Report on the SIGIR 2022 Session on Women in IR (WIR)

Nazli Goharian
Georgetown University
USA
nazli@ir.cs.georgetown.edu

Faegheh Hasibi
Radboud University
Netherlands
f.hasibi@cs.ru.nl

Maria Maistro
University of Copenhagen
Denmark
mm@di.ku.dk

Suzan Verberne
Leiden University
Netherlands
s.verberne@liacs.leidenuniv.nl

Abstract

The SIGIR 2022 Women in IR event, organized by SIGIR WIR,[1] took place on July 12 in Madrid, Spain and was attended by close to 100 participants, mostly in-person. This year's theme was **"Women in Leadership Roles"**, motivated by an interest in our community. Four speakers, covering academia, industry, and entrepreneurship were invited, who shared their experiences.

Date: 12 July, 2022.

Website: https://sigir.org/women-in-ir/sigir2022.html.

1 Introduction

The session was opened by Nazli Goharian (SIGIR WIR and the Organizing Committee Chair), by giving an introduction to the topic of this year's (2022) event and introducing the new WIR event organization. She addressed that one of the topics covered in the SIGIR WIR 2020 event [Goharian et al.] was participation of "Women in Leadership Roles," where the statistics have not been favorable, motivating a need for improvement. She explained that in the SIGIR WIR 2021 event [Goharian and Bast], WIR ran a survey in the IR community mainly on gender pay inequity and also asked the community about their interest in having leadership workshops. As the result of positive feedback, the plan for WIR 2022 was set to focus on the topic of women in leadership roles by inviting a set of speakers from academia and industry. Nazli announced that starting 2022, WIR events are governed by an Organizing Committee. Current members were introduced: Maria Maistro (Session Chair), Faegheh Hasibi, and Suzan Verberne. Furthermore an acknowledgment was given to Microsoft Research (MSR) for providing funding for female student and faculty registration.

---

[1] https://sigir.org/women-in-ir/

The session Chair, Maria Maistro, introduced the speakers and ran the session. Each speaker was very well received and followed by the engaging audience and their comments and questions. The speakers representing academic leadership were: Diane Kelly (Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, University of Tennessee) and Gabriella Pasi (Head of Department of Informatics, Systems, and Communication & Vice-Rector for International Relations, University of Milano-Bicocca). To represent industrial leadership, Jaime Teevan (Chief Scientist and Technical Fellow, Microsoft Research) provided her experience and lessons learned. Luz Rello (Founder of Change Dyslexia & Faculty of IE Business School) shared her entrepreneurship motivation, experiences, and lessons learned.

The talks were well received and were targeted not only at female colleagues but the general audience (irrespective of their gender). The covered topics include, but not limited to, the beneficial impact of IR research on leadership roles, the importance of reading books, promoting achievements of one's team in leadership roles, having supportive people around, balancing between family and work, and when needed making informed decisions to sacrifice and compromise in order to achieve career goals. The audience found the talks inspirational, reflected by the positive feedback we received from the in-person audience and also on social media.

References

Nazli Goharian and Hannah Bast. Report on women in ir (wir 2021) at sigir 2021: Community engagement and influence. *SIGIR FORUM, volume = 55, number = 2, pages = 1–3, year = 2021.* URL https://sigir.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/p09.pdf.

Nazli Goharian, Xin Ma, and Suzan Verberne. Women and Disparities in Leadership and Wages. *SIGIR FORUM, volume = 54, number = 2, pages = 1–3, year = 2020.* URL https://sigir.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/p12.pdf.