

Preface from NTCIR-11 General Chairs

Welcome to the Eleventh NTCIR Conference (NTCIR-11 Conference) and the 6th International Workshop on Evaluating Information Access (EVIA 2014).

The NTCIR is a series of evaluation workshops designed to enhance research on information access technologies, including information retrieval, cross-language information access, question-answering, information extraction, text mining, etc., with East Asian languages such as Chinese, Korean, and Japanese as well as English. Emphasis has been placed on East Asian languages, but it has attracted international participation outside. Each NTCIR is an ongoing process that takes place over the course of 18 months.

NTCIR-11 plays host to the tasks listed below. The activities of each task are coordinated by forty volunteer task organizers combined with central coordination by the program co-chairs Hideo Joho and Kazuaki Kishida. Hundred and twelve research groups from 23 different countries/regions registered for one or more tasks and have conducted experiments using the common data sets and experimental designs set for each so that participants can compare the effectiveness of the results and learn from each other. Eighty-one groups from 20 different countries/regions submitted the results for one or more tasks and have conducted experiments.

[Core Tasks]

- Search Intent and Task Mining “Imine”
- Mathematical Information Access “Math-2”
- Medical Natural Language Processing “MedNLP-2”
- Mobile Information Access “MobileClick”
- Recognizing Inference in TEXT and Validation “RITE-VAL”
- Spoken Query and Spoken Document Retrieval “SpokenQuery&Doc”

[Pilot Tasks]

- QA Lab for Entrance Exam “QALab”
- Temporal Information Access “Temporalia”
- Cooking Recipe Search “RecipeSearch”

EVIA 2014, which was organized by two co-chairs, Ruihua Song and Stefano Mizzaro, is a refereed workshop that welcomes submissions from both NTCIR-11 task participants and individuals not involved in the tasks. This workshop enlarges the NTCIR community, and we expect it to provide a wider forum to discuss related topics and research leading to future NTCIR tasks as well as future information access technology research.

The Conference of the NTCIR-11 and EVIA 2014 are organized by the NTCIR-11 Organizing Committee and the National Institute of Informatics (NII). We are extremely grateful to the sponsors, which are listed in the conference program and Website. Their generous support has enabled us to help promising young researchers and students to travel to the Conference.

We also thank the following organizations and people for their understanding of the project and for providing substantial support in various forms: Jamie Callan and his team for providing the ClueWeb collection for Imine task, and part of the work done in IMine was supported by a Research Fund FY14-RES-SPONSOR-111 from Microsoft Research Asia; part of the work done in Math-2 partially supported by the Leibniz association under grant SAW-2012-FIZ_KA-2 and JSPS KAKENHI Grant Numbers 2430062, 25245084, and 14J09896; Japan’s National Center for University Admissions and the Todai Robot Projects in NII, for providing examination data and Tokyo Shoseki., Co. and Yamakawa Shuppan. for textbook data used in RITE-VAL and QA-Lab; The Council for Science and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, JAPAN, The Rakuten Data provided by Rakuten, Inc., Yummly Recipe Data v1 for Recipe Search task; Hiroshi Oshima for his substantial work to constructing spontaneous queries and judgments for SpokenQuery and Doc task;

We are grateful for the Program Committees of NTCIR-11 and EVIA 2014, and for the task organizers of the NTCIR-11 and their organizations for the understanding that has enabled them to act as task organizers. In addition, several of the NTCIR-11 task organizers served as the editors of this volume and provided feedback on the papers submitted by the participants. Many of the task participants volunteered to help with the dataset creation, and we appreciate their great contribution to this

Proceedings of the 11th NTCIR Conference, December 9-12, 2014, Tokyo, Japan

community based activity. Last but certainly not least, we would like to thank the many people who worked behind the scenes—especially Mariko Okada and Kazuko Matsuo—for their support throughout the process of the NTCIR-11.

NTCIR-11 continues the structure introduced in NTCIR-10 with multiple general co-chairs and program co-chairs, and with tasks coordinated by task organizers with only seed funding from the central coordination. We are proud to see that such organizational change turned out to be very successful in having such a wide variety of active tasks.

We sincerely hope that each of the participants will enjoy presenting their research results and engaging in discussion with each other at the meeting, and that such an occasion will lead to fruitful collaboration and the enhancement of research.

December 2014

Noriko Kando

*National Institute
of Informatics,
Japan*

Tsuneaki Kato

*The University of
Tokyo, Japan*

Doug Oard

*University of
Maryland, USA*

Tetsuya Sakai

*Waseda University,
Japan*

Mark Sanderson

*RMIT University,
Australia*