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Preface

The 48th European Conference on Information Retrieval (ECIR 2026) was held in Delft, The Netherlands, from 29 March to 2 April 2026, bringing together researchers and practitioners from Europe and around the world.

These proceedings contain the papers presented at ECIR 2026, including contributions from the main conference, findings, demonstrations, reproducibility, resource, and IR4Good tracks, as well as the doctoral consortium, workshops, tutorials, and other satellite events. The ECIR 2026 program showcased a broad spectrum of novel and impactful research, reflecting both the maturity of the information retrieval field and its rapid evolution in response to new methodological and societal challenges.

Alongside established ECIR tracks, the 2026 edition continued to support venues that encourage diversity in contribution types and research perspectives. The Findings track provided an outlet for solid and well-executed work that could not be accommodated in the main track. The IR4Good track highlighted research addressing societal challenges such as fairness, accountability, transparency, privacy, and sustainability in information retrieval systems, often at the intersection of computer science and the social sciences. This year, IR4Good was an integral part of the main conference program.

The ECIR 2026 program comprised papers across multiple tracks, reflecting the breadth and diversity of contemporary information retrieval research. From 530 submissions sent for review, the final program comprised 46 full papers, 10 findings papers, 9 reproducibility papers, 17 resource papers, 19 IR4Good papers, as well as 37 short papers, 13 demonstration papers, 14 doctoral consortium papers, 10 industry track papers, 16 invited CLEF papers, and 7 invited FDIA papers. In addition, one session in the program was devoted to papers published in the first two issues of the Information Retrieval Research Journal (IRRJ)¹. This initiative reflects ECIR's ongoing effort to strengthen the connection between archival journal research and the conference community.

In the research tracks, submissions were peer-reviewed by at least three members of the international Program Committee to ensure that only work of high relevance and quality was included in the conference. The review process was double-blind. Acceptance decisions were informed by detailed reviewer discussions coordinated by Senior Program Committee members.

The accepted papers cover the state of the art in information retrieval and related areas, including user-centric IR, retrieval models and systems, learning and optimization methods, evaluation, recommender systems, retrieval-augmented generation, and emerging challenges at the intersection of IR, AI, and society. As in previous years, ECIR 2026 featured a strong presence of student-led work, alongside contributions from academia, research institutes, and industry.

In addition to the technical papers, the ECIR 2026 program included three keynote talks, seven tutorials, eleven workshops, a doctoral consortium, and an industry day. Keynote speakers included Katja Hofmann (Microsoft Research Cambridge) and

¹ <https://irj.org/>.

Madeleine I. G. Daepf (Public Democracy America and Microsoft Research), as well as the Keith van Rijsbergen Award winner.

The tutorials covered a broad range of topics, including ranking models, conversational search with large language models and agents, reasoning for IR and IR for reasoning, practical in-memory inverted indexes, mechanistic interpretability, neural lexical search with learned sparse retrieval, uncertainty quantification for large language models, and economic perspectives on fairness in information retrieval.

The workshops brought together participants to discuss a diverse set of themes, including narrative extraction from texts (Text2Story 2026), Search Futures, geographic information extraction (GeoExT 2026), information access in uncertainty scenarios (INFUSE), information retrieval for accountability and integrity (IRAI), scholarly information access (SCOLIA 2026), credible information retrieval to reduce online misinformation (ROMCIR 2026), open web search (WOWS), late interaction and multi-vector retrieval (LIR), Conversational Search for Complex Information Needs, and Synthetic Data and Simulation Synergy for Information Retrieval, covering both foundational and emerging challenges in the field.

The success of ECIR 2026 would not have been possible without the dedication and effort of a large team of volunteers and reviewers. We wish to thank all reviewers and meta-reviewers for their careful evaluations and constructive feedback, which were essential in ensuring the high quality of the conference program. We are also grateful to the many chairs who contributed to the organisation of ECIR 2026, including the reproducibility track chairs Andrew Yates and Venkatesh V.; the IR4Good track chairs Bhaskar Mitra and Maria Heuss; the resource track chairs Petra Galuščáková and Panagiotis Eustratiadis; the demonstration track chairs Yue Feng and Sandipan Sikdar; the industry day chairs Benjamin Piwowarski and Vinay Setty; the doctoral consortium chairs Aldo Lipani and Julian Urbano; the CLEF Labs chairs Julia Maria Struß and Sean MacAvaney; the workshop chairs Negar Arabzadeh and Franco Maria Nardini; the tutorial chairs Faegheh Hasibi and Manish Gupta; the Collab-a-thon chairs Maik Fröbe, Jan Heinrich Merker, and Harry Scells; the best paper awards committee chair Craig Macdonald; the sponsorship chairs Ujwal Gadiraju and Edgar Meij; the proceedings chairs Alisa Rieger and Johannes Kiesel; the local organisation chairs Masoud Mansoury and Nan Bai; and the publicity chairs Yifei Yuan and David Graus.

We would also like to thank all student volunteers, whose commitment and hard work were instrumental in ensuring a smooth, welcoming, and memorable experience for all participants and attendees. We further acknowledge the support of our sponsors and partners, whose contributions helped make the conference possible.