SIG Governing Board Meeting

November 3, 2023

In-person Attendees:

Adrienne Decker	Michelle Trim	
Alison Clear	Mona Kasra	
Brendan Lucier	Mor Harchol-Balter	
Christine Harvey	Neha Kumar	
Ding Yuan	Pat Ryan	
Dongmei (May) Wang	Ray Trygstad	
Donna Cappo	Sam Zaza	
Jeanna Matthews	Sanmay Das	
Jeffrey Foster	Scott Delman	
Jeffrey Jortner	Tal Rabin	
Jens Palsberg	Thomas Zimmermann	
Jingtong Hu	Vanessa Murdock	
John Kim	Vicki Hanson	
Jonathan Aldrich	Vivek Sarkar	
Kim Tracy	Wayne Graves	
Lisa Brown	Yannis Ioannidis	
Matt Huenerfauth	Yingying (Jennifer) Chen	

Virtual Attendees:

Andreas Tolk
Brad Lawrence
Catuscia Palamidessi
Divyakant Agrawal
Eelco Herder
Francis Chicano
Huiling Ding
John Krumm
Matthew Caesar
Matthew England
Reetuparna Das
S Tucker Taft
Wang Wei
Xiaofeng Wang
Xue (Steve) Liu
Zafeirakis Zafeirakopoul

List is not all-inclusive

Agenda:
- President's Update/Q+A
- FCRC Report
- SGB Awards Committee
- ACM Finance Update
- Services Report
- Publications Board Report
- SIGUCCS Term Limits Actions
- Conference Locations

Palsberg welcomed all and introduced members of the EC and ACM HQ staff. He announced three items of excitement: conferences are back to in-person, ACM Open, and increased impact factors for ACM journals. Palsberg opened a round of self-introductions and then set the stage for the President's update.

The President's Update (Ioannidis, ACM President)

Ioannidis briefed all on his tour of ACM's top 10 conferences (DAC, GRAPH, KDD, TAPIA, MM, CCS, SC, TSCSE, CHI, MOD/PODS), based on conference size.

During his term, he has attended 7 out of 10 conferences thus far and will attempt to visit each twice. Additionally, he has attended conferences not listed on the top 10 list (ASSETS, FDG, CSE, TURC, and so on).

Common Conference Issues

During the conference tour, Ioannidis took note of common issues shared across conferences and organized the issues into 8 categories: purpose, sustainability, openness, DEI + A, publication ethics, scientific ethics, foreign visas, and logistics.

Purpose

Currently, open science is directing us away from how papers are placed into one of three options: arxiv (https://arxiv.org/), conferences, or journals. Instead, it points us towards the future where we disseminate papers in arxiv, publish in journals, present videos/posters, and interact at conferences. The purpose of conferences is to interact, publicize, and present.

Sustainability

The pandemic gave us the opportunity to experience virtual conferences, which became hybrid ones, giving us various options; this poses the question of how many of each type should we have to be sustainable? Which parts of the world should we also be looking to hold conferences with sustainability in mind?

Openness

Ioannidis reminded all that ACM will be open access (OA) starting Jan. 2026, with a pilot run on Jan. 1, 2024 via ICPS. He posed questions of worry surrounding OA: what will happen to SIG dollars when OA initiates, can we afford this, and what about people in places that cannot afford OA? He also mentioned the controversial topic of open reviewing, where signed reviews are made public; some conferences are currently experimenting with open reviews.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion + Accessibility (DEI+A)

Ioannidis stated that more diversity is needed in awards and key roles. He posed questions on how do we advance the financially weak and the linguistically weak; how does one help to boost those with great ideas but may not be able to write them well on paper in a non-native language? Additionally, words and expressions matter in papers; thus, how do we properly ask those with a disability if they need help? Furthermore, Ioannidis stated that every conference should have an accessibility budget, with services procured at the ACM-level for better price negotiations. He added that robots as avatars, to assist those who may be disabled, has been a topic of suggestion too.

Publication Ethics

Ioannidis stated that documentation is vital for both historical purposes and problem detection. He suggested an ACM-wide knowledge graph, recording all roles that one has served in and their connections or contacts. He explained the importance of historical documentation to see who is misbehaving and posed questions of how to deal with plagiarism and self-plagiarism in today's

world of Large Language Models (LLMs), how to educate others on ACM policies, as examples are crucial, and if ethics videos as a prerequisite for paper submissions should be considered and enforced.

Scientific Ethics

Ioannidis shared that the ACM Technology Policy Council has initiated movement towards algorithmic accountability and responsibility and is committed to keeping in that direction. He also posed questions on how to create common open platforms and infrastructure to use clean data for auditing and experimentation; additionally, should reproducibility be a prerequisite for acceptance, and what does community education on ethics, scientific beauty, and values mean?

Foreign Visas

With many obstacles surrounding visas, there are some ideas that may help including receiving signatures from both ACM HQ and a local contact who is well known in the community on visa support letters.

