Preface IR4U2 2024, the 1st Workshop on Information Retrieval for Understudied Users

Pera, Maria Soledad; Cena, Federica; Huibers, Theo; Landoni, Monica; Mauro, Noemi; Murgia, Emiliana

Citation (APA)
Pera, M. S., Cena, F., Huibers, T., Landoni, M., Mauro, N., & Murgia, E. (2025). Preface IR4U2 2024, the 1st Workshop on Information Retrieval for Understudied Users. *CEUR Workshop Proceedings*, *3989*, 78-79.

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

Preface
IR4U2 2024, the 1st Workshop on Information Retrieval for Understudied Users

1. Overview

In this manuscript, we provide a brief overview of the inaugural edition of the IR4U2 workshop at ECIR 2024. For this edition, we intentionally chose an in-person format, which not only allowed for the presentation of accepted contributions but also fostered highly interactive discussions and enabled networking among attendees to build a sense of community.

For IR4U2, we envisioned the following objectives:

- Create a community that brings together multidisciplinary Ph.D. students, academics, and industry practitioners with the goal of enhancing the understanding of the core Information Retrieval technology and its effects on a wide range of understudied users.
- Take an inventory of the various use cases, research projects, ongoing initiatives, and available resources related to Information Retrieval technology.
- Identify open challenges and opportunities for future research directions in the field.
- Outline a general approach to support research efforts that are driven by and aimed at serving specific user groups.

Overall, we accepted two contributions, each peer reviewed by at least two members of the program committee (PC). The presentations of the accepted contributions, along with a keynote address by Michael Ekstrand, sparked lively interactions among attendees and fostered ideas to advance research focused on the topics of the workshop.

As co-organizers of IR4U2, we would like to thank the ECIR 2024 workshop co-chairs for their support in organizing the event. We also want to express our gratitude to all the authors and presenters, as well as the members of the PC who generously shared their time and expertise in providing feedback to the workshop authors.

2. Workshop Details

As we mentioned in our workshop proposal [1], we observed that Information Retrieval research efforts aimed at fostering access to information for people with diverse abilities and needs are quite sporadic. They generally focus on specific groups, such as older adults, young children, adolescents, individuals with mental health disorders, users with autism spectrum disorder, those with intellectual disabilities, or individuals with specific learning needs [e.g. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]. Venues like CHI and UMAP have recognized the impact of technology on these understudied populations. In the case of Information Retrieval, however, more comprehensive research is needed to understand how Information Retrieval technology can and should be designed to better serve all users and what that entails.

To continue to advance the discourse in this area, please refer to the details of the workshop, including the comprehensive Call for Papers and the Overall Program, on the website dedicated to IR4U2: https://ir4u2workshop.wixsite.com/ir4u2.

Additionally, the slides and recording of the keynote address by Michael Ekstrand, Assistant Professor in the Department of Information Science at Drexel University, titled "To Serve Whom and How? Provocations on the Political and Ethical Foundations of Access to Information" are available here: https://md.ekstrandom.net/talks/2024/ir4u2.

Lastly, building on the small-group and general discussions that followed the keynote address and contribution presentation, we outlined the main takeaways and next steps for the Information Retrieval community in a SIGIR Forum report [7].

Declaration on Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used Grammarly for: Grammar and spelling check; along with improving writing style. After using this tool, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the publication's content.

The IR4U2 2024 Organisers

Maria Soledad Pera, TU Delft, The Netherlands
Federica Cena, University of Turin, Turin, Italy
Theo Huibers, University of Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands
Monica Landoni, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Switzerland
Noemi Mauro, University of Turin, Turin, Italy
Emiliana Murgia, Università di Genova, Italy

References

[1] M. S. Pera, F. Cena, T. Huibers, M. Landoni, N. Mauro, E. Murgia, 1st workshop on information retrieval for understudied users (ir4u2), in: European Conference on Information Retrieval, Springer, 2024, pp. 409–414.

[2] B. Xie, N. Charness, K. Fingerman, J. Kaye, M. T. Kim, A. Khurshid, When going digital becomes a necessity: Ensuring older adults' needs for information, services, and social inclusion during covid-19, in: Older Adults and COVID-19, Routledge, 2021, pp. 181–191.

[3] J. H. Danovitch, Growing up with google: How children's understanding and use of internet-based devices relates to cognitive development, Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies 1 (2019) 81–90.

[4] A. Milton, M. S. Pera, Into the unknown: Exploration of search engines' responses to users with depression and anxiety, ACM Transactions on the Web 17 (2023) 1–29.

[5] N. Mauro, L. Ardissono, F. Cena, Personalized recommendation of pois to people with autism, in: Proceedings of the 28th ACM conference on user modeling, adaptation and personalization, 2020, pp. 163–172.

[6] P. Delgado, V. Ávila, I. Fajardo, L. Salmerón, Training young adults with intellectual disability to read critically on the internet, Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities 32 (2019) 666–677.

[7] M. S. Pera, E. Murgia, M. Landoni, F. Cena, N. Mauro, T. Huibers, Report on the 1st workshop on information retrieval for understudied users (ir4u2 2024) at ecir 2024, in: ACM SIGIR Forum, volume 58, ACM New York, NY, USA, 2024, pp. 1–5.