description of atmosphere as sensed in the reports is of a convivial, open, welcoming space, with repeated mentions of ‘fun’ and ‘joy’, ‘laughter’ and ‘camaraderie’.

The action described here is that of a packed space, full of conversation, short sharp presentations (2 mins, 7 mins); lots of mention of Twitter being used; some mention being engaged in debate, others mention ‘lurking’; the overall feel is one of peers sharing their expertise; it is ‘teachers talking about teaching’.

Remarks about organisation are common – reports referenced the house rules common to many TeachMeets (‘the camel’ or a soft toy thrown as a ‘time’s up’ signal, a ‘random name picker’, ‘drinks and nibbles’); many commented on the relaxed and non-hierarchical or ‘DIY’ nature of the organisation, the fact that is was ‘democratic’ and ‘opposite to conference guru talks’.

Observations about others encountered at TeachMeet

When describing the others encountered and the effect they had on the respondents, three sub-categories of comments emerged – the sharing of practical ideas, inspiration and motivation, and descriptors of the presenters… the most frequently used term used here was passion.

The sharing of practical ideas is mentioned again and again – practical ideas from other people’s classroom, ‘real experiences’, ‘innovative ideas’ modelled by others, and a peek through ‘a window into their classroom’ are appreciated.

The infectious nature of inspiring and motivating presenters is mentioned many times, their enthusiasm and the unselfish nature of ‘teachers lighting up from inside when they talk about what they do’. A remarkable number of responses name many
of the teachers whose presentations made an impact – if for nothing else, for this it is worth reading all of the response.

The stand-out descriptor of others repeated many times in the reports, of TeachMeet presenters is that of a generous, passionate, positive, authentic, honest and ‘truly excellent educator’.

**Observations about the self on attending TeachMeet**

Reports about the effect on the self at the TeachMeet become more confessional and deal with four effects - relational, emotional, practical, and transformation effects on self … the word most used here was inspired.

In relational terms, respondents express appreciation for meeting others ‘face to face’, ‘in real life’, feeling welcomed, and making friends.

On an emotional level, there is much talk of being inspired, ‘totally inspired’, enthused, revitalised, excited, ‘having a wonderful experience’ and ‘walking away full of the joys of what we do’.

The practical effects listed are about seeing new resources, and having the chance to try them out, ‘testing half-baked ideas in the in-between debate’; one comment echoes that often seen online after TeachMeet: ‘the most effective and cheapest CPD I have experienced’.

Some of the reports are of effects of a potentially transformational nature, of renewal of passion, happiness, and about feelings of empowerment: ‘the chance to share what you know is so powerful’, ‘the power of grassroots’.

**Observations about wider impact on the teaching community**

Many of those reporting impacts and outcomes after experiencing TeachMeet report some very transformational in four areas of their life – in their personal life, their classroom, their teaching careers, and on their teaching community … the most commonly used term here was connection.

Writing of transformational impacts on themselves as a teacher and as a person after meeting TeachMeet, many spoke in terms of being reinvigorated as a teacher,
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

‘was stuck in a rut, TeachMeet got me out’ ‘changed my view on education’, ‘a big effect on my learning and my life’, ‘left the TeachMeet feeling like a different person’. The words ‘life changing’ appear several times. The friendships developed were mentioned by many. The most striking change was the number of people who reported that they went on to attend, present at, and organise more TeachMeets. Transformational impact on the classroom … returning to their classroom with new ideas and a new passion, ‘a new zest for teaching’, some feeling they had a “licence to try new things”, “explore, be inventive and joyful”, developed others’ ideas”. All of these were developments were reported with a refreshing reflective honesty … ‘it impacted my practice’, ‘I may be a better person and more importantly a better educator’.

Transformational impact on the career, although not as widely reported as the previous impact on the self, was in some cases quite dramatic – many describe a personal and professional growth that lead them to further study, ‘I signed up for a Masters’, ‘it made me research’, ‘I co-wrote a paper', I now lecture at initial teacher training’. Two ensuing PhDs were mentioned. Some saw it as an ‘opportunity to lead’, as ‘helped me at an interview’, ‘a night that changed my professional life’.

Transformational impact on the wider teaching community is inferred in the many reports of highly appreciated and ongoing new ‘connections’ ‘collaborations’, ‘networks’, ‘PLN’, ‘increased trust and respect’, ‘building a community’. This is where the reader will notice over and over again the thanking of named and unnamed others. One comment reminds of something that is often posted online by those who attend an unconference for the first time: “it transformed my attitude to what CPD could be in the hands of teachers”. It is Bennett’s ‘guerrilla CDP’ again!

Concerns expressed – it is important to note that a few respondents did express their concerns and hopes in appreciation that TeachMeet would remain the open democratic ‘thing’ it began as in 2006. This is a recurring conversation on social media and at TeachMeet gatherings, and it important that it is not forgotten, and returned to – perhaps it will be the theme for the next round of research?

#teachmeet
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

[extracted from an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) of n=60 responses to question posed by Ewan McIntosh in 2016 (Amond 2019)]

...the event

comments on the TeachMeet event itself

colour and context ... 
... about atmosphere sensed 
... about actions witnessed 
... about organisation witnessed

“fun... joy... open laughter, sharing”
“connecting in real life... short (7min, 2 min)...everyone equal... twitter... debate... eclectic... the ‘in-between’ conversations”
“opposite of conference... democratic... without hierarchy... relaxed atmosphere... drinks & nibbles”

...the others

comments on the presenters and audience

colour and effect... 
... about sharing practical ideas 
...about inspiring and motivating 
...participant descriptors

“real teachers sharing real experiences... window into the classroom of actively practicing teachers”
“teachers lighting up when they talk about what they do... inspiring... enthusiasm”
“passionate... infectious passion... authentic... expressing beliefs... positive”

...the self

comments on personal reactions

colour, effect, and actions... 
... relational 
...emotional 
...practical 
...transformational

“chance to network... meet friends... exchanging ideas... (newcomers) felt welcomed”
“inspiration... enthused... revitalised... excited to get back to classroom next day”
“most effective and cheapest CPD... testing ideas in the in-between debates”
“showed me the power of grassroots... the chance to share is so powerful”

...the community

comments on what happened afterwards

tales of transformational effects... 
in personal life (inside & outside ed) 
in classroom 
in career path 
in community / network

“gave confidence to be daring... organised more teachmeets... went to more teachmeets... life-changing... left feeling different”
“left excited to share with my students... shaped my teaching... impacted my practice”
“made me research... did a masters... did a PhD... changed my professional life”
“connections... new network... building a community... doing it for ourselves on our own”
Commentary

The preceding interpretive reduction and summary described themes ranging from descriptive commentaries on TeachMeet event and the people involved to reflective, and in many cases confessional, tales of transformation in the personal and professional spheres of their lives. This progression reflects the stepped layers of success espoused in many of the classic models and theories of evaluation of CPD (eg Guskey, Kirkpatrick-Katzell, Wenger-Trayner & de Latt) – in all of which modest success is represented by a positive reaction to the event itself, but the highest level of success is represented by a change across the system. Examined in the light of Aileen Kennedy’s five tool framework (2005, p. 247), many of the listed characteristics of success can be detected – “development of the collective as well as the individual, increase in professional autonomy, facilitation of transformation” rather than mere transmission. Although this may be limited to those those involved in the TeachMeet community, it suggests that TeachMeet as an event could withstand being benchmarked as a legitimate format of informal professional learning.

