

## SIGIR 2017 Chairs' Welcome

Welcome to the 40th Annual International ACM SIGIR Conference on Research and Development in Information Retrieval (SIGIR 2017). SIGIR is the premier scientific conference in the broad area of information retrieval. We received a high-quality set of full-paper submissions to consider for inclusion in the conference program. We thank the 66 Senior Program Committee (SPC) members, 216 Program Committee (PC) members, and at least 70 additional reviewers for their contributions to paper selection. This pool of committed SIGIR volunteers was based in 33 countries and over 170 institutions, spanning academia, industry, and beyond. We recognized 8 SPC members and 29 PC members / additional reviewers whose contributions to the review process were outstanding.

We reviewed 362 papers for the full paper track, and accepted 78, for an acceptance rate of 22%. In total, there were 1056 authors from 42 countries: 299 from China, 232 from the United States, and 525 from the rest of the world. The countries (with at least 10 submissions) with the highest acceptance rates were the United Kingdom (42%), Italy (42%), Singapore (38%), Australia (27%), and the United States (24%). The most popular call-for-papers topics for accepted papers were ranking algorithms (19%), text representation (17%), behavioral analysis (15%), recommender systems (14%), and user studies (14%).

We made several modifications to the paper submission and review process for SIGIR 2017. We transitioned to EasyChair, one of three conference submission applications supported by ACM. We significantly updated the call for papers to broaden the range of topics considered in scope for the conference, and more accurately reflect current research trends. To boost diversity, we increased the number of women SPC members (24% this year, up from 15% last year) and increased the number of SPC members based in Asia (23% this year, up from 8% last year). To help improve review quality, we also required that PC members have at least one full paper at SIGIR and be active at the SIGIR conference in the past five years (some limited exceptions were permitted). The largest change was a modification to the role of the secondary SPC, with the goal of better utilizing their expertise and making better decisions for borderline papers. Each paper had a primary SPC member, who was responsible for writing the meta-review and making a recommendation regarding the paper's disposition. If they believed it was necessary, the primary SPC could request an additional review from a secondary SPC member, who did not see the other reviews or the discussion to date. Once they submitted the additional review, the secondary SPC member could see the other reviews and participate in the discussion. The additional SPC review informed discussion and helped the primary SPC make a recommendation. Overall, secondary SPC reviews were provided for 20% of full papers.

We ran an in-person SPC meeting at Microsoft in Redmond, WA. To allow more SPC members to take part, we enabled remote participation via video conference. Approximately half of the SPC participated, either in person or

remotely. SPC members were asked to submit their full-paper recommendations prior to the meeting. During the meeting, we discussed papers flagged by SPCs as requiring discussion, as well as papers with “accept” and “reject” recommendations. Some of the papers marked as “reject” by SPC members before the meeting had strong support from at least one PC member. A subset of those full papers ended up being included in the conference program after a detailed discussion.

The short paper track received a record number of 398 submissions and accepted 121 (30%) of them. The track was chaired by Hui Fang, Mounia Lalmas and Yiqun Liu.

The demo paper track received 36 submissions and accepted 17 (47%) of them. The track was chaired by Gareth Jones and Takehiro Yamamoto.

The SIGIR Symposium on IR in Practice (SIRIP 2017) had seven invited talks and five accepted regular papers. The track was chaired by Sumio Fujita and Vanessa Murdock.

The doctoral consortium track received 14 submissions of which 9 (64%) were accepted. The track was chaired by Makoto P. Kato and Kira Radinsky.

The tutorial track received 14 proposals of which 8 (57%) were accepted. The track was chaired by Fernando Diaz and Adam Jatowt.

The workshop track received 12 proposals of which 8 (67%) were accepted. The track was chaired by Jaap Kamps and Grace Hui Yang.

We thank the above track chairs, their program committee members and reviewers for their hard work—including a small group of SIRIP PC members whom we have chosen not to disclose, as doing so would break the single blind review.

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