Logistics

Ioannidis briefly listed key issues on conference logistics: integrating a reviewing system with the Digital Library (DL), early appearance of accepted papers in the DL, documentation for entering papers in the DL (as many face issues entering metadata for their papers), multiple submission deadlines (a conference-journal fusion), budget predictions, corporate memory (chair's manual), and centralizing sponsorship at the ACM or SIG level.

Common SIG Issues

Several key issues: confusing ACM-SIG-chapter hierarchy, declining membership, members being customers (only joining ACM for discounts), and volunteer burnout. The flow of information between SIGs and chapters creates problems: a chapter may organize events, but the SIG may not be aware. Likewise, information of flow between ACM and SIGs poses problems.

Boards/Councils Highlights (7 permanent bodies)

Ioannidis gave a rundown on the following updates: the DEI Council developed a voluntary demographic questionnaire for those who publish with ACM, the Practitioners Board reinstated meetups, which are essential to those who do not attend conferences, the Publications Board will hold an ACM Open workshop in Singapore this month to inspire participation, the Education Board has a new curriculum CS2023, and the Technology Policy Council is currently influencing AI policies and sent a high representative to attend a meeting on AI, held by the Technology Policy of the White House.

Ioannidis ask the group for questions

SIGACT has determined that hybrid conferences cost a lot of money and aren't worth it because not many people join on-line during talks, it's difficult to ask questions remotely, and it raises the registration fee for those participating in person. A better alternative would be having authors put their talks online beforehand when they agree to present.

Ioannidis: People are still experimenting with hybrid conferences. We don't know what conferences will look like years from now, as hybrid doesn't work for certain cases.

SIGIR has experienced poor hybrid programming, but there still needs to be a way for remote participation for those who can't acquire visas. SIGIR was held in Taipei and 200 researchers from China couldn't get visas. Additionally, SIGIR'22 had no-shows for remote presentations. Has anyone come up with a good solution to make online programming compelling and engaging?

Ioannidis: I'm not currently aware of anyone who has come up with a good solution, as people are still experimenting. We don't know the sweet spot for hybrid conferences yet.

SIGCSE is moving away from hybrid conferences for the reasons just mentioned; instead, we hold two separate conferences, a virtual and in-person one. This helps to address equity concerns for those who can't travel, who can't get visas, or who are from universities that don't allow travel.

SIGCAS and other SIGs are experiencing steep membership declines. Do you have any marketing materials, communication packages, or toolkits that might help to increase membership?

Ioannidis: Yes, there are resources available, and ACM HQ can help. However, the resources on hand may not necessarily be what is currently needed to attract new membership at the ACM or SIG level. All societies are facing membership issues, but we are exploring new marketing tools and ways of reaching prospective members.

SGB: What's the difference between board and council and what's the difference between SIG and SIG chapter?

Ioannidis: Councils get voted in and boards are appointed. Chapters are local communities that are associated with a SIG but participate in local activities. For example, we have SIGCHI, SIGCHI India, and SIGCHI Chicago.

Is the SIG the technical division, while the chapter the geographic one? SIGBio is going to China next year, so is ACM China officially under ACM?

Ioannidis: ACM has 3 regional councils that are not related to a SIG and are broad – ACM Europe, ACM India, and ACM China. It would be beneficial to connect with the ACM China Council if you are going to China.

Regarding membership decline and volunteer burnout, SIGBio leaderhship believes it comes down to value proposition. What is the value proposition for members and volunteers?

Ioannidis: In the past, the value proposition used to be content access, but now that content is free and becoming freer with time, the value proposition is now value; what cannot be done alone can only be done by a big group like ACM. We are evolving and further discovering value proposition.

SIGDOC has talked about dividing the conference among a few weeks to allow smaller groups of presenters and better interaction while promoting better access to those under resourced.

SIGWEB's medium conferences aim to have dedicated parts of the conferences being hybrid, but particularly the workshops and tutorials are experiences that most people don't want to sign up to spend 3, 4 days fully online anymore.

This is also something seen at SIGCHI.

SPATIAL is offering free affiliate membership for all conference attendees. We'll see if this helps our membership numbers in any sustainable way.

SIGEVO allows online attendees with no presentation to register for free if they are ACM or SIGEVO members. This raised the number of SIGEVO members and the number of online attendees.

IEEE provides *Overleaf* freely to members. SIGBED is recommending *Grammarly* for non-native speakers to improve their writing. We could have better negotiation power with ACM support.

Please note: The ACM LaTeX template on Overleaf platform is available to all ACM authors here.

Ioannidis: I know SIGCHI is pioneering this and are offering *Grammarly* and *Overleaf*.

Ioannidis: We saw the impact of ACM's *O'Reilly* Online Learning, and hopefully it will be picked up again. These are great tangible benefits to entice new members.

SIGBED leadership likes the idea of the DEI Committee guiding individual SIGs. Secondly, across interactions with other SIGs, there is interest in AI and there are also some concerns. In SIGBED, many papers have been submitted to top AI conferences instead of our traditional ones because authors think the AI conferences hold more prestige and populate more citations. In addition to SIGAI, maybe we can also have a global ACM AI initiative to bring more benefits and opportunities.

