
From the Chair...

SIGIR has long placed a priority on supporting student attendance at our conferences, struggling to keep student registration fees down to the lowest level that will cover costs. In addition, we are devoting increasing resources to our travel support program, particularly for students presenting their work. Looking back at our 2011 budget, we had allocated \$50,000 for this purpose. Over the past five years, this allocation has increased steadily to \$125,000 for the current fiscal year. And for next fiscal year, we have decided to substantially increase this amount to \$250,000.

Our decision was driven partly by the need to support our new conferences (ICTIR and CHIIR), partly by increases in actual travel costs to conferences spread around the globe, and partly by our desire to attract and retain new people in our research area. At the same time, we are reviewing and revising our policies for allocating travel support across our various sole-sponsored (SIGIR, ICTIR and CHIIR) and co-sponsored conferences (CIKM, JCDL and WSDM). In general, support will be apportioned to these conferences according to the expected student attendance and the nature of SIGIR's sponsorship relationship, with some adjustment for conference location. Students will apply for support directly through SIGIR, with application information available on our website.

To help manage these changes, Jaime Arguello (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) has agreed to take on the new role of Student Travel Award Chair. He will be working with our Treasurer, Diane Kelly, to implement our new travel policy. Welcome and thanks, Jaime!

Elsewhere in this issue, we reprint the first winner of our new Test of Time Award. As announced at SIGIR 2014, the award went to ChengXiang Zhai, William W. Cohen and John Lafferty for their SIGIR 2003 paper "Beyond independent relevance: Methods and evaluation metrics for subtopic retrieval". This paper represents pioneering work on the topic of novelty and diversity in search, and it continues to have substantial influence on research in this area.

The winner of the SIGIR 2015 Test of Time Award will be announced at our main conference in Santiago, Chile in August. Also coming up on our conference calendar, we have JCDL in Knoxville, Tennessee in June. In September, ICTIR 2015 will be held in Northampton, Massachusetts. CIKM heads to Melbourne, Australia in October, and WSDM 2016 will be held in San Francisco in February. In mid-March 2016, our first ACM SIGIR Conference on Human Information Interaction and Retrieval (CHIIR) will be held in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Thinking back to WSDM 2015 in Shanghai and forward to SIGIR 2016 in Pisa, I realize that SIGIR will sponsor conferences on five continents over a period of 18 months. And we would be very happy to receive your bid to hold one of our conferences in Africa, or anywhere else. SIGIR has a policy of rotating its conferences across three general regions of the world (Europe and Africa, Asia, and the Americas). While this policy can create demands on finances and time, we feel that maintaining the international character of our research community is well worth it, and we hope that our support for student travel helps to offset some of the burdens.

As always, please contact me if you have comments or concerns related to SIGIR. I hope to see you at one of our conferences sometime in the near future.

Charles Clarke
Chair of the SIGIR Executive Committee
chair_SIGIR@acm.org