SIGIR 2015 Workshop Program Overview

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Abstract

SIGIR workshops provide a platform for presenting novel ideas in a less formal and more focused way than the main conference. The SIGIR Workshop Program is a venue where discussion, collaboration and the sharing of ideas can take place. This paper provides an overview of the SIGIR 2015 workshop program. Papers describing details of the individual workshops written by workshop organizers are also included in this issue of the Forum.

SIGIR Workshops have spanned a range of topics over the years and this year was no exception. The program contained a mix of new workshops, as well as follow-ups from successful past workshops. Organizers were from academia, industry and government and a range of geographic locations. The titles, organizers and URLs of the workshops are presented below in Table 1. Workshops are described in more detail by organizers in the pages that follow this overview.

This year's workshops included new explorations of established topics such as temporal information retrieval, personalization, and question answering. The Workshop on Temporal, Social and Spatially-aware Information Access (#TAIA2015), now in its fourth year at SIGIR, explored the relationship between temporal information access and other data sources. Similarly, the Workshop on Social Personalization & Search (SPS2015) studied opportunities for improved personalization provided by social data. The Web Question Answering Workshop focused on next generation QA systems beyond those that respond to simple factoid questions.

In addition to these familiar topics, several workshops investigated entirely new subareas of information retrieval. The Workshop on Reproducibility, Inexplicability, and Generalizability of Results (RIGOR) focused on testing the robustness of existing results in information retrieval. The Workshop on Privacy-Preserving Information Retrieval, is in its second year, drew together researchers from the privacy and retrieval communities to improve the sensitivity of information retrieval research to user privacy concerns. The Graph Search Workshop studied information retrieval in highly structured information spaces, bringing some of the research topics from industry into a public academic venue. Last but not least, the Workshop on Neuro-Physiological Methods in Information Retrieval Research investigated topics on the novel use of physiological data for information retrieval.

Table 1. SIGIR 2015 Workshop Program

Graph Search and Beyond
Omar Alonso, Marti Hearst and Jaap Kamps
http://humanities.uva.nl/~kamps/gsb15/

International Workshop on Social Personalization and Search (SPS2015)
Peter Brusilovsky, Leandro Balby Marinho, Denis Parra, Christoph Trattner and Alejandro Bellogin
http://socialcomputing.ing.puc.cl/sps2015/

Neuro-Physiological Methods in IR Research
Jacek Gwizdka, Joemon Jose, Javed Mostafa and Max Wilson
https://sites.google.com/site/neuroir2015

Privacy-Preserving IR: When Information Retrieval Meets Security and Privacy
Grace Hui Yang and Ian Soboroff
http://privacypreservingir.org

SIGIR 2015 Workshop on Reproducability, Inexplicability and Generalizability of Results (RIGOR)
Jaime Arguello, Fernando Diaz, Jimmy Lin and Andrew Trotman
https://sites.google.com/site/sigirrigor/

Web Question Answering: Beyond Factoids
Eugene Agichtein, David Carmel, Charles Clarke, Praveen Paritosh, Dan Pelleg and Idan Szpektor
http://webqa2015.tumblr.com/

Workshop on Temporal, Social and Spatially-aware Information Access (#TAIA2015)
Klaus Berberich, James Caverlee, Miles Efron, Claudia Hauff, Vanessa Murdock, Milad Shokouhi and Bart Thomee
http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/people/milads/taia2015.aspx

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Following previous years, the workshop proposal deadline was just after the full paper deadline, but notifications went out early (approximately one month before paper notifications) in order to give organizers more time to plan and solicit and evaluate submissions. Our solicitation focused on workshops that would contain ample time for general discussion and engagement by all participants - not just those presenting papers. We encouraged workshop formats that fostered collaboration, discussion, group problem-solving and community building initiatives.

We received 14 workshop proposals, each of which was peer-reviewed by three members of the Workshops PC. Workshop proposals were evaluated along a number of dimensions including relevance to SIGIR, expected audience, timeliness and character (with a favor towards more interactive workshops). After discussing the submissions with Workshops PC members, as well as with the PC Chairs of the technical program, 7 workshops were accepted (50% acceptance rate). We sought to include topics that covered the breadth of expertise in the SIGIR community, would appeal to a diverse range of SIGIR attendees, and would push the state-of-the-art in IR research.

Overall, the SIGIR 2015 Workshop Program was a success. We received many excellent submissions and the workshops that were selected were well-attended and received positive reviews from attendees. We greatly appreciate all authors who submitted a proposal for consideration and all reviewers for their help in selecting which proposals to include in the program. We are also grateful to Microsoft Research for providing workshop fee waivers for thirty-five students. We look forward to receiving your workshop proposal next year and seeing you at a 2016 SIGIR workshop!