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ICMI 2024 Chairs' Welcome

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Publication date
2024

Document Version
Final published version

Published in
ICMI Companion '24

Important note
To cite this publication, please use the final published version (if applicable).
Please check the document version above.

ACM
Association for Computing Machinery

Advancing Computing as a Science & Profession

ICMI
Costa Rica
2024

JUANCKRUZ

ICMI'24 Companion

Companion Publication of the
26th International Conference on
Multimodal Interaction

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ICMI 2024 Chairs' Welcome

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the 26th International Conference on Multimodal Interaction (ICMI 2024) in San Jose, Costa Rica. This is the first ICMI held in Latin America. ICMI is the premier international forum for human-centered multimodal interaction and social artificial intelligence (AI). Multimodal human-centered AI includes machine learning and computational techniques, such as representation learning, fusion, data and systems. The study of social interactions includes both human-human and human-machine interactions. A unique aspect of ICMI is its multidisciplinary nature which values both scientific discoveries and technical modeling of human interaction towards positive and societally beneficial applications. We are keen to showcase the recent advances in the field to the community and provide an inclusive forum to develop and exchange new ideas. To this end, a new initiative committee has been established to organize events for newcomers and facilitate inclusion.

ICMI 2024 features a single-track main conference, which includes: keynote speakers, technical full and short papers (including oral and poster presentations), demonstrations, doctoral consortium, late-breaking, special session and blue-sky papers. The conference also features workshops, grand challenges and tutorials. All ICMI 2024 papers, including the main conference and other events, are published by the ACM as part of their series of International Conference Proceedings and Digital Library.

The organization committee initiated a few distinctive features, including the addition of a new initiatives program featuring a "newcomers to ICMI" event as well as a new mentoring program that is held to make the community more inclusive and welcoming. We have also facilitated local childcare for participants traveling with their children.

As this edition marks the first time the conference is hosted in a Latin American country, we wanted to take the opportunity to promote the inclusion of local attendees by using the student volunteer program. All student volunteers were selected from local universities this year.

The theme of this year's ICMI conference is "Equitability and environmental sustainability in multimodal interaction technologies." The focus is on exploring how multimodal systems and multimodal interactive applications can serve as tools to bridge the digital divide, particularly in underserved communities and countries, with a specific emphasis on those in Latin America. In line with this ambition, we also added a panel to this year's program to discuss the challenges that researchers from Latin America face in this field and how the community can address these challenges.

The call for papers attracted submissions from the Americas (54 participants), Asia (33), Australia (2), and Europe (65). A Senior Program Committee supervised the review process together with the Program Chairs. Each paper in the main track was reviewed by at least three reviewers from the Program Committee. The authors had the opportunity to submit a rebuttal, and the Senior Program Committee members initiated discussions following the rebuttals to finalize their recommendations. The review of the submissions to the Late Breaking Results, Doctoral Consortium, Blue Sky, demonstrations, workshops and grand challenges were managed by their corresponding committees.

The final program statistics can be summarized as follows: 154 complete papers were submitted to the Main conference track, of which 59 papers (38% acceptance rate) were accepted. 19 of these papers were presented as oral presentations (12% oral acceptance rate). For the Late Breaking Results track, 14 papers (74%) were accepted from 19 submissions and presented as posters. The Doctoral Consortium track accepted 10 submissions (100%), and the Demonstrations track 9 out of 11 submissions. The Blue Sky Papers track includes papers selected for their innovative vision and potential of opening new research directions for the ICMI community. Three papers (33%) were selected from 9 submissions by a special committee and were awarded prizes sponsored by CCC Computing Community Consortium. The conference's satellite events include 4 workshops, 3 grand challenges and one tutorial.

The conference program features three keynote talks by Heloisa Candello, Yaser Sheikh, and Thalia Wheatley covering different topics of interest, including cognitive science, human factors, embodied and computer vision and graphics. Catherine Pelachaud will also give a keynote address as the recipient of the Sustained Accomplishment Award 2024.

We express our sincere gratitude to various committees for their contributions to the conference: senior program committee and reviewers, who devoted considerable effort in reviewing papers and providing valuable feedback to authors; chairs of all tracks and their associated committees for their selection of high-quality research; publication chairs and our publishing partners Aptara Inc. and ACM SIGCHI; and all people involved in preparing the ICMI conference this year with a special shout-out to the local team led by Laura Cabrera Quirós (Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica) who did a magnificent job in overcoming many unforeseen obstacles.

We also would like to thank our generous sponsors: our Platinum Sponsor, Openstreams.ai; our Silver sponsor Educational Testing Service (ETS) and Electronic Arts (EA), our Bronze Sponsors, Disney Research and Google as well as our Blue Sky Sponsor, CCC Computing Community Consortium and our institutional sponsor Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica. We

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