ACM SIGIR Annual Business Meeting 2016: Secretary's Notes

Emine Yilmaz
University College London
emine.yilmaz@ucl.ac.uk

1   Opening Matters

The 2016 ACM SIGIR Annual Business Meeting took place on Wednesday July 20, 2016, at the SIGIR 16 Conference in Pisa, Italy. The meeting started at 12:30 and was led by the new chair of SIGIR, Diane Kelly.

As of July 1st, 2016, SIGIR has a new executive committee consisting of Diane Kelly (University of Tennessee) as the chair, Jaap Kamps (University of Amsterdam) as the vice chair, Emine Yilmaz (University College London) as the secretary, Ben Carterette (University of Delaware) as the treasurer and Charles Clarke (University of Waterloo) as the past chair. The program started with the introduction of the new members of the executive committee. Diane explained the role of the executive committee, which involves ensuring continued high quality and reputation of SIGIR and its sponsored conferences, meeting the needs of SIGIRs members, as well as ensuring the financial stability of SIGIR and high visibility of presence within ACM.

Apart from the executive committee, volunteers play an important role in running SIGIR. Diane introduced and thanked the volunteers for 2014-2015. The volunteers for this period were Krisztian Balog (Information Director), Guido Zuccon (Social Media Director), Jaime Arguello (Student Travel Awards Chair), Craig Macdonald (June Forum editor), Ben Carterette (December Forum editor), Claudia Hauff (IR-List editor), Fernando Diaz (previous Awards Chair), and Falk Scholer (new Awards Chair).

Diane introduced a new volunteer position, the Student Affairs chair, whose focus will be outreach to student, to arrange activities for students and increase the involvement of students. Laura Dietz has been appointed as the first Student Affairs chair due to the related work she has already done in previous SIGIRs. SIGIR will also be appointing a Student Liaison to SIGIR and is accepting volunteers for the position.

The meeting continued with a description of the services and benefits obtained being a SIGIR member, such as access to the SIGIR forum, reduced conference registration fees, access to the ACM Digital Library, access to the SIG-IRList electronic newsletter, organization of special events and student support.

2   SIGIR Sponsorships

Diane further discussed the current financial status of SIGIR and described the plans for student support. In 2016, there have been two specific SIGIR 2016 grants for students from developing countries (Donald B. Crouch Travel Grant) and students from under-represented groups (Google Travel Grants). Support has also been provided to students presenting at other SIGIR associated events, such as ICTIR, CIKM, WSDM, CHIIR and JCDL. SIGIR also provides support for ACMW, whose goal is to support the participation of women in Computer Science. In 2015-2016, 4 students were funded via the Crouch Travel Grant to attend SIGIR 2016 and 87 students were funded by SIGIR to attend SIGIR 2016, out of which 3 students were funded through ACMW. Students funded via SIGIR in associated conferences involve 21 students for JCDL 2016, 19 students for CHIIR 2016, 35 students for WSDM 2016, 90 students for WSDM 2015, and 15 students for ICTIR 2015.

The discussion continued with the Friends of SIGIR program, through which SIGIR provides up to $5,000 to support student travel and keynote speaker(s) for conferences considered as friends of SIGIR. Applications for this program are managed by the SIGIR Treasurer and are accepted four times per year. Current friends include ADCS, AIRS, CLEF, FIRE, IR Autumn School and MediaEval. SIGIR provided funding is also used to fund the student lunch, the student party, and the business meeting lunch that happen during the conference.

3   RIAO Proceedings and the IR Museum

Thanks to Greg Grefenstette and Christian Fluhr, the full set of RIAO proceedings are currently being scanned and will appear in the ACM Digital Library. Diane further described the IR museum[1], whose goal is to make publications otherwise difficult to find accessible by the community. For the museum, Michael McGill has secured permission for the Salton/McGill 1983 textbook and Keith van Rijsbergen has donated the copies of his Information Technology: Research and Development Journal. Keith has also donated his 1979 book on Information Retrieval to appear at the IR museum.