And so what does all this suggest?

TeachMeet, evolving as it has done by instinct and trust, must be doing something right. If this set of honest from-the-heart responses reflects the first ten years of TeachMeet, it has not been without impact on many levels – personal and professional. For a ‘new’ informal movement with nothing “official” or incorporated apart from a striking logo; no dictionary entry, a lone Wikipedia entry, ten years and counting is something to be proud of. There is a tacit ethos of sorts, kept ‘out there’ by lots and lots of ‘Fifth Estate’ open discourse especially on Twitter and blogosphere – mainly based on the trust in the original simple premise/promise of “teachers sharing with teachers”.

Onwards to TeachMeet 20! Keep the conversation going at #teachmeet
“How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?”. Responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Aaron Davies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First TeachMeet :: Teachmeet at the Pub, Melbourne, 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This was organised by Digital Learning and Teaching Victoria, held at a small pub in the back of Carlton. What I remember was time spent putting a face to the name of those who I had connected with online and engaging in debate about topics such as cloud computing, traditional essays and maker education. What I love most about TeachMeets is the potential to test out ideas with others. From exploring digital literacy, questioning giving back, changing education and challenging the digital native myth, I have found presenting in a new context forces you to rethink your ideas, as well as opens them up to criticism. Through the feedback gained though, it has helped me grow both personally and professionally. Although we can have Twitter chats, organise a Hangouts or connect verbally via Voxer, none of these modes or mediums quite emulate the experience of connecting face-to-face. This is the strength of TeachMeets. Although the presentations are great to hear and it is always good in regard to perspective, the value gained is often found in the breaks where you are able to connect with colleagues and collaborate. In today’s day and age, it seems odd when teachers restrict their thinking to the four walls of their own classroom. TeachMeets provide a great opportunity to reach out and go beyond this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Adam Brooks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Gamification and Game Based Learning, 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TeachMeet has provided me with a network of passionate teachers who are excited about revolutionising learning within schools. Moreover, it has given me the confidence to be daring, the support network when times got tough, and the feeling that I am part of something bigger. TeachMeet has given me the opportunity to lead. Through Bhavneet Singh and the other members of the TeachMeet WA core team, I now get to bounce ideas on a daily basis to improve the education system within Australia and beyond. I am particularly excited about the #TMWAreach initiative to reach regional and remote WA through Google Hangouts on Air episodes on a regular basis. I find with TeachMeet, we are always reminded to keep the students at the forefront of our minds. Not just the students within our own class, but with each and every student. And that really allows teachers to focus on the task at hand - to encourage students to find their passion to give back to the community.
TeachMeet Computing was not only my first TeachMeet it was my first foray into speaking in front of others who weren't in my class at university. I had just finished my honours year and went to present about my project (teaching primary kids to program using Scratch) as it was important to me to share what I had been doing. I think I signed up for the longest (shortest) 2 minutes ever; I mean I was a just about to graduate computing student, with little teaching experience going to tell Teachers how I'd taught kids!! As terrified as I was it went well (I think?). I also took offense at someone telling me I spoke great about programming for a primary teacher (he shall remain nameless) not that I am insulted at being called a primary teacher far from it - apologies to anyone who is a primary teacher I am so sorry for the telling of this, it is not meant that way at all just I felt a bit miffed as I was someone who had a degree in computing and not primary teaching (should I stop now?); sorry primary teachers I have the utmost respect for you - hence why my research has always been in primary education. That day made me realise just how important teachers actually are and how raw a deal they get from folk when all they want to do is make your child’s education better.

Two folk from that day inspired me - Charlie Love and Kate Farrell, it was my first ever meeting with either but following them on twitter and seeing them reaffirmed my belief that it really does take someone amazing to teach and I just wasn’t at that stage yet BUT I wanted to do what I could to help teachers hence why I went into my PhD.

6 years on and a few more TeachMeets later I’ve learned that it's an amazing community to be part of, everyone is truly supportive of each other. I've learned that not only are teachers from all stages are amazing and just as important as each other but also that we are all taking part in these TeachMeets for the one fundamental reason that we are trying to improve ourselves in order to give our students a better learning experience.
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

**UK**

**Andy Knill**

First TeachMeet :: *TMEssex*, Wickford, 2015

I first spoke at TMEssex and invented Mishmashlearning that I have blogged under to this day. Organising TMEssex and TMhavering with Tom Sherringham, Martin Burrett and Andy Lewis were all great events to be involved in. Being Raffle Guy for Drew Buddie at TMBett13 is memorable for the £600+ raised for Sandy Hook Elementary school in the USA after the shooting there. Out of Teachmeets came my passion for promoting Solo Taxonomy and the account for Globalsolo, passed onto Pam Hook in 2015. I have met so many in person or by following Teachmeets as distant as Australia and New Zealand, participating by Twitter. My teaching is a test bed for many ideas received and thank you to all who have stood, participated, caught flying hexagons or watched me dance as part of my many presentations. I will keep extolling the value of Teachmeets to all that will listen and the many who are unaware.

**UK**

**Ben Rouse**

First TeachMeet :: *Teachmeet Brighton* 2012

I signed up for a 7-minute presentation to reflect on my attempts to use the "flipped classroom" approach with my year 10 mathematics class. Before my slot up stepped a couple of fairly nervous looking primary teachers who didn't strike me as seasoned presenters. They began to speak about a blogging project they had taken part in called Quadblogging that led to a connection with a class in Japan. This was soon after the devastating tsunami in Japan and the two classes had had the opportunity to discuss the fear and impact of the tragic event … I was struck by the range of subject matter and the honest nature of the presentations, these were real teachers sharing experiences whether they were successful or a disaster they had learnt from. I have just scrolled back through the old class blog to find I created it straight after the teachmeet! I set up my own class blog and subsequently signed up to a quadblog where my class joined up with classes in Melbourne, California and Singapore. I refer to those two teachers regularly in conversations about things that have left a lasting impression on my teaching. Since Brighton in 2012 I have attended three or four teachmeets that have not matched the impact of the first one. I have seen teachmeets hijacked by self-promotion and product promotion or set up for recruitment by people who have never attended one before. Despite these diversions they remain one of the few places I know where there is a place for teachers to share without judgement (unlike twitter sometimes) leading to a real learning experience. I would like to encourage those teachers out there trying out ideas to sign up to share at their first teachmeet, you may be nervous about your own presentation, but the stories shared by the other presenters will be the part that stays with you.
Australia

Bernadette Mercieca

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Melbourne, 2011

Regularly meeting innovative teachers from a variety of state, Catholic and independent schools was a great experience for me. It was fun to present my ideas at different times, and I always came away with a new idea from what I heard from other people. Over the years, Teach Meet people have become friends and we connect on Twitter.

