

From the Chair....

Greetings SIGIR members! It has been a busy six months, so let's get right to it....

SIGIR is Healthy

SIGIR membership increased 6.4% last year, to just over 1,300 members. SIGIR had income of US \$377K and expenses of US \$365K, for a profit of US \$12K during the last fiscal year, and a fund balance of US \$455K. At the SIGIR Business Meeting I reported a small loss for the year, based on ACM estimates. However, when ACM closed the books, income was higher and expenses were lower than estimated. Lucky us!

SIGIR 2004 Was a Success

SIGIR 2004 was the largest European SIGIR conference, with attendance of 381, 58 papers, 8 tutorials, and 10 workshops. We thank General Chair Mark Sanderson, Local Arrangements Chair Peter Willet, and Treasurer Micheline Beaulieu for their hard work. We particularly thank them for having workshops in the Arts Tower, with its paternoster lifts; no trip to Sheffield would be complete without that experience.

We also thank the Program Chairs Kalervo Järvelin, James Allan, and Peter Bruza; Poster Chair Gareth Jones; Workshops Chair Mounia Lalmas; Tutorials Chair Fabio Crestani; Demos Chair Ian Ruthven; Mentoring Chair Doug Oard; and Best Papers Chair John Tait for putting together an excellent technical program. Special thanks goes to David Harper for organizing a very successful Doctoral Consortium.

SIGIR 2008 in Asia

At the SIGIR Business Meeting groups from **Singapore** and the **People's Republic of China** announced that they would bid to host SIGIR 2008. Whichever site is selected, 2008 will be the first Asian SIGIR conference. Be sure to check the next issue of Forum!

In Cooperation Conferences

CIVR 2005 and **CORIA 2005** will both be held "in cooperation" with SIGIR. When a conference is "in cooperation" with SIGIR, SIGIR members get the lowest registration rate. Check the <http://www.sigir.org/> Web site before you register for an IR-related conference. If it is "in cooperation" with SIGIR, be sure to mention your SIGIR membership when you register for the conference.

Preserving Our History

Although IR is a young field, it is already losing its memory. Important early IR papers and reports are becoming increasingly difficult to find. SIGIR is exploring the possibility of collecting and preserving early IR research, in English, and in other languages. We need two types of help: i) ideas about what to save, how to organize it, and how to

preserve it; and ii) volunteers to help with the work. David Lewis is coordinating this effort. Contact him at secretary_sigir@acm.org if you want to get involved.

New SIGIR Conference Policies

The number of submissions to the SIGIR conference has increased dramatically. In response to requests from recent Program Chairs, the SIGIR Executive Committee has adopted the following policies for the SIGIR conference. These take effect for 2005.

- SIGIR will strictly enforce *page-based* length restrictions on papers submitted to the conference. Submitted papers must be in the camera-ready format for the previous year or the current year. If the paper is too long, it will be rejected without review.
- SIGIR policy for many years has been that papers submitted to the SIGIR conference may not be under review elsewhere during the SIGIR review period. Such *duplicate submissions* are rejected automatically. In spite of this policy, duplicate submissions continue to be a problem. Beginning in 2005 the authors of duplicate submissions will not be permitted to submit papers or posters to the SIGIR conference in the following year.
- Individuals may organize only one workshop per SIGIR conference. If someone is included in more than one workshop proposal, neither workshop will be approved.
- Workshop Chairs are expected to attend their workshops. When Chairs do not attend their own workshops, it undermines the credibility of the event.

Executive Committee Terms Extended

A SIG's Executive Committee can request to have its term extended from 2 years to 4 years without holding an election. Most recent SIGIR ECs have exercised this option, in part to save SIGIR the cost of holding an election (about US \$2000), and in part because it seems silly to step down just when the officers have learned their jobs.

This EC asked Past Chair Susan Dumais to lead a discussion at the SIGIR Business Meeting about whether this EC should have its term extended. Sue reported that the vote was strongly in favor of asking the EC to continue. In August we requested to have our terms extended. In September the SIG Governing Board approved our request.

If you disagree with this decision, there is a petition process to force an election. See *Communications of the ACM*, or contact Ginger Ignatoff at ACM (ignatoff@hq.acm.org).

As always, we value your opinion. If you have ideas about how SIGIR can be improved, please let me know by email.

Best wishes for the new year!

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