Ioannidis: There are two ACM efforts: the Technology Policy Council and local Technology Policy committees. The US and Europe have issued tech briefs that talk about AI, issues, and principles of algorithmic responsibility, and AI responsibility. There is also an AI initiative within the Pubs Board on journals.

A link was shared (SIG Best Practices.docx - Google Docs) allowing members to share ideas that are working/not working. The current advice in there may not be exactly what you're looking for right now, but the general idea of using this group to band together and figure out problems is helpful. If you are facing a problem, maybe we can ask ACM HQ to pilot an experiment to solve a specific problem. I also encourage members to learn from the previous person in your current position to support continuity of what has already been tried and failed in your own SIG.

Ioannidis: While we have Best Practices sessions, it's also valuable to discuss the worst practices.

SIGDOC has been trying to bring graduate and undergraduate students to our conferences by organizing poster competitions, waiting membership fees for those participating in poster competitions, and providing nice cash awards to winners. We are also discussing spring workshops to train graduate students and early career faculty on LLMs, responsible AI, and other topics of interest to the community to better engage membership. We are interested in cross-SIG workshops or collaborations. To deal with budget constraints, we are working with universities and hosting conferences in college towns for future conferences. How do we cope with the constraints of college towns, where it's more costly to travel?

Lastly, regarding volunteer burnout, how do you get support from department heads for this type of leadership/service role? I've had problems locally.

Ioannidis: Everyone is trying to find the right balance and the right budget, which is a challenge that all conferences face. Serving in a volunteer role is normal to academic and professional life; it helps gain acceptance from the community when it comes to promotions. Maybe letters of appreciation from SIG chairs or the ACM President could be a good way to further validate your role and gain their support.

The key problem with youthification is not the youth, who are research oriented as students, it's after graduation when they go into industry and drop their student membership, or it's people that aren't research oriented, even as students, and don't join altogether because they don't see the benefits. The bulk of the younger generation in the community feel this way, so it's a challenge because we need to keep them engaged and involved.

SIGACCESS leadership asked how ACM is handling prospective students thinking about the field of computing who are asking if there will still be many programming and computing jobs coming up? With many AI generative tools, is this a threat to us as a profession? Should professionals come into this field?

Ioannidis: Additionally, the Technology Policy Council will discuss issues surrounding the job market in the age of AI; this is important to talk about and goes way beyond ACM. Links were provided to some of the generative AI statements out of the Technology Policy groups. There have been some comments on the effect on the workforce Ioannidis would be happy to talk to SIG leaders about getting involved in the Technology Policy Council.

[ACM-USTPC GenAI Principles June 2023](#)

[For "Botter" or Worse: Chat GPT, the Universe, and Everything - May 3, 2023 (acm.org)](#)

[REV FINAL Joint AI Statement Update (acm.org)](#)

[Algorithmic Responsibility in the New Machine Age (acm.org)](#)

SIGSIM leadership indicated that the new generation has a very different view on networking, which has been one of the main drivers to join a professional society. They are digital citizens who already have many connections. We should clearly answer the question of what we as ACM can do for them. How can we make this case for them? What can be offered that they cannot get easily somewhere else?

Ioannidis: During my tour of the conferences, I'm talking to people and listening to what they have to say. The younger generation that attends react amazingly to various things I discuss such as open science, sustainable development goals, social responsibility, and justice. Although technology brings them to conferences, what really gets them out of bed when it comes to ACM or a particular SIG, is values. This may be the main attractor for the younger generation; they care about what we do, the impact of what we do, and what they will do and will do in the future.

Per Matthews, there was an article ([After the Complaint: What Should ACM Disclose? | March 2023 | Communications of the ACM)](#) on how important it to clearly communicate the outcome of that and specifically address young people who are asking ACM to do more on this front.

In SGACT, there were three young researchers submit an ethics complaint about an ACM fellow; the ethics committee dealt with it, but the researchers were prohibited from responding and sharing the resolution. What kind of process is that?

Ioannidis: When such a case comes to ACM, at whatever level, depending on the offense, there are separate committees that investigate. If it can be proven with evidence, then sanctions are imposed. Revealing names is not allowed because that is confidential; there are ethical and legal consequences when we publicize who did what and what their punishment was. We are working on our disclosure policy to provide anonymized examples of incidents characteristic to what people may face, plus statistics. Disclosure and educating the community on good and bad behaviors are items we are working on to prevent more cases. Since we are a global society/community, conceptions of different types of behavior varies across cultures; we need to establish standards common to everyone.

A leader asked if ACM could conduct a survey to discover what stakeholders are in our community, (academia, industry, volunteer leaders, and young professions) and what they want? Additionally, how do we get to know our community? SIGBio has an active volunteer, but their institution does not appreciate them, making it difficult to keep them engaged. ACM should contribute efforts to increase a sense of belonging and appreciation to their local members.

Ioannidis: ACM conducted in the past, as well as a more recent survey for the DL, surveying the users and their DL needs. These results can help reveal our community and what it needs. Regarding volunteer appreciation, we could do more and seek more tangible appreciations, but these can also look and have different meaning differently across cultures.