4   Awards

Diane continued with the awards and described the Test of Time Award, where the SIGIR 2017 Test of Time Award will be selected from the set of full papers presented at SIGIR 2005, 2006, and 2007. The top-five most cited papers (according to the ACM DL) are automatically nominated for the award and other papers can be nominated by sending an email to Falk Scholer, the new Awards Chair of SIGIR. There were also discussions about the awards available at the ACM level, such as ACM Fellow, Athena Awards and the Turing Award and Diane encouraged the senior members of the community to consider applying or nominating people for the awards.

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[1]Available online at the SIGIR Web site http://sigir.org/resources/museum/

5   New Initiatives

Finally, Diane discussed the new initiatives that the executive committee would like to accomplish in the next few years. One of the aims of the committee is to lower the price of conference registration for non-student members by $100. One possibility for this could be by providing the conference organizers some advance payment so that the organizers have some seed funding, which could possibly lead to the reduction in the registration rates requested by the organizers.

Another goal of the committee is to develop and unify communication and feedback strategies across different channels. There are various different venues and channels in which news about SIGIR have been posted during the last few years such as Twitter, Facebook, etc. and we would like to unify all these channels of communication for organized delivery of the news about SIGIR. The committee would also like to have a new logo for SIGIR, create some advertising and recruitment campaigns for SIGIR, and create a mechanism for accessing the SIGIR Forum in an interactive way by enabling log in mechanisms for the end users.

The committee would also like to provide a travel grant program specifically for students from under-represented groups and first-timers.

Another new initiative of the committee will be to better connect SIGIR conferences with the Transactions on Information Systems (TOIS) Journal. Starting next year, authors of accepted TOIS papers will be invited to make short oral presentations at the SIGIR sponsored conference of his/her choice, such as SIGIR, ICTIR and CHIIR.

6   Treasurer's Report

SIGIR treasurer Ben Carterette took over and reported that the SIG's finances are very healthy, with discretionary budget of approximately $1 million, well above the ACM requirement to have enough reserves to cover a SIGIR conference. Ben gave a detailed list of expenses of SIGIR. The primary expenses of SIGIR tends to be grants & awards, publications, travel & meetings, and allocations. SIGIR also uses some of its budget for funding the Friends of SIGIR program and the student lunch and party at SIGIR. Compared to previous years, SIGIR is now spending more on travel awards and less on publications.

Ben described the changes in conference income over time, showing how the income changed over different years for SIGIR, CIKM, JCDL, WSDM, ICTIR and CHIIR. Most SIGIRs, including SIGIR 2015 seem profitable according to the reported values. Ben also described other sources of income outside of conferences for SIGIR. Most of this income comes from the ACM Digital Library, which has been increasing over the different years. Income from membership dues has been going down as the digital library income has been going up. The income obtained from interests has been slightly trending down but seems stable overall. SIGIR also obtains income from the MemberPlus program and subscriptions, and the income obtained from these resources tend to be stable across different years.

In terms of the SIGIR memberships, membership numbers have been more or less stable since 2011. Professional memberships have been going down over different years but other forms of memberships (affiliates and students) have been going up to compensate for that.

In terms of the student travel awards given by SIGIR, this year $250,000 was given as student travel awards which is almost double of what was given in the previous year.

7 Discussion

The business meeting followed with discussions, led by the chair Diane Kelly. There were discussions about increasing the scope of SIGIR, making it attractive to a broader community. There were discussions about adopting a multiple track system for SIGIR to make sure that there are dedicated tracks to areas that are under-represented in the current form.

There were also discussions about the paper length, where some participants argued for switching back to an 8 page limit due to 10 pages being too long, which cause some of the authors to try to fill space with unnecessary experiments. Another participant mentioned that the 10 page limit may be affecting the quality of the reviews, as well as the number of submissions and argued for decreasing the paper length to 8 pages as well.

There were further discussions about the review process, both in terms of possible changes in the review model, as well as in terms of increasing the quality of reviews. Some suggestions included introducing a rebuttal or an appeal procedure for the reviews so that authors have a way of responding to the reviews they got. However, some participants raised concerns about the appeal process due to increased load it would bring to the PC members. Another suggestion was to introduce guidelines for the reviewers in order to increase the quality of reviews and to make sure different reviewers have the same criteria in mind while reviewing papers.