Ireland

Breeda Corcoran

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet ICTEDU, Thurles, 2012

It showed me how IT tools can support student engagement and learning. It was fun

USA

Brian McClain

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Tally, Tallahassee, c. 2014

The actualization of an independent, teacher-run professional development session has propelled me through these dark times of public education. As I want to hear from experts "in the field" in other areas, I find most valuable being inspired by the passion and compassion of actively practicing teachers; and not from people with limited experiences and who have self-selected their way out of the classroom. Teachers are fabulously gifted at crafting a lesson to fit their own style and skills. What I find spot-on effective is the immediacy of the follow-up conversations that the short-presentation format provides. I have seen and heard teachers collegially develop one-day lessons and entire units on-the-spot in ten-minute conversations before leaving the session, all the while smiling and voiced with excitement and anticipation.
Australia

Celia Coffa

First TeachMeet :: Teachmeet Melbourne, 2011

I was introduced to Teachmeet by Henrietta Miller who talked about TM Sydney. They did not exist in Melbourne but a chat between three participants, including myself created the first event. The first amazing highlight was meeting some of my online network face to face. Our Melbourne style of Teachmeet is uncomplicated, organic, flexible and wonderful. From gatherings of 6 to events with 100, each event is the sum of the participants and often the venues offered. Such opportunities to mix with educators from diverse spheres are rare. The eclectic nature of the content and the venues is energising, enlightening and enjoyable. Above all, the personal connections I have made are the major highlight. I have numerous examples of where conversations started at or after a Teachmeet have morphed into amazing collaborations that have directly benefitted my school and students. My network of teachers is my best asset as a teacher who always tries to analyse and learn new things. Teachmeets enhance the networks as nothing is better than a face to face connection. I have been brought to tears, made laugh out loud by different presentations, I have been a bit disconnected to a few but thankfully it was only 7 minutes of my life! The type of people who spend their time at a Teachmeet are the type of teachers I want to learn with and from. The venues we have been offered have widened my eyes to so many amazing educational spaces from classrooms, staff rooms, libraries, museums, art galleries, gardens and quite a few pubs too. The enthusiasm is infectious, and I will continue to evangelise for this wonderful format of professional learning.

Ireland

Chris Reina

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet South, Cork, 2015

Attending my first TeachMeet - I wasn't sure what to expect - possibly educators who I hoped would be passionate about their profession. I got far more. Rarely do you find a coming together of people who all bring passion, dedication and interest combined with enthusiasm and devotion; my kind of people. (The kind who venture out on a rainy, cold November night in the middle of the week!) From here forward, I knew I would also run my own TeachMeet. Over the last 2 years, I've been to TeachMeets in Mayo, Limerick and Dublin and met more unsung heroes who change the lives of those they encounter. The amazing thing about TeachMeets is the halo and loop effect. Simply being in the presence of similar people feeds back on itself. You in turn get charged up to explore, investigate, learn and teach. It's like a battery that recharges itself by being close to other people. Teachers have always been those who change the world - by offering positive guidance for their students and inspiring them to greatness. TeachMeets change teachers - in exactly the same way.

#teachmeet
Ireland

Ciara Brennan & Kathleen Byrne

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Primary East, Glencullen, 2014

A wet, gloomy evening in the Dublin mountainside. But inside the bright, colourful hall of St. Patrick’s NS Glencullen, a buzz of anticipation & excitement bubbled for the first Teachmeet to be held solely for primary educators in the Republic of Ireland. Following attendance at the CESI Teachmeet in Galway, Ireland earlier that year, we saw the power and potential the teachmeet model could have in the primary sector. We were so inspired at the Cesimeet that we wanted to build an organisation to support teachmeets at primary level. And so Teachmeet Primary East was born and our first event was about to begin, the first of many. Following events and teachmeets around the country, we changed our name to Teachmeet Ireland a year later.

UK

David Rogers

First TeachMeet :: TM BETT, 2008

Organising and attending TeachMeets has opened up collaboration and conversations with other teachers that would never have happened. I’m especially proud of building a community in Portsmouth around teachmeets - our first one attracted 7 people in my classroom and the final one 150 in a battleship and of establishing two teachmeets in the geography community. TeachMeet GACOnf took 5 years of badgering, and TM RGS targets the London community. The best thing about teachmeets … the conversations and the beer which is why TMSolutions saw teachers meeting in a pub with no plan. Most of all, I see TeachMeets as an opportunity for teachers to talk to teachers about teaching, and an important outlet outside of schools. Although many of the larger TeachMeets deliver in terms of new content, I always leave with something. My main thought was to ensure that all meetings of teachers become teachmeets. I ran priory geography meetings along the lines of teachmeet ideas and endeavour to ensure line management meetings are the same. Most of all, the people that I’ve met through teachmeets have kept me sane during my time grappling with senior leadership and the frustrations it brings.
**UK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Eylan Ezekiel</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First TeachMeet :: Scottish Learning Festival, Glasgow, 2009</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn by the enthusiasm and excitement of friends and tweeps on twitter, I signed up for TM at the Scottish Learning Festival in ‘09 having little or no idea what to expect. It was enthusiasm (for learning) and excitement (in learning) that seemed to power the evening though technical difficulties and to help transform my attitude to what CPD could be, in the hands of teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Italy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Francesca Neiviller</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First TeachMeet :: Cardiff, 2011</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a study visit to Cardiff, where met the teacher Bart Verswijvel who introduced us to the opportunities the web and digital tools can offer teachers. From that time on I use these IT tools to teach!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Australia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Heather Ballie</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First TeachMeet :: #TMMelb, Mebourne, 2011</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Twitter friends in real life and strengthening connections; developing confidence in presenting to peers; opportunity to reflect on current learning; lots of new ideas to take back to school. More of what I think is at <a href="https://youtu.be/JW-ENj1h6LY">https://youtu.be/JW-ENj1h6LY</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