A leader asked if someone committed a misconduct, how do SIG or conference organizers get access to types of information, so that said person won't be invited to serve important roles, like management of paper reveals? If we don't know that information, how do we prevent further damage.

Sometimes misconduct is not just local to one conference, for example there may be double submissions between conferences. How does ACM plan to help conference organizers to coordinate checks? Even in conferences outside of ACM, we have had these kinds of incidents occur in the past, so I wonder how ACM plans to help.

Ioannidis: In principle, any editor in chief, associate editor, conference program chair, and so on, should consult with ACM before asking someone to serve in a role, as anyone found guilty of misconduct is kept on record at ACM. However, leaders may not know that they should approach ACM for such a list. I've suggested a knowledge graph; the DL, which mirrors a social network of sorts, advertising peoples' activities, such as publishing, could be expanded to list all roles they've served in too. There also may be discussion of collaboration to be considered with our sister society, IEEE, and maybe AAAI. There are plans to hold strategic meetings on all topics in the early parts of 2024.

A SIG leader asked if the database was currently an interface, is it manual, query, or is there an API that a program/conference chair could use? There could be a few 100k people that we want to check, so how do we check efficiently? I'm worried about scalability issues.

Ioannidis: You can upload a spreadsheet.

Scott Delma, ACM Publications Director, added that there are also many publishing industry initiatives happening. When an author has work retracted in the ACM DL, that data goes into a system called, *Crossmark*, which is operated by the CrossRef Organization, and recently, they've acquired a database called, *Retraction Watch*, an industry-wide database of all retracted articles in scholarly literature that's shared across the board. Additionally, the Scientific Technical and Medical (STM) Organization, which checks red flags such as dual submissions across various publications.

FCRC Report (Sarkar, EC)

What is the Federated Computing Research Conference (FCRC)?

Sarkar briefed leaders on FCRC background, explaining that the conference hosts a spectrum of affiliated research conferences and workshops in a single venue, covering a broad range of computer science research areas. A typical FCRC schedule follows as: Sat-Sun workshops and tutorials, Sunday evening, with the possibility of Turing Lecture, and Monday – Friday conferences are held, which include plenary talks, representing speakers from all areas – registering for one conference enables you to attend talks at other conferences on the same day, so you get the benefit of location. There is a high level of student participation – 46% of attendees in 2023 were students.

FCRC Steering Committee (SC)

FCRC has a smaller SC, given that this event happens every four years. While Sarkar held the SC chair title since 2019, Timothy Pinkston is this year's new SC chair. Other past members included Barbara Ryder, Dean Tullsen, and Rajiv Gupta.

Past FCRC Locations, Chairs, & Conferences

Sarkar showed a list of conferences that have participated throughout FCRC (1993-2023).

SIGs who have participated in FCRC include SIGACT, SIGARCH, SIGBED, SIGecom, SIGENERGY, SIGHPC, SIGMETRICS, SIGOPS, SIGPLAN, and SIGSIM.

Is There a Theme for FCRC?

FCRC is bottom-up, organic, and community driven; participation has been fluid over the years; FCRC can be challenging to plan for its organizers. The next FCRC is planned to be held in June 2027.

FCRC'23 had a post-conference survey which received 282 responses, equaling only 11% of all attendees; the low responses may be a symptom of burnout from continuous online activities. Some survey questions asked were:

- Q1: If ACM FCRC were to be held again, would you attend? Results: yes (78%), no (22%)
- Q5: Did you attend conference sessions outside primary? Results: yes (51%), no (49%)
- Q6: Did you find FCRC to be a useful networking experience outside of your area? Results: yes (68%), no (32%).

Preliminary Discussion with SIG Chairs

Sarkar stated that a preliminary discussion was held on Oct. 27, 2023; the overall sentiment from SIG chairs seemed positive towards FCRC, indicating desire for continuation. However, Sarkar explained the organization and FCRC budget model are at a crossroad and stated the following issues:

- Multiple events registration, plus a FCRC registration fee
- Too much overlap among popular sessions in different conferences
- The large space adds time to walking from one conference to
- Attendees felt that standalone conference experience is better than FCRC experience

Sarkar shared future suggestions from SIG chairs: explore NSF grants to cover FCRC registration fees for students and create a staggered/stacked schedule for conference sessions.

Conclusions

- FCRC has many student attendees (1,200+); ACM and industry partners should connect more deeply with student participants.
- The current FCRC budget model is not sustainable, generating too much uncertainty.
- FCRC costs are increasing and the need for increased contingency funds.
- Some companies are approached by both individual conferences and FCRC, creating further confusion.
- Lack of institutional memory

Sarkar stated that the SIGs need to contribute funds to create a sustainable budget for FCRC to continue.

SIGMETRICS has been with FCRC since the beginning, but we struggle with the organizers, as the general chairs complain that the job is overly complicated, and they don't have control over choices. I'd like to see FCRC continue because I enjoy going to multiple conferences, but I think about how I'll confront nothing but complaints.

Sarkar: Let's put that list of complaints together. FCRC is a great experience for the community, great for attendees but can be painful for the organizers and it doesn't have to be that way.