Finally, there were also discussions about open access to publications. People from under developed countries cannot access the current publications and new ways of enabling them access to these publications should be considered in the future.

8 SIGIR Co-sponsored Conferences

Diane presented the SIGIR co-sponsored (JCDL, CIKM, WSDM), and SIGIR sponsored conferences (ICTIR and CHIIR) and gave some statistics about these conferences.

Joint Conference on Digital Libraries JCDL '16 was held in June 19-26, 2016 at the Rutgers Newark Campus. The conference was chaired by Nabil Adam, Lillian Cassell and Yelena Yesha, with Rick Furuta and Michelle Weigle servind as PC Chairs. The conference was attended by 142 attendees and had a gross surplus of $74,660. JCDL '17 will be held in University of Toronto, for which the papers will be due in early January. JCDL 2018 has still been accepting proposals during the time of the business meeting.

Conference on Information and Knowledge Management CIKM '15 was held in Melbourne, Australia with general chairs Alistair Moffat and James Bailey. CIKM '16 will be held in Indianapolis in October 24-26 2016, where the general chairs are Snehasis Mukhopadhyay and ChengXiang Zhai. The rest of the organizing committee for CIKM '16 involves Elisa Bertino, Fabio Crestani, Javed Mostafa, Jie Tang, Luo Si, Xiaofang Zhou as the PC Chairs for the Research Track, and Yi Chang, Yunyao Li, Parikshit Sondhi as the PC Chairs for the Industry Track. CIKM '17 will be held in Singapore. The organizing committee for CIKM '17 involves Marianne Winslett and Ee-Peng Lim as the general chairs, and Ada Fu, Jimeng Sun and Mark Sanderson as the PC Chairs. The steering committee are accepting bids for hosting future CIKM Conferences, and interested people are encouraged to contact Jimi Shanahan. Further information about hosting CIKM can be found at `http://www.cikmconference.org/hosting.html`.

Web Search and Data Mining WSDM '16 was held in San Francisco, USA in February 2016, with Paul Bennett and Vanja Josifovski as the general chairs. WSDM '17 will be held in Cambridge, UK. WSDM '18 will be in Marina del Rey, LA, USA, for which the paper submission deadline is July 30th, 2017. Participants interested in hosting future WSDM conferences should contact Ricardo Baeza-Yates expressing their interests.

9   SIGIR Sponsored Conferences

International Conference on the Theory of Information Retrieval ICTIR '16 is held in University of Delaware, Newark DE, USA on September 13-16, 2016. The organizing committee involves Ben Carterette and Hui Fang as the general chairs, Mounia Lalmas and Jian-Yun Nie as the PC Chairs, and Fernando Diaz and Stefano Mizzaro as the short paper chairs. ICTIR '17 will be held in Amsterdam, with Jaap Kamps, Evangelos Kanoulas and Maarten de Rijke as the general chairs. Other members of the organizing committee involve Emine Yilmaz and Hui Fang as PC Chairs, Christina Lioma and Katja Hofmann as Short Paper Chairs, Grace Hui Yang as the Workshop Chair, Josiane Mothe as the Tutorial Chair, Julia Kiseleva as the Publicity Chair, and Rianne Kaptein as the Sponsorship Chair. ICTIR '18 will be held in Tianjin, China and the committee is currently accepting bids for hosting ICTIR '19, for which interested participants are encouraged to contact Leif Azzopardi.

Conference on Human Information Interaction and Retrieval CHIIR '16 was held in Chapel Hill, NC, USA on March 13-17, 2016. The organizing committee for CHIIR '16 involved Diane Kelly and Rob Capra as the general chairs and Nick Belkin, Jaime Teevan, and Pertti Vakkari as the PC Chairs. CHIIR '17 will be held in Oslo, Norway on 7-11 March 2017 and CHIIR '18 will be held in New Brunswick on March 11-15, 2018. CHIIR '19 will be held in Europe and the committee is currently accepting bids to host the conference, with Nick Belkin as the main point of contact for the bids.