#teachmeet
UK

First TeachMeet :: BETT, 2010

I didn't know what to expect and the room was packed with around 300 people. My name came out first. I think this was a good thing as, having never seen a presentation there before, I had nothing to compare it to. I got up, did my thing, got a few laughs and sat back down. I turned immediately to a colleague and asked why we hadn't done this in Hampshire yet. So a few months later, we setup the first Teachmeet Hampshire and 100 people turned up and it was a great success. The Hampshire ones have continued on and off since then but BETT will always be a bit different... in 2011 I helped to organise it and have helped out a number of them since. I even ended up hosting one of them alongside Ian Usher. Not many people have hosted TM BETT and I'm proud to say that I am on the list. It was a scary evening, but everyone was lovely, and it went very well. Since those days Drew Buddie has managed them expertly...there have been challenges and there have been some amazing moments. It was incredible seeing everyone come together for Bev Evans in 2015 and to raise money for charity after she passed away. She was such a big part of Teachmeet and will be sorely missed. Despite all of these moments, the biggest for me was 2015. I only had a 2min presentation on the use of Skitch in the classroom. This was a tool that could be used to annotate photographs and (with Dawn Hallybone's help/approval) I ended my presentation with a photo of an ultrascan and announced that my son was on his way. This felt like the perfect moment to do it. Amongst the 400 people in the crowd were many dear friends who I have met through Twitter and I couldn't have shared it with a better bunch of people. In 2016 Oliver went to his first Teachmeet and had a little appearance on the stage too. The Teachmeet/Twitter family made this special moment possible. Many of the Teachmeet stories will be about the learning that has taken place, and I have learnt loads, but for me it will always be about the connections that have been made with other educators, many of whom I now call friends.

England

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Midlands, 2009

First experience of teachers that weren't afraid to branch out, to make use of tech, to share their experiences (good or bad) with others. Met and have consequently followed with interest the varying careers and postings of Doug Belshaw, Tom Barrett, and Jose Picardo.
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

Malaysia

First TeachMeet :: BETT, 2009

Travelled 6600 miles to attend BETT, but it was TeachMeet that inspired me the most. Amazing fun, so much learnt, met @helikon, @lisibo, @digitalmaverick amongst others. Won a raffle prize from BrainPOP and ate pizza at TeachEat. Started TeachMeetKL in Malaysia, the first TeachMeet in SE Asia, now running regularly with around 70 teachers from many international schools. Teachers often tell me it's the best PD they've ever had. It works. Thank you TeachMeet.

UK

First TeachMeet :: BETT, 2009

For me TeachMeets crystallised the truths about most conferences & 'professional' gatherings - those innately understood by most presentation-hardened participants… "We've heard most of this presentation's points before", "That woman I spoke to over coffee had some much more interesting ideas" and "I think I've got something to contribute which would be more relevant to most people in the room than this well-known person" - and gave me the impetus and nous to apply the idea around the corner and around the world.

I met more people who've had a positive influence on my professional life than I've ever thought possible. On occasion I've had a micro-platform to share practical ideas and been fortunate enough to look after a couple of the larger TeachMeets, which from their different nature served to highlight what a locally-organised and well-run TeachMeet could, should and might look like. I've been privileged to be asked to support TeachMeets in the US and Turkey and enjoy them most when newcomers feel welcomed, that there's something for them to learn and, most importantly, something for them to share and illuminate the professional lives of others with. I also got to hear Mark Pentleton play the piano with a cacophony of background singing, which isn't something that happens every lifetime. Ewan, Tom, Dughall, Rachel, Drew, Dawn, Miles, Leon, Jade, Doug, Josie, Tess, Derek, Theo, Tim and many many others have helped me look further than I thought, and probably better than I am, and I owe TeachMeet for knowing them.
UK

Ian in Sheffield

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Yorkshire and Humberside, 2010

Connections.
My second TeachMeet had the biggest impact on me. I knew I was in the right place when, shortly after entering an otherwise empty room, two people I'd never met were mocking me ... all in the best possible taste of course! On Twitter, Dughall McCormick and Bill Lord were no more than names who tweeted interesting things. The TeachMeet made them plain as the passionate and inspiring people I now know they are. Hosted by Damien Ward and masterfully compered by Dughall, that evening changed the way I viewed professional learning and provided a window into the classrooms of some amazing educators. Pete Richardson, James Cross and Jim Malone all displayed an enthusiasm, creativity, commitment and desire to improve and share their practice I'd never encountered before. We were also joined remotely by some of David Mitchell's Year 5 pupils. I also had the privilege of hearing Nick Jackson talk about shifting the locus of learning towards his GCSE students. We not only heard where that worked well, but also where it needed further development and what his aspirations were as he moved it forward. I mention that because, although Nick and I subsequently met for no more than a few brief minutes, what we had learned from each other was enough for us to co-write a paper for NAACE, even though Nick was now in Australia! That TeachMeet seeded enough trust and respect to allow us to challenge each other, be critical and work together, yet apart. Sometimes 7 minutes is all you need.

Australia

Jacques du Toit

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet EduTECH, 2014

I was introduced to TeachMeets by Matt Esterman in 2014 when he asked for presenters for the first TeachMeet at EduTECH ...I came to the TeachMeet very nervously, not knowing quite what to expect, but soon my life was changed. I connected with educators from all over Australia; Ewan McIntosh did a presentation and many others that I had interacted with online. Sitting there listening to teachers sharing what they do, their passions, their ideas, and all in short 7-minute sessions was incredible ... I heard Simon McKenzie, a Twitter #histedchat friend, talk on his Ancient history class project, and developed my own take on his project later that year to great success. Simon Crook shared a line that I still remember, "Engage me or Enrage me" with regards to meetings. From this first initial TeachMeet I launched TeachMeets in my region, and they have grown over the past two years where others are also starting them up to help extend our teaching networks and help everyone grow. TeachMeets really provide a wonderful platform where teachers can share and connect, and it has truly opened my world.
Australia

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Melbourne, 2012

TeachMeet Melbourne is an extremely important and influential part of my professional life as an educator working in a non-school setting. It is a personal lifeline to the world of the classroom. It’s my staffroom and the place I feel energised and excited to be part of the teaching profession. My first TeachMeet was such a positive experience - friendly passionate individuals prepared to share and be excited by their work and the work of others. The collaborations and the professional support network I have as a consequence of my TM Melbourne "membership" sustains and invigorates my professional practice. In my 30+ years as a teacher/learner TM Melbourne is, along with the #edchat communities of Twitter, the most positive and productive personal learning network I belong to. Twitter chats and connections are amplified by the F2F experiences enabled via TeachMeets. I have introduced many Tweeters to TM and see both as integral to my commitment and contribution to ongoing professional learning in the education sector.