SGB Awards Committee (Palsberg, EC)

Palsberg explained that the moratorium on awards, placed by the ACM Awards Committee, has been lifted as of today after a year-long clean-up by the new SGB Awards Committee, led by Natalie Enright Jerger and consists of Shan Lu from SIGOPS, David Lo from SIGSOFT, and Minghua Chen from SIGEnergy. Additionally, a new awards template form has been approved, formalizing the awards approval process. The SGB Awards Committee will oversee each process and keep an eye on all awards, ensuring accuracy and public visibility.

Questions

Who keeps track of proposals from the past? Is it the SIG's responsibility or ACM? There was a conference that asked us about a proposal for an award that was approved many years ago and they want to make a change to that, but the conference couldn't find the proposal, and I think ACM doesn't have it either.

Cappo: Contact me post-meeting and I'll research it. with Dave Morris at ACM, who might have it.

How does a SIG go about making a minor change to the name of an award without changing its meaning? Who would we send that proposal to? Will it take long?

Cappo: You would fill out the awards template indicating the modification and send to me. I then send to the SGB Awards Committee, and with their endorsement to the ACM Awards Committee for final approval.

Is there anything in the processes or rules about the new proposal that applies to anything we need to know about the process for our current awards process? Or if we haven't heard from you, are we fine with the way we're working?

Palsberg: I cannot totally speak for Natalie, but my understanding is that you are fine with the current awards. I think the clean-up is declared done, and of course, there might be something we missed and then we'll clean up a little more, but by large, all the current awards are good, and we are now moving on to a new batch.

Cappo: Natlie and her team are going to send messages to each of the SIG chairs because we want to make sure the information, we collected is accurate. You'll be asked to review and

confirm the awards that we have on file for you, and we will let you know if anything needs modification.

Is there somewhere an official listing of what counts as an award and at what level it is to distinguish between conference and SIG awards? What is the policy on naming? We used to administer what were called Student Travel Awards, to directly give money to students to attend conferences, but now we've had to change that process.

Palsberg: If it's an award like a conference paper award that doesn't come with a name, that does not need approval. Or a travel award, like you said, that does not need approval. When an award has a name, or is SIG-wide, then it needs approval.

Let's say the committee decides for a specific award, not to present that award in a given year because no nominations rose to the level of the award, are there best practices or policies to handle that case?

Clear: We've not given awards and just skipped over that year and moved on; we just don't announce the award that year.

How can we find the information about how to submit the proposal and the process for reviewing the award proposal?

Palsberg: Donna sent an email this morning, with a link to the awards template, and you can send the proposal to Donna or Natalie. https://awards.acm.org/guides

Is there a directory for all the current SIG Awards that can easily be found?

Silkett: The ACM website has an awards list for each SIG: https://awards.acm.org/sig-awards

Do we need approval for giving a tangible appreciation for a volunteer in my SIG? They are very involved, so I want them to have something that they can show to their department chair. Additionally, our conference best paper award comes from the conference budget and SIGBio awards from the SIGBio budget, do I need approval for both types of awards? Do I need to submit an application for awards under SIGBio?

Palsberg: You don't need approval for unnamed conference level awards (e.g., best paper award). However, if it's a SIG giving an award, or a conference Test of Time, then yes you need approval. And yes, you need to submit a proposal. You could ask other SIG chairs for their past proposals. It's not a lot of work to establish.

Cappo: Acknowledging volunteers can also be done with certificate of recognition, which doesn't require approval.

We created 4 committees for our 4 awards. Is it expected to place list names of the committee members we've selected? What happens when those on the committee don't want their name publicized on the web?

Palsberg: SIGPLAN plans to put our committee members on the website, this openness and transparency is very important. We want to lean on the side of transparency. And if they want anonymity, they would be given it, as this is no longer a strict requirement.

We've had prior experiences with committee members receiving pressure to give awards to certain people. For one of our awards, we've only made the chair public on the web because the committee members stay on for a 3-year appointment and people may realize this and do a lot of lobbying.

There are positive and negative reasons as to why individuals may not want to be connected to a particular decision, such as someone not getting selected. Would it be more important for transparency to know the relationship of the individual to ACM, rather than their identity? Could the website state that "this award committee is comprised of four active members of the SIG" and leave it at that?

If you see who gets selected and notice that the set of folks from a certain university or a research area, that keep getting awards, it could be evidence of a click, since there is no transparency as to who is being selected. Do you have a diverse group of people helping to select the awards?

If people are limited to one 3-year term, then it makes it harder for cronyism to take place. If you have the problem of folks questioning the integrity of decisions, then your SIG probably has bigger issues than just that one award.

This sounds culturally alarming. If people on committees face so much pressure and lobbying potential retribution, then we've got a problem. You should generally look for people willing to put their name on, as this is a public service function. Maybe we need to look into what is going on.

When we called for candidates to be on these committees, we had the term of reference and one of them was that their name would be on the website, but they forgot to read that part and when it was all over, they find out and later say that they don't want their name listed on the website.