10   TREC 25th Anniversary

The business meeting followed with a special announcement from Ian Soboroff from NIST on the 25th anniversary of the Text REtrieval Conference (TREC). On November 15th during the TREC Conference, there will be a celebration program involving Sue Dumais as the keynote speaker and many participants who have played an important role in running TREC.

11   ACM SIGIR

Next on the agenda was the SIGIR conference itself, or officially called the international *ACM SIGIR conference on Research & Development in Information Retrieval.*

SIGIR '15 Report: SIGIR '15 was held in Santiago, Chile with Ricardo Baeza-Yates as the general chair. 349 people registered for the conference, out of which 342 people attended the conference. The conference reported a surplus of $129,000.

SIGIR '16 Interim Report: SIGIR '16 was held in Pisa, Italy with Raffaele Perego and Fabrizio Sebastiani as the general chairs. SIGIR '16 was attended by 574 people, 470 people registered for tutorials and 324 people registered for workshops. These numbers showed an increase in participation compared to the previous year. Financially, the conference looks healthy with a likely profit.

SIGIR '17 Update: Noriko Kando presented SIGIR '17 to be held August 7-11, 2017 in Tokyo, Japan. Noriko Kando, Tetsuya Sakai, and Hideo Joho will be the general chairs, and Ryen White, Hang Li, and Arjen de Vries will be the program chairs. The conference will be held at the Kelo Plaza Hotel in the heart of Tokyo.

SIGIR '18 Update: Kevyn Collins-Thompson presented SIGIR '18 to be held July 8-13 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The organizing committee of the conference involve Kevyn Collins-Thompson and Qiaozhu Mei as the general chairs and Brian Davison, Emine Yilmaz and Yiqun Liu as the PC Chairs. The conference will be held at the University of Michigan campus.

SIGIR '19 Announcement: Diane took the stage and officially announced the location of SIGIR '19. SIGIR '19 will be held in Paris, France at the new conference center of the new UP6 campus. The general chairs of the conference will be Mathieu Chevalier, Eric Gaussier and Benjamin Piwowarski. Eric Gaussier presented the current plans for SIGIR '19. The exact dates the conference will be held are to be determined.

SIGIR '20 Informal Bids: Diane took the stage, and announced that the SIG-IR is asking for bids for SIGIR 20 to be held in the Asia/Pacific Region. She asked for "informal bids" with formal bids due on September 15, as stipulated on `http://sigir.org/bid.html`. Four informal bids were presented during the business meeting. It is still possible to submit a formal bid even though an informal was not presented during the conference.

The first informal bid was by Jimmy Huang, Yi Chang, Xueqi Cheng to host SIGIR '20 in Xian, China. The bid was presented by Yi Chang. One of the highlights of the bid was the goal of attracting more than 1000 participants to attend SIGIR '20 at Xi'An, and to significantly lower the student registration fee to $250.

The second informal bid was presented by Yiqun Liu, proposing to host SIGIR 20 in Hangzhou, China. The organization team involve several people from Tsinghua University, Renmin University of China, Fudan University, Zhejiang University and Alibaba Incorporation. The organizers also plan to significantly reduce the student registration rate.

The third informal bid presented proposed to host SIGIR 20 in Dubai at the University of Wollongong campus. The bid was presented by Farhad Oroumchian. The proposed general chairs for the conference involve Farhad Oroumchian, together with two other general chairs whose names are yet to be determined.

The final bid of the conference was to host SIGIR 20 in Bali, Indonesia. The proposed chairs for the bid are Tat-seng Chua, Min-Yen Kan and Stephane Bressan.

Most of the participants voted in favour of the Xian bid, which received approximately 70 votes in total. The second favourite bid was the bid to host SIGIR 20 in Bali, with approximately 40 votes. Hangzhou and Dubai bids both received approximately 30 votes each. The final decision on the location will be made by the executive committee after the official bids are received.

12 Conclusion

As sessions were about to start again, Diane Kelly concluded the business meeting with thanks to all attendees.