Canada

First TeachMeet :: TM SLF, 2010

I was new to Scotland and wanted to connect with other teachers and bring some Canadian teaching fun to Scotland. I jumped right in and shared at my first TeachMeet ever … TeachEat afterwards was a fantastic time to really get to know people. Linda Lapere, Ian Stuart, Doug Belshaw, Iain Hallahan, Anne Marie Weston and Jennifer Harvey are still friends to this day. It was a conversation I needed to learn more about Scottish curriculum, schools and be able to talk the talk at an interview … I attended more TeachMeets including one in Inverness which was a fantastic pub night. TeachMeets took me to places I would have never found, including a fantastic weekend in Ayr. I finally got to meet Kenny O'Donnell, who I had been tweeting with even before I ended up in the UK … The next year I hosted TMSLF - and loved it. It was a great tipping point of TeachMeets getting too big with too many sponsors and led to conversations and refocusing about what a TeachMeet should be. TeachMeets opened the door to me teaching in Scotland. I'm not sure I ever would have made it without the connections or friends I made. I've gone on to work with Alberta Education and I'm now a Director of a school authority. My Scottish time gave me a wider perspective on curriculum and teaching I wouldn't have without global experience.
Scotland

Jane Kelly

First TeachMeet :: St. Mungo's High School, Falkirk, 2016

Teachmeet has fuelled my passion for Microsoft and using it to enhance my teaching and learning. I had already been using OneNote as an integral part of my teaching but now I am using more and more Microsoft products to complement my lessons. I have a new zest for teaching! Thank you!

England

Jennifer Hart

First TeachMeet :: London, 2013

I went to The Bridge Academy Teachmeet with no idea what I was heading to. It was a superb introduction to the world of Teachmeets. Action Jackson ensured the energy of the room was kept at a high and the pace and quality of the presentations was fantastic. I took away lots of ideas but more importantly, the knowledge that there were lots of other teaching geeks out there who were just as excited talking about their practice as myself. I can trace so many great things back to that night! I joined Twitter while sat in the audience that night. If it wasn't for that TeachMeet I'd not have discovered all the fabulous Tweeters who have subsequently influenced me, supported me and become friends. I went on to attend more TeachMeets, conferences and events in my own time and eventually took the plunge and started blogging on Staffrm. All of this is thanks to that first Teachmeet. I only wish I'd discovered the world of Teachmeets earlier in my career!

UK

Jodie Lopez

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet SW London, 2011

The TM was full of interesting people but it was Miles Berry who stood out, he showed a site aimed at secondary geography. It was a timely reminder, at that point in my teaching career, that "learning styles" were not nearly as important as teaching styles … A few months after that first TM I decided to organise my own - the first #tmLondon. The wifi didn't work so I was saved by Leon Cych and his mifi. I had never met him before but he has become a firm friend since. His generosity dedication to helping others share has always made an impact. That TeachMeet had many hairy moments, but my lasting memory is of a room full of strangers, most holding a pint, some sitting on the floor to squeeze into the space, and every single one laughing and bonding during the talks. Many are still good friends today and some have moved from the corner of the room to now being centre stage!
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

Ireland

First TeachMeet :: TM BETT 2008

A blog post from Ewan McIntosh put me on the trail of Teachmeets. Late 2007, I had discovered an interesting group of bloggers, mainly from Scotland but a few from the rest of the UK, who had engaging conversations on using Web 2.0 tools. Attending TMBETT08, I was able to meet these people in the flesh for the first time, all who have become friends at this stage. I think Teachmeet worked because Web 2.0 tools enabled the connectivity of educators to extend across distance to connect and share I was able to give back by bring others in to the Teachmeet movement like Mags Amond who was in a better position to get Teachmeets off the ground in Ireland than I could at that stage. I think I have been so lucky that these cool smart people who I respect so much allowed me to play and travel with them on the Teachmeet journey.

Scotland

First TeachMeet :: The Jolly Judge, Edinburgh, 2006

I went to The ScotEduBlogger Meetup that kicked off the TeachMeet movement. It has had a pretty big effect on my learning and life. When TM started it seemed like something completely different and it chimed with ideas that I was starting to think about then and have been thinking about ever since. To me TM had some interesting components. These might not be the same for other people and they are certainly out of step with the way that some TeachMeets have developed. TMs were a reaction against conference sessions and keynotes where a ‘guru’ talked through a slide deck for an hour. The idea was that everyone who turned up was willing to talk for 7 or 2 minutes. There were no keynotes, and no one came first or was guaranteed a spot. There was no PowerPoint, this is an oft broken rule, the spirit, IMO, is that you don't read your way through some sets of slides. If you were not interested in the current speaker you were free to have a chat. The atmosphere was relaxed, a few drinks and nibbles. Lead by Ewan McIntosh, these ideas were, influenced by BarCamp. The first few events felt incredibly exciting. We talked like maniacs, posted photos, wrote blogs posts. There was a fairly strong tech bias, but the mantra 'It is the teach not the tech' was chanted. People expressing their own views, organising themselves from the bottom up, democratic, without hierarchy. There were influences from the Open Source movement and the tech world too. Blogs posts, photos, links, were tagged and could be aggregated. For me it is mixed with ideas of sharing, creative commons, openness and fun. It fitted with my growing interest in Open technologies and OER. If I was to condense what I have got from TeachMeet it would boil down to the idea of doing it for ourselves, owning our own spaces and sharing freely.
Scotland

Juliet Robertson

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Beyond, 2010

It was lovely to see classroom teachers think outside the box - quite literally, and apply their teaching skills and knowledge to an outdoor context. Iain Hallahan did a great job organising the event and going well "beyond" the call of duty to make it happen. Jen Deyenberg, I think, made geocaching practical and possible for any class teacher to experiment with. Sinclair Mackenzie demonstrating the half-life of a radioactive isotope through chucking pine cones in the air has to be one of the most innovative approaches I've seen to physics.
I did a blog about the event here http://creativestarlearning.co.uk/maths-outdoors/teachmeet-beyond-and-the-outdoor-numeracy-notes/

Ireland

Kathleen O’Reilly

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Froebel, Maynooth, 2016

I first engaged with the TeachMeet community as a third year B.Ed. student. Having attended two and organised one TeachMeet I can say I have reaped the rewards. TeachMeets allow all attendees to converse and discuss teaching ideas, challenges and methodologies to expand on understandings of school life. As a final year student I have learnt a lot from TeachMeets and fully intend to apply what I have learnt to my future teaching career. I also hope that once I begin formally teaching that I will have the opportunity to return and present at future TeachMeets.

UK

Katy Main

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet SHP, c. 2009

I'd really enjoyed the day of sessions at SHP (which are always reinvigorating) but I was flagging by the end of the day. The fringe session was a TeachMeet. I reluctantly went along and immediately was pleased I did. I loved the format and the short intense ideas was a perfect end to the day.
I've been to others since but that first one really showed me the power of grassroots teaching and learning.
UK

Kenny Pieper

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Lothians, 2011

I attended #tmlothians11 at the Scottish Book Trust in Edinburgh. I was invited through by Fearghal Kelly and Colm Linnane, two people who would come to influence me in so many ways. The night itself seems like a blur but was the start of something which would transform me as a teacher. The origins of what would become Pedagoo were discussed that night; I met Neil Winton for the first time and spent time chatting with Fearghal about Scottish Education. My involvement with Pedagoo has been perhaps the most fruitful and worthwhile professional activity in my teaching career and it wouldn’t have happened without Teachmeet. My friendship and ‘partnership’ with Fearghal have been a huge part of my teaching life and the list of great educators I’ve met is endless. I’ve been to dozens since then and, whether I present or not, I’ve never experienced one which hasn’t been worthwhile in some way. I’m proud that Teachmeet was born in Scotland. Thanks to Twitter, each time I go I meet people I’ve been friends with for years. Teachmeets just might provide the energy and creative boost your career needs; it certainly did it for me.