Maybe you could go back to the people who have said this and gather a little more information about what exactly they're concerned about, and bring those concerns forward, in an anonymized way. We could pool that information and understand what's happening here.

Kumar shared a best practices doc, and one of the items is on awards. If you want to share what your SIG is doing with regards to awards, you could do it there:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rd3ABSXfUDK1OPyzJ07rLBcpfHUUjPSWSHK0fjsjkfk/edit#heading=h.kyzj3m2ssgj2

It's implicit in our professional conduct guidelines that you should not be colluding, you should not be advocating for yourself to win an award, you should not be advocating for your papers to be accepted.

ACM Finance Update (James Schembari, Dir. of Finance)

FY'23 Final Year-End Results

Schembari reviewed the year-end results of FY'23, stating that ACM did better than what was budgeted by 9.2M or 12.9%. SIG revenue exceeded the budget by 9.8M, due to conferences coming in better than budgeted, DL distribution, and an increased interest rate applied to fund and award balances.

SIG expenses were 3.9M over budget (increase conference expense), and the SIG overhead met a budget of 4.4M, which includes a contribution to the SIG Overhead Reserve Fund (SORF) of 356K.

SORF

Based on Presidential Task Force recommendation, this year's contribution was 356K. If next year's contribution hits 1.4M, the SORF balance would be 1.7M, paving the way for our FY'27 goal of 2.5M, replenishing SORF to half of the Overhead amount, and being fully funded over a 5-year period.

Questions

Where did the 2.5M goal come from?

Schembari: We did a detailed analysis in FY'21, FY'22, to come up with the overhead amount. We added a 3% cost of living adjustment all the way to FY'23, then we divided that number in half. So next year, there will be a detailed analysis of what the actual amount is, and it will be adjusted if needed. Historically, we've seen that if 3% increases added to the overhead amount, it aligns with the amount that comes out of the detailed analysis.

When you have a negative, it's almost like 30% of your total targeted. How do you address that, any strategies? The 738k?

Schembari: The 738k is the deficit now. The goal is to be totally funded in FY'27 at 2.5M. So the balance at the end of FY'23 is 356K; if everything is spent and the contribution is made in FY'24, the balance will be 1.7M; we still have FY'25, 26 to get to the goal of 2.5M.

Palsberg: There was an ACM council resolution some time ago that said the goal for this reserve fund is to get half of a year's overhead. James projected into the future, and it seems like the overhead will probably be 5M in 2027, so we are trying to go for half of that.

Currently, ACM charges 16% of the expenses. We are not losing money in SIGOPS yet, but we notice warning signs. For example, this year, we see our corporate sponsorships have dropped, so the previous SOSP, two years ago, was 210K, and this year dropped to 100K; it's the same general sponsorship chair, so essentially, they asked the same corporates who said yes 2 years ago, but many said no this time, or reduced the budget. And inflation too, right? We have been seeing that the cost per registration has increased by 25%, compared to 4 years ago, which was

when the last in-person SOSP took place. Specific to our SIG, SOSP is held annually; before it was every 2 years. We were expecting a little drop in attendance, and on the other hand, there is fixed costs, like AV, conference halls that are essentially fixed. What I'm hearing is that ACM is doing well, is there any chance that this overhead can be decreased in the future?

Schembari: You mentioned that ACM charges conferences. ACM charges each of the SIGs and it's up to the SIGs to determine how the overhead is collected or recouped; that 16% is just historically something that each of the SIGs charged for the conference; there are some conferences that don't charge overhead, there are some that charged 10%, some that charged 16%; the 16% is up to SIGs.

Palsberg: The overhead amount was decided a year and a half ago, and we will revisit the overhead amount two years from now, as there will also be a new SGB chair and some new faces.

Is it up to us, the SIGOPS Board, to change the rate? Essentially, we can't change the 16% but can say where it comes from.

Palsberg: The SGB pays overhead based on its expenses; we sum up all the expenses of everything that we have and pay overhead based on that. Inside of the SGB, we have a formula, depending on the expenses of individual SIGs, that calculates what percentage of the expense each must pay. Then inside of the SIG, one can make decisions on how to pay that percentage.

Is there a process where volunteer leaders can list services that are needed and ones that aren't?

SIG leaders can contact Cappo in SIG Services.

SIG Support Analysis (Donna Cappo, Dir. of SIG Services)

What are we doing for the overhead?

Cappo gave a rundown of ACM departments and services. Currently, SIG Services helps to organize 38 SIGs, 175 conferences, 100+ workshops, and 150+ cooperating events, which equals hundreds of volunteer leaders that receive services. The services are categorized into SIG (e.g., bylaw actions, contracts, and invoice payments) and conference-related activities (e.g., site selection, contracts, and desk audits).

Additional ACM departments collaborate with SIG Services, providing services to SIGs and conferences too. The Office of Finance prepares SIG budgets, maintains financial records, arranges and participates in annual audits, adheres to VAT requirements and reimbursements, and liaises with insurance vendors.

The Office of IS maintains activities on the ACM website, listservs, databases, website and domain name ownership, and contracts services, such as Zoom and submission systems.

The Office of Publications leads publication production, develops and administers policies, and oversees ethics and plagiarism issues.

