

COSIT'07



International Conference on Spatial Information Theory
Mount Eliza, VIC, Australia; September 19-23 2007

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Last year's COSIT, part of a conference series running (depending on who you ask) since 1992 or 1993, was held at the beautifully located Melbourne Business School at Mount Eliza, Victoria in September 2007. Official counting lists this conference as the 8th in line. It has been the first time that COSIT has taken place outside Europe and the USA. Still, with over 100 participants from all over the world it has also been one of the largest COSIT conferences.

Themenübersicht

Spatial information theory explores the foundations of space and time. Accordingly, the list of topics covered on COSIT conferences is quite diverse with researchers from areas of Geographic Information Science, Computer Science (especially AI), Psychology, Philosophy, and Architecture (this list is not exhaustive) meeting there. "Classical" topics that have also been represented on this COSIT include (qualitative) spatial reasoning, navigation (both from an empirical and computational perspective), cultural studies, and ontologies (again, this is not exhaustive). 28 papers out of a total of 102 submissions have been selected for presentation in single track sessions.

The conference started with a workshop day, having four workshops on such different topics such as spatial cognition in architecture, semantic similarity measurement, distributed geoinformatics, and social space and geographic space. Already on that day, the Business School was buzzing with activity.

Main Conference

On the next morning, Stephan Winter (who organized the conference jointly with Matt Duckham, Lars Kulik, and Benjamin Kuipers) opened the conference. Each morning started with a keynote speech given by Deborah McGuinness, Mandyam Srinivasan, and Kim Marriott, respectively. The three sessions on the first day were followed by a poster session. 25 posters have been presented after a (traditional) rush of "minutes of madness" where every poster presenter had one minute to promote their poster. And Lars Kulik did a great job of keeping people from talking any longer than that minute. The poster session has been a lively, stimulating event that led to discussions reaching well beyond the session itself.

On day two, after two morning sessions of talks, we headed off to an excursion at a local vinyard. The wine has been very nice and tasty and its presentation entertaining, but regrettably there has been quite some rain so there has not been much of a chance to explore nature in the surroundings. At least, some parrots showed up to demonstrate Australia's exotic nature. Day three then had another three sessions of presentations.

After the last session on day three, best paper and poster award have been awarded. The best paper award has been determined by the participants voting on a pre-selection of papers. Best paper award has gone to Alexander Klippel (PennState U) and Dan Montello (UCSB) for their work on "Linguistic and Nonlinguistic Turn Direction Con-

cepts." The best poster award has gone to Falko Schmid (U Bremen) for his work on "Extracting, Representing, and Communicating Previous Spatial Knowledge for Personalized Wayfinding Assistance." Then, the official conference has been closed with "famous last words" and an (also traditional) announcement of several events taking place this year.

Doctoral Mentoring and Future

Traditionally, after the main program days, the very last day of COSIT is doctoral colloquium day. 23 PhD candidates seeking feedback presented their work to a mixed audience of junior and senior researchers. The large number of presenters illustrates that the topics addressed at COSIT are well established in research; drawing a sufficient crowd for COSIT'09 (and ,11, and ,13...) shouldn't be any problem.

All in all, COSIT'07 has been a very well organized, stimulating conference in a lovely setting directly at the beach of Port Philip Bay. Don't miss COSIT'09 in another lovely setting: Aber Wrac'h, Brittany, France!

Contact

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