UK

Kevin Hewitson

First TeachMeet :: TM BETT, 2014

My story of how TeachMeet made an impact is about the opportunity to share as well as listen, collaboration has always been my “thing”. When I had to stop teaching, I never stopped being a teacher ... One day I discovered the TeachMeet event at BETT and signed up to present. There was that energy and people were listening and afterwards asking questions. Collaboration, feedback, challenge, and ideas. This was just what I was looking for. Since then I have presented at half a dozen TeachMeets and met some great teachers and heard some amazing ideas. Some have echoed those early pioneering days and are simple affairs and some have got rather grandiose with keynotes speakers and a compare. I have been actively supporting TeachMeets virtually and encourage any to advertise their Twitter hash tags before the event. More than once I have been involved in a teach meet in Australia through Twitter. People have Tweeted photographs for me, sent me slide presentations, and allowed me to contribute from my chair and keyboard. My present challenge is to get people to “flip” TeachMeets” – for the last one I was involved in I sent out a series of tweets beforehand in order to get people into a thinking frame of mind and to start thinking about the issues my presentation would raise. TeachMeets have opened up my world post teaching and allow me to collaborate with those still involved in meeting the daily challenges of teaching and learning. Once a teacher – always a teacher!
USA

Kyle Calderwood

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Kentucky 2011

ISTE conference in Philadelphia 2011 ... met William King and struck up a conversation about education and social media usage. Will co-organizes TeachMeet Kentucky. I had never heard of a TeachMeet before, and Will invited me down to present. I flew down in October to experience what it was to share best practices with educators who wanted to learn and share so badly, they came in during a school vacation week. From that experience, I started talking about running a similar one in New Jersey. This year marks the 5th anniversary of me running TeachMeetNJ. It has literally transformed my life. From the people that I've met to presentations that I've given, all have made me a better person and more importantly a better educator. There's no better feeling as an educator than stepping up on the stage to welcome over 300 other educators to TeachMeetNJ each year. To know that ALL of those educators have given up a day of their summer vacation to share and learn is a humbling experience. Everyone in that room is equal and we're all there to help make our student's experiences in the classroom and our colleague's more enriching.

Ireland

Leanne Lynch

First TeachMeet :: TM CESI, Galway, 2013

My first TeachMeet was an incredible experience, senses were awakened to a new world; a world loaded with passion and grit, ideas and creativity. I was surrounded by inspiring people who came to share their thoughts and experiences and enjoy the company of other committed, daring and resourceful educators. There was nothing pretentious about the event. In fact, it was rather captivating. The people, their energy and evident joy encouraged me to seek out more. Over the past four years, I have attended, and even presented, at many more. I have not only benefited on a professional capacity from TeachMeets but have also developed special friendships with wonderful people. Priceless memories have been created. One person, in particular, stands out in my mind as a 'TeachMeet Presenter Pro'. Bianca Ní Ghrogáin (RIP), an unassuming character, was a captivating communicator who readily gave her audience an authentic insight into the daily workings of her classroom. While TeachMeets are not quite the same without her, her presence is somehow always felt in the essence of sharing and caring, and in the hearts of the people who were blessed to have known her. I am very grateful to be part of the buzzing, exciting TeachMeet world and look forward to future experiences to come.
UK  
Liam Murphy

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Bedford, 2011

TeachMeet changed my view on education. It opened doors to other educators. It gave me resources and ideas to take away and use. Every TeachMeet I have been to has left me enthused and revitalised. I've now been to many and even organised one - TMCambs, 2012. I'm never sure whether to present or not. As both presenting and just ‘lurking’ have their advantages - I try to present at alternate TeachMeets at least.

UK  
Lisa Steven aka @lisibo

First TeachMeet :: TM BETT, 2008

I attended BETT 2008 as someone new to 'technology' and its use in the classroom, enthusiastic and wanting to learn ... Two things happened next that had a huge effect on me:

1. Doug Belshaw launched the EdTechRoundUp Flash meeting in a two-minute presentation; it became a regular part of Sunday night and (I'd like to think that) I contributed more than birthday cake! A weekly chat with the likes of Tom Barrett, John Johnston, Dai Barnes, David Noble, Sinclair McKenzie, Ian Stuart, Kristian Still, Mary Cooch, Tess Watson, Rob Hill and Dan Needlestone, as well as Doug and Dave Stacey, was always full of ideas (some of which boggled my mind!) and helped me develop my own thinking.

2. The fruit machine chose Dave to speak and whilst I can't recall exactly what he spoke about, I do recall the challenge he issued; "Next year, Lisa, you need to get up there and talk." So, I did! I stood up and told everyone that the previous year I'd sat where they were and thought I had nothing to share but I did. And so does everyone. What's old hat to one is revolutionary to another. I shared all the things I'd explored that year. And I went further, volunteering to help organise, and making cupcakes yearly from then onwards. But that's another story!
Ireland

Maggie Green

First TeachMeet :: TM CESI, Galway, 2013

I was fortunate enough to sit beside Bianca Ní Ghrogáin (RIP); that chance encounter of arriving late and sitting at the back corner beside Bianca was life changing. I was incredibly nervous about being there and was in awe of the teachers who stood up to share their ideas and stories ... talking to Bianca that night and seeing her passion for teaching and learning helped me to focus. Her passion was infectious, I left that Teachmeet feeling like a different person. Bianca's picture is currently up in my classroom as the Wonderful Woman who inspired me to be a teacher. If I had never attended that TeachMeet how different my life would be.

Ireland

Mags Amond

First TeachMeet :: Scottish Learning Festival, Glasgow, 2008

Instead of going to dinner, I went to a TeachMeet. Good move. Life changing, life enhancing move. The minute Ewan got the thing going, my gut reaction was "I want this in Ireland". I was seconded from my classroom at the time as a Dept of Ed CPD provider, delivering mandated courses to colleges in Ireland. This format was so refreshing - peers sharing ideas, and - (oh my!) - having fun. My chance came at the CESI National Conference in Feb 2009, when we added an evening TeachMeet. It was a memorable night. (It also marks the date many of the CESI tribe joined the twitterati.) Now #tmcesi is a fixture at each year's #cesicon and has migrated to other educational conferences. TM is popping up in teacher training colleges, schools and libraries also. As an activity, it has brought me many precious moments and many precious friends. As a phenomenon, it has prompted me to enter the world of research. (I may seek your help, reader).

