

ACM SIGIR Annual Business Meeting 2020: Secretary's Notes

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1 Opening Matters

The 2020 ACM SIGIR Annual Business Meeting took place virtually on July 29, 2020 and July 30, 2020 to accommodate participants from different time zones. It was led by the chair of the SIGIR Executive Committee (EC), Ben Carterette.

The EC aims for increased transparency: the meeting agenda and minutes of each quarterly meeting are posted online. Regularly, an online form is distributed to the community to elicit questions/comments for the EC. This opportunity is not yet taken up a lot by the community. The form can be found online.¹

2 SIGIR Volunteers

SIGIR would not function without its volunteers. The volunteers are Nattiya Kanhabua & Guido Zuccon & Chirag Shah (Information Co-Directors), Jaime Arguello (Student Travel Awards Chair), Josiane Mothe & Tirthankar Ghosal & Julián Urbano (SIGIR Forum Editors), Hannah Bast & Gianluca Demartini & Ryenn White (SIG Awards Chairs), Andrew Yates & Jiaxin Mao (Student Affairs Chairs), Donna Harman (SIGIR Historian), Barbara Poblete & Hussein Suleman & Suzan Verberne (SIGIR Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Chairs), Jaap Kamps (Conferences Chair), Nicola Ferro & Johanne Trippas (Artifact Review Committee Chairs), Nazli Goharian & Xin Ma & Suzan Verberne (Women in IR).

Note that two of the above chairs are newly created: the *Conferences Chair* and *Artifact Review Committee Chairs*.

We thank the outgoing volunteers Craig Macdonald & Claudia Hauff (outgoing SIGIR Forum Editors), Falk Scholer (outgoing Awards Chair), Laura Dietz and Johanne Trippas (outgoing Student Affairs Chairs).

¹<http://bit.ly/SIGIR-EC-form>

3 Impact of COVID-19

AFIRM 2021 is likely to be canceled; AFIRM 2020 occurred as anticipated on site. WSDM 2020 was held on site but participants from China were not able to attend. CHIIR 2020 was initially canceled and later run as virtual event. JCDL 2020 was initially postponed and later run as virtual event. The 2020 editions of SIGIR, ICTIR and CIKM were run as virtual events.

4 ACM SIGIR Academy

The newly created ACM SIGIR Academy honors and recognizes individuals who have made significant, cumulative contributions to the development of our field. It is led by Ryen White. Each year, a small cohort (3-5 new members) will be elected to the SIGIR Academy. This selection is an official ACM award. Inductees will be celebrated at the SIGIR conference in their year of induction.

To start off the academy, leading researchers in IR have been *auto-inducted* as the class of 2021. The next deadline for nomination is December 31, 2020. A diverse selection committee will pick the inductees. More details on how to nominate someone can be found online.²

5 Official Recognition for SIGIR Members

Irwin King from the Chinese University of Hong Kong has become an *ACM Distinguished Member*. Google's Marc Najork has become an ACM Fellow.

6 DEI Checklist

The DEI chairs have created a DEI checklist for conference organizers to ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive event. This checklist will become part of the SIGIR handbook and distributed to the SIGIR associated steering committees. The June 2020 version of the checklist can be found online.³

7 Future of ICTIR

The ICTIR steering committee has been rebooted. We thank Leif Azzopardi for his work as former steering committee chair. The tentative plan is to run ICTIR 2021 as a mini-conference co-located with SIGIR 2021, with a timeline similar to SIGIR 2021 workshops.

The new ICTIR steering committee is chaired by Tetsuya Sakai and includes the following members: Krisztian Balog, Frank Hopfgartner, Vanessa Murdock, Bruce Croft, Yi Fang, Evangelos Kanoulas, Fiana Raiber, Dawei Song and Keith van Rijsbergen.

²<http://sigir.org/awards/sigir-academy/>

³<https://bit.ly/dei-checklist>

8 SIGIR 2023

At the business meeting the location of SIGIR 2023 was announced. Among the four strong bids, **Taipei, Taiwan July 23 - 27, 2023** was selected.

Bids to host SIGIR 2024 (to be set in the Americas) are now being accepted.

9 Treasurer's Report

SIGIR treasurer Min Zhang presented SIGIR's finances. SIGIR maintains its healthy financial state. Most of its income is generated by conferences and ACM's digital library. In the fiscal year 2019, \$287K were spent on student travel grant awards. SIGIR 2020 was supported with 158 student grants and 50 non-student grants. A total of \$34K were spent on the *Friends of SIGIR* program.

10 Audience Discussion Points

During the last part of the business meeting the floor was opened to the audience. The following list provides a summary of the discussion points that were raised by the audience. Where appropriate, the response of the SIGIR executive committee is included.

- SIGIR's **best paper award process** can be improved by being more consistent and transparent in nature in terms of candidate selection (ensuring that reviewer scores are not the ultimate arbiter), award committee selection and award criteria.
- Events sponsored by our SIG should be required to **adopt diversity best practices**. *Ben Carterette: 'requiring' is a strong word; everyone is a volunteer; we do our best to encourage the adoption of best practices; the conference leader workshop organizers are aware of the importance of this issue.*
- Going forward, SIGIR paper should have *limitations* and *ethical considerations* sections to force authors to think more deeply about their contributions and the consequences of their work.
- Do we have insights into the **economical consequences of open access**? *Ben: not yet, but we will investigate this.*
- We should move towards an **unlimited number of reference pages** at our conferences.
- We should think about updating our **review process** to encourage more high-quality reviews. Are there things we can learn from the NLP community and how they are running their review process?
- The **SIGIR paper deadline** at the end of January inconveniences a lot of authors. Can it be moved? *Ben: this issue is regularly being discussed at the EC level but we are restricted by VISA process times (once conferences move to being onsite again). There is no deadline that will work well for everyone.*

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- It should be clarified better to reviewers what is (not) **in scope** of SIGIR. Reviewers are not consistent, which leads to bad experiences for authors. *Vanessa Murdock (program co-chair of SIGIR 2020): this concern was addressed by a higher acceptance rate (27%) and by the PC chairs pushing back against out of scope reviews; PC chairs are aware of the problem.*
 - The NLP community has strong incentives for **dataset and resource papers** and as a result lots of dataset papers are published. This is not the case for SIGIR. How can we encourage a similar trend at SIGIR?