

Preface

This volume contains the papers presented at SocInfo 2016, the 8th International Conference on Social Informatics, held during November, 2016, in Bellevue, WA, USA. After the conferences in Warsaw, Poland, in 2009, Laxenburg, Austria, in 2010, Singapore in 2011, Lausanne, Switzerland, in 2012, Kyoto, Japan, in 2013, Barcelona, Spain, in 2014, and Beijing, China in 2015, the International Conference on Social Informatics came to United States for the first time.

SocInfo is an interdisciplinary venue for researchers from diverse fields including computer science, informatics, and the social sciences to share ideas and opinions, and present results from their research at the intersection of social sciences and information sciences. The ultimate goal of social informatics is to facilitate and promote multidisciplinary research that transcends the boundaries between social sciences, computer science, and information sciences, so that researchers can better leverage the power of informatics, computing, and social theories to advance our understanding of society and social phenomena. We envision SocInfo as a venue that attracts open-minded researchers who can cross the disciplinary boundaries and talk to other researchers regardless of their background and training. In doing so, we have invited and selected highly interdisciplinary keynote speakers and papers, which integrate social concepts and theories with large-scale datasets, algorithms, or other concepts and methods of computing.

We were delighted to present a strong technical program, which was a result of the hard work of the authors, reviewers, and conference organizers. We received 120 submissions, an increase from the last SocInfo. From these, 36 papers were accepted as full papers (30.0 %), and 39 were accepted as poster papers (32.5 %). This year, we decoupled the presentation format and the paper format; papers that are accepted as posters are published as is (with the same page limit as the full papers), without enforcing the shorter page limit. We also allowed the authors of accepted papers to opt for a “presentation only” mode with no inclusion in the proceedings: The authors of eight papers chose that option. Finally, a lightning talk option was offered to all authors of papers accepted as posters, to give interested authors the opportunity to present results with a brief oral control initial.

We were also pleased to have Joshua Blumenstock (University of California, Berkeley), Meeyoung Cha (KAIST and Facebook), Tina Eliassi-Rad (Northeastern University), Adam Russell (DARPA), Matthew Salganik (Princeton University), and Hanna Wallach (Microsoft Research and University of Massachusetts Amherst) give exciting keynote talks.

This year we hosted eight satellite workshops, namely, on Data Visualization (SocInfo VIZ: Actionable I From Visualization to Research Narratives); Virality and Memetics; Cultural Analytics; Activity-Based Networks; Social Media for Older Adults (SMOA); Urban Homelessness and Wise Cities; Web, Social Media, and Cellphone Data for Demographic Research; Computational Approaches to Social Modeling (ChASM), and Online Experimentation with Large and Diverse Samples.

We would like to thank all authors and participants for making the conference and the workshops a success. We express our gratitude to the Program Committee members and reviewers for their hard and dedicated work that ensured the highest-quality papers were accepted for presentation. We are extremely grateful to the program co-chairs, Y.Y. Ahn and Emma Spiro, for their tireless efforts in putting together a high-quality program and for directing the activity of the Program Committee. We owe special thanks to Nathan Hodas, our local co-chair, who had a vital role in all the stages of the organization. We thank our publicity chairs, Munmun De Choudhury and Brian Keegan, our Web chair Farshad Kooti, and workshop chairs, Tim Weninger and Emilio Zagheni. Also, last but not least we are grateful to Adam Wierzbicki for his continuous support.

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