The Office of DL leads permanent hosting and content preservation, DOIs and CrossRef registration, reference linking, citation, statistic tracking, and conference proceeding metadata/production.

The Office of Membership maintains membership data, service and fulfill SIG-related obligations, respond to SIG and conference-related queries, and liaise with chapters.

The Office of Marketing oversees press release and social media activities, promotes through the ACM website and MemberNet, and SIG membership marketing.

The Office of Executive Director and Policy and Administration keeps ACM on strong financial and legal footing, oversees elections, sanctions dataset, liaise with legal counsels, auditing and investment management services, and other organizations, and provides guidance on legal issues, policies and procedures, and trademark filings.

Questions

What is the marketing support?

Cappo: They market the SIGS as part of the SIG marketing efforts. If there is an award that comes up, they'll sometimes do separate marketing.

We are increasingly finding it difficult to find volunteers to host SIGMOD in the US. Given this reality, is it at all feasible for ACM to provide help in event management (even with an external provider)?

ACM doesn't provide management services directly; we have contractors, and we have contractors here in the US and outside of the US. Yes, we can help.

Thank you, Donna, for all that you do. I wish this could be visualized somehow on our ACM website. You mentioned that there are more than 160 contracts, are those all ACM financially sponsored conferences? What about ACM technical sponsored conferences?

ACM will only sign contracts for sponsored or con-sponsored events. Your reference to Technical sponsorship is what we call in-cooperation, that means we have no financial or legal responsibility for them, and we do not sign contracts on behalf of in-cooperation events.

For those in-cooperated events, if they later want to publish within ACM, do we allow this?

Cappo: They can apply through the ICPS program.

They are paying their own fees in doing that? Does your office also provide support for that to know the ACM workflow, the paperwork?

Cappo: Yes, if they apply for cooperation, we will direct them to the ICPS process and documentation.

I'm wondering if there is a way to monitor how SIGs feel about the services that they're receiving and what they could use or how the trajectory has been over time, and compare budget level, etc. There have been staffing shortages, and disruptions, and we feel that at the SIG level, in terms of what we have been able to expect from the office of SIG Services. Maybe a survey each year.

Cappo: We can consider a survey.

I will hear multiple SIGs talking about a service they wish ACM provided but don't, or services they seek outside of ACM. I would like to see a process to incentivize experiments. It would be great for it to be a formal process too.

Cappo: Send us a scope of work, we'll determine how to get you that service. Likely, it would be external to start, and we would monitor it.

Does ACM ever review services the SIGs are seeking outside ACM and which SIGs are seeking it? Maybe we could do a joint contract for services.

Cappo: Yes, we have the Cvent license, HM Marketing services for plaques and certificates, and there is a general Zoom license, and submission systems; we also have discounts on those because of the volume that we have.

It would be nice to have a site or doc to see a list of SIG services or, links, or best practices; it would be good for visibility more year-round than just during our meetings.

Kumar: We've been talking about a Slack workspace. I put the link on Zoom:

https://acmsiggoverni-ckr7965.slack.com/join/shared_invite/zt-26dzrip03-qqpzpLUA33cxtwgVxRGSyQ#/shared-invite/email

This will be great for discussions, not just for chairs, but other EC members as well. We'll see how this experiment goes.

ACM Publications Update (Scott Delman, Dir. of Publications)

Delman planned to review four main points: OA, publication, joint taskforce on workshop publications, and SIG Newsletters.

ACM Open Background

ACM began with a hybrid open access model in 2013, giving authors a choice of OA or not. The transition accelerated in 2018, when ACM collaborated with large universities (Uni. of California, Carnegie Mellon Uni., Uni. of Minnesota, and Iowa State Uni.) to create an institutional model, signing licenses between societies, publishers, and institutions because hybrid OA was moving too slowly, where only 5% of published articles became OA each year. The model was also influenced by discussions with various universities in Asia, Europe, and Latin and South America and how they are handling their OA initiatives, as well as discussions

with the Libraries at UC Berkely, to discuss the Uni. of California's OA mandate. After a year and a half of development, the model, ACM Open, was launched in Jan. 2020, with a heavy focus on financial sustainability and a goal to enable students and faculty members to publish with ACM without requiring any authors to publish with an Article Processing Charge (APC).

ACM Open Access: https://www.acm.org/publications/openaccess

https://libraries.acm.org/subscriptions-access/acmopen

Participants: https://libraries.acm.org/acmopen/open-participants

The ACM Open Model

The model is straightforward, where institutions are evaluated based on their author publication history (the previous 3 years) and categorized into a 10-tier system. The model provides each institution with an annual price, which is based on their tier level. As the transition from Read to Publish occurs, for ACM 1/3 of institutions will pay more and 2/3 will pay less. Financial waivers will be provided to address equity concerns for 100+ countries.

Why flip the DL to Open Access?

Flipping the DL to OA was initiated with An ACM member-led petition and statement to transition sustainability by the end of 2025. Additionally, ACM will follow government and funding mandates (Plan S, OSTP memo, and national policies). OA is also beneficial to authors and the computer science community.