Croatia

Marijana Smolcèc

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet International Online Event, 2011

My first TeachMeet was a webinar organized by Arjana Blazic and Bart Verswijvel, online. It was really special. I got to meet many educators, colleagues shared ideas from the classroom, web tools I was not familiar with and I got to share my experience. TeachMeets are an unselfish and endless source of ideas and positive energy that is distributed among teachers worldwide. It's a fast, it's fun, it's resourceful and it's addicted! You simply must love TeachMeets!
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

Wales
Matthew Pullen
First TeachMeet :: Teachmeet Clevedon, 2012

Someone recommended this event as a place to find out a bit more about the use of technology in teaching and learning ... I showed up not having a clue what to expect but got chatting to Dan Edwards and found that I was totally inspired and was being introduced to a whole new era to my teaching. Up to this point I was your typical teacher, isolated in the classroom and the only CPD I received was what I was told by the school was important for me. Nothing personalised at all. I listened intently to every story on the stage and the next day went into my school with a new passion and a million ideas, I think I may have tried out most of them in my first lesson. With a real buzz I decided that I too could share what I was doing so I signed up to the next Teachmeet in Clevedon which was a few months later ... I am not at all a confident public speaker, so this was a huge deal for me ... over 200 people were in the audience and to say the nerves were present is an understatement. Anyway I did my 5 minutes and loved it, the chance to share what you know works is so powerful, Twitter gave me instant feedback on the impact from those in the audience and I was hooked. If I look to where I am now it has to all be down to those first couple of events. I now lecture in teacher training, the passion that was unlocked to develop teaching and learning, first in myself and then to share with others, started in that hall in Clevedon. The connections made, through Twitter and in person have helped me see how much more there was to personal development. If it wasn't for Teachmeet, I wonder if I would have found my true passion for teaching and learning.

Scotland
Nick Hood
First TeachMeet :: Teachmeet SLF, Glasgow, 2007

Teachmeet gave me the opportunity to share and engage with digital education, and to network with other users and experimenters in radical approaches to teaching and learning in classrooms around the world. Through sharing good practice and innovative ideas with other practitioners, Teachmeets have not only impacted on my practice, they have also enabled me to look critically and reflectively at how I teach and, importantly, to continue to take that reflexive stance that I believe is crucial to the continuing professional development of the modern teacher.
USA

Reggie Grant

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Tally, Florida, 2013

TeachMeet Tally was born on when a dozen or so educators gathered in a meeting room at a restaurant and bar in Tallahassee, Florida, to share and discuss proven teaching methods. The event was inspired by the TeachMeet format conceptualized in Scotland and popular in the U.K. and Australia. Since then, TeachMeet Tally has held about 22 meetings that were attended by more than 100 local educators. In this past year, our third, several student teachers attended and presented.

The community built around TeachMeet Tally has become important to many. It started with a core group of teachers and has grown each month. As of May 2016, the group’s Facebook page has 92 members. The underlying concept is teachers supporting fellow teachers. This comes in many forms. One way we support each other is the presentations that are shared at the monthly events. The other ways are the informal discussions and camaraderie at these meetings.

In my 13 years as an educator, I have been subjected to a lot of bad professional development. The TeachMeet format has provided, by far, the most effective (and cheapest) PD that I have ever experienced.

Ireland

Richard Millwood

First TeachMeet :: BETT, London, 2008

It demonstrated to me the desire to network with other teachers is strong, despite being on a Friday night after a day at BETT for most participants. This enthusiasm for giving and taking ideas and practices was evident at every TeachMeet I took part in ever since and remains a testimony to the power of open space technology unconferences. As well as the pudding of reports of grounded practice from the stage, it also allowed for convivial connection with old friends and the testing of half-baked ideas in debate in the all-important spaces between presentations.

New Zealand

Rob Ferguson

First TeachMeet :: St Andrew’s College, 2017

It is what passionate teachers in a school do daily, but better. It connects you with all the other passionate teachers in your local community and beyond. It keeps the passion alive and gets the creative juices flowing. It’s the good oil.
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

**Malaysia**

**Samantha Best**

First TeachMeet :: Chesney School, Oxford, 2013

Teach meet has been an inspirational source of creative ideas and resources for me. Having taken from multiple teach meets, I presented in December 2013 and found the experience wonderful. The ultimate way of sharing with like-minded people. The result for me is always walking away full of the joys of what we do, excited to get in the classroom the next day.

**Ireland**

**Seamie O’Neill**

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Froebel, Maynooth, 2015

Teaching and teachers are at the heart of education, and teaching and teachers are at the heart of the Teachmeet concept. That heart is a generous one of sharing ideas with fellow educators. What struck me most after my first Teachmeet was the sense of joy in the sharing, the sense of joy in the opening of minds to new ideas and horizons; the endless possibilities of the impact on those new ideas on the minds and hearts of the children we have yet to teach, and the licence that the Teachmeet community gives us to try new things, to explore, to be inventive and joyful in our teaching.

I was introduced to the Teachmeet concept Bianca Ní Ghrógáin (RIP), who showed many that Teachmeets could provide the perfect forum for sharing new learning and engaging teaching with the world.

**Malaysia**

**Shannon Walsh**

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeetKL, Kuala Lumpur, 2014

As a brand new teacher, fresh to the world of teaching, attending my first TeachMeetKL was truly inspiring. International teachers from all around the area gathered on a WEEKNIGHT to share their experiences in their classes. A year later, I attended the TeachMeetKL for Mathematics, where we played with math and shared our love for the subject. Upon returning to my classroom, my head buzzed with creativity and budding ideas, and had me excited to share this with my students! Thanks TeachMeet, and Happy 10th Birthday (with hopefully many more to come)!
Malaysia

Siti Zaleha

First TeachMeet :: ISP, 2013

I came to ISP with a group of my teacher friends not knowing what TeachMeet is all about. We were of course amazed and interested throughout the session when we saw teachers from other schools come and work together in sharing good practices. To be honest, I felt really small and intimidated because my school opposed technology to the max. And there I was witnessing such wonderful teaching techniques being enabled by the use of technologies. I met a lot of talented teachers, too. I still remember exchanging ideas and views with them, and it strikes me that I have not equipped myself enough to prepare myself and my students to embrace the challenges in teaching and learning in the 21st century! I signed myself up to further my study at Taylor’s Uni, taking up Masters in Teaching and Learning after I attended TeachMeet. I realised one thing - learning should not stop no matter at which level of life you are and TeachMeet just gave me that wakeup call! Thank you so much to Ian for extending the invite to us, and certainly it changes my life as an educator :)

Ireland

Stephen Howell

First TeachMeet :: TM CESI, Dublin, 2009

The form is not large enough to contain my positive comments and the impact TeachMeets have had on me and my career!

Australia

Steve Box

First TeachMeet :: Brisbane, 2013

I met many people through this medium. We connected over a common recognition of the power of passionate storytelling and the contagious nature of this passion through sharing and connecting. It didn't matter what was being shared as much as that it was being shared.
Ireland  
Susan Nic Réamoinn

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Froebel, Maynooth, 2015

Bianca Ní Ghrógáin (RIP) convinced me to present at my first TeachMeet. It was such a great experience and I met such amazing people that I went along to a few more. The opportunity came up to help Bianca and Mags Amond organize the Froebel TeachMeet and it was a wonderful experience. Hearing the trainee teachers' inspirational stories from their School Placement was great. Teachers are so passionate about their practice and put such effort into their teaching, TeachMeet gives them the opportunity to share their work in a comfortable and fun environment. I organized a KidsMeet in our school in 2016 and it was a huge success. Instead of hearing Teachers and their practice the children from 5th and 6th shared their interests with each other in a TeachMeet dynamic. They were all so enthusiastic and it had such a positive impact on our school community. TeachMeet has really shaped my teaching in the last few years and teaching CPD has really changed since TeachMeet's increase in popularity in the last few years.

UK  
Sway Grantham

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeet Coventry 2010

I was doing my PGCE at the time and it was a very small gathering at the University. It was the first time I had seen teachers sharing the thing that went on in their classrooms beyond the more formal ‘teaching lectures' and there were so many ideas to be gained. This was where I first heard about the professional network at my fingertips through Twitter and saw a headteacher taking us on a tour of her school through photos. There was no difference in the learning and sharing of different levels of management and no one minded that we were 'only trainees’ which was frequently the case at that time. Overall, I left feeling welcome and accepted rather than one of those people who takes their job too seriously and needs to know when to stop. I found out that there were other teachers who wanted to know more, do more and generally continue learning to create exciting learning experiences for their classes.
I suppose I am a TeachMeet newbie because I only attended my first TeachMeet eighteen months ago! I organised it myself and I’m just going to come right out and say it- it was pretty darn good. Lots of sharing practice. Lots of good cakes. Almost everyone there was at a TeachMeet for the very first time and what fun we had! We left lighter (in spirit at least, I did mention the good cakes). We felt inspired, enthusiasm for teaching and learning kindled through listening to each other. That event made me realise how important TeachMeets are and how essential it is that as teachers, we carve out spaces for ourselves to reflect and share what we do. To connect and talk about what goes on in our classrooms. Teaching can be a lonely business, after all.

But why did I organise a TeachMeet in the first place? Well, it’s got a bit to do with the very brilliant pedagoo.org and a lot to do with Twitter. I had reached a point in my career where I was reasonably sure of what I was doing (most of the time). I had my own set way of doing things. And I started to realise that I had my own set way of doing things. I began to spot my auto-pilot light coming on during lessons and it made me feel very sad. I didn’t want to stop learning. I had spent my whole career climbing, exploring, slipping up, climbing again as I learned how to teach and now here I was, sitting on a great big, boring plateau. I didn’t know how to get past it, and I felt like I was the only one there.

I found #PedagooFriday by accident on Twitter and all of that changed. Look at all the other teachers! Doing amazing stuff! That little powerhouse of a hashtag was like a breath of fresh air. It helped me make use of Twitter properly and I began to develop a professional learning network that has become a constant source of joy, inspiration and challenge.

Because when teachers share what they do, magic happens. Sometimes it’s big magic that grabs you and throws you off a plateau. Sometimes it’s lots of tiny small sparks of magic- ‘Ooh, I’m going to try that’ magic ‘I never thought of it that way’ magic or even just ‘I’m going to Google that when I get home’ magic. TeachMeets are magic in a bottle. They are inspiring and fun, and they bring the joy out in teachers. Because teachers light up from the inside when they talk about what they do. So now I organise TeachMeets. A whole bunch of them. You can organise your own, too. Buy some cakes, gather up some teachers and just start talking. Talk until you get past the moans and groans and get onto the good stuff. What went well, what’s exciting your class, what you really want to try but aren’t sure how to get started. Or talk about what makes you angry, what’s frustrating you and what you are planning to do about it. Just talk and I promise you, the magic will happen. Thank you TeachMeet- I am climbing again and I am never going to stop.
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

**Malaysia**

Tessa Oakley

First TeachMeet :: Kuala Lumpur, 2012

I remember the mini in-house TeachMeet we did - the Principal morphed Henry VIII and I thought it was a simply brilliant idea. I also presented at the first TeachMeet in KL. I don't think I did a great job, but I was glad to be there all the same! I saw so many good ideas - from Languages teachers taking their students on virtual tours of far-away cities, to Primary teachers making animation directors of their children behind just one website. It's since inspired me to attend other types of conference. The learning just never stops!

**Malaysia**

Tim Gascoigne

First TeachMeet :: TeachMeetKL, Kuala Lumpur 2014

TeachMeet is a great way to connect with other educators who are like minded. I loved the ideas and connections that were made and was able to instantly bring something back to my classroom.

**England**

Tim Head

First TeachMeet :: TM Branston, Lincoln, nd

After lurking and reading twitter conversations I decided to jump in. I met some great people online and they convinced me to attend a teachmeet and stop being such a hermit. At the teachmeet I was most inspired by Jill Berry, a lovely lady and so knowledgeable. It was at TMBETT16 that I decided to finally stand up and speak. When the fruit machine picked my name, I didn't know whether to run and hide to stand up and be counted. Thankfully I opted for the latter. I had to wing it a bit as my slides wouldn't work on the computer. It's all a bit of a blur and I don't remember much about what I said. On the night I listened to some truly excellent educators. I was touched by Natalie Scott's presentation about her school for refugees in Dunkirk, I laughed with Stephen Lockyer as he attempted to log in his account, and witnessed Drew Buddie in an Ironman costume. What can I say, other than I can't wait for the next one? Thank you to all who thought up the idea of TeachMeet!
References

1. *Ten years on from the very first unconference for educators: TeachMeet is 10*. Ewan McIntosh. 2016.
edu.blogs.com/edublogs/2016/05/teachmeet-is-10.html
   openspaceworld.org/
eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/16312
   www.researchgate.net/publication/323893768
   web.archive.org/web/20091002215858/http://www.johnconnell.co.uk/blog/?p=2215
   ictevangelist.com/what-is-a-teachmeet-any-more/
   magsamond.com/research/TeachMeet10
How did TeachMeet make an impact in your world?

IPA: Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

IPA is a qualitative sensemaking research method which seeks to interpret the lived experience of individuals. The researcher’s positionality as an insider is acknowledged as important here, as “the phenomenon is hidden within the participants’ accounts until interpreted by the researcher’s own experience”. The IPA research cycle involves iterative reading of reported descriptions, taking notes on content, language and concepts, then clustering and reflecting on emerging themes to write a commentary that Smith et al. refer to as “unfurling of perspectives and meanings (2009, p. 21)".

TeachMeet10 by TeachMeet Collective is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.