Key benefits to OA include greater readership and citation of research, furthering the field of CS (innovation), better revenue alignment with the most engaged institutions worldwide (sustainability), and increased access leads to increased usage, leads to increased citations (impact/discoverability).

Questions

My university just joined ACM Open, and one thing that has been confusing for us is which publications are included in that program.

Delman: We have a concept called, APC eligible, on our website, which are research papers funded by research grants. ACM decided early on that when it flips to OA, it's flipping everything that we publish, both the APC eligible articles and the non-APC eligible articles.

There are different types of articles, and whether they are items that institutions pay for when they subscribe to ACM Open is different - e.g., an editorial, or a poster, which are items that are considered a research article that we would not ask the community to pay an APC for. It is a fact that authors are going to pay APCs, but they are only going to pay APCs for what we call APC eligible articles: Open Access Publication & ACM

What is an institution's motive for joining? On your bullet point: 1/3 of institutions will pay more, and 2/3 will pay less. Is that speculation or a real statistic?

Delman: That's a real statistic.

Aldrich: If your institution subscribes to ACM Open, then every paper you publish with ACM, and if someone from your institution is the corresponding author, it will be OA.

Is that the value proposition for the institution?

Delman: There is more value proposition for the institution. For example, IEEE has a plan for institutional transition to OA, but they haven't stated a deadline, so they have not set a date by which everything will be OA. They've chosen to really focus on journal publications, not conference publications. That becomes a bit of an issue for ACM and IEEE because we have so many co-sponsored events. If you're an author and you are publishing with ACM after December 31st, 2025, your article will be OA, mandatory.

How do we bring the funding agency in the formula, so they can be the one sharing some of these beyond the individual institution?

Delman: When OSTP, PLAN S came out with their initial mandates, and in the years that have followed, it was clear that they would put these requirements in place but there would be no additional funding from those funders to pay for them. This creates problems for societies, publishers, authors, etc., who are left with figuring out how do they implement these mandates in a way that works for each of those societies and publishers and authors.

Many of these funders have come out with a sort of second-generation plans; I think Plan S came out with a 2.0 version just last week and JST in Japan came out with its first OA mandate. One of the challenges that we have, is that we are transitioning an entire publication portfolio within a period of about 5 years; when we look at where our publications are, they come from all over the world and some of those countries are very progressive and push open access, and some are not, so they are going at different speeds.

We will talk about China because it's a research publication powerhouse; they are the only largest publishing country that does not have a national open access mandate, and that's hugely challenging for us because until the government actually requires that authors publish in OA, those institutions don't feel the pressure to sign on, so it has to come from bottom-up because it's not coming from top-down.

What is the terminology: PLAN S. OSTP, JST?

Delman: OSTP is the Office of Science and Technology Policy, it's the White House office, in the US, that oversees all the technology policy, including open science. Plan S is a coalition; it's the program that was developed by an organization called Coalition S, which has 15-20 European countries that are participating and most of the major funding bodies, the government funding bodies, are participating in that Coalition S. UKRI is the UK research sort of body that funds most of the research in the UK, and JST is the Japanese Science and Technology; these listed have been the most progressive.

If an institution pays its fees after 2025, everything will be OA; my institution is tiny and it can't afford it, so after 2025, can I not publish?

Delman: We developed a 10-tier structure to define large to small institutions, and if you're in that very small group, what we call tier 10 institutions, which are institutions that publish with ACM between 0-3 articles a year. We want those institutions to stay on long-term, so we are lowering their prices as we transition from 2020 through 2025.

In developing our pilot with the universities, we committed to be transparent about the impacts of this transition. Very large institutions, tier 1 institutions, will pay many multiples in dollars of what they were paying to access the DL. ACM's motivation for transition isn't money, it's to transition to an open environment. We are also committed to publishing our annual finances of the publications, and we've done that for the last 3 years.

ACM Open Model – Original Challenge

If almost 70% of your publishing income comes from institutions that don't publish very much with you at all, then what happens when the DL becomes completely open access, and those institutions start cancelling? 70% of our income goes away, not just as a publisher, but an organization. Part of the challenge when we talk about sustainability is how do you both move to open access model and at the same time do tine a way where you can be sustainable. One of the ways we chose to do that was charging institutions based on publishing activity. So those institutions that had the largest value proposition would pay the most.

Ultimate Goal – More balanced revenues and expenses

Most of the future publishing revenue should come from institutions affiliated with authorship, so different groups of institutions pay their fair share. If around 30% of the top 100 institutions by article count, are publishing around 32% of the articles published every year, those same institutions should roughly be responsible for about 30% of the income generated from publishing.

Usage Benefits of Publishing OA in the DL

Since a hybrid open access model began in 2013, ACM has on hand about 10 years' worth of data (downloads, usage, and citation data), which was used to compare articles published behind the DL paywall to articles published in front of the paywall. Results showed that OA articles were downloaded 2-3 times more.

Citation Benefit of Publishing OA in DL

Citation data tracking was done by a database called *Dimensions*, provided by Digital Science. OA articles showed a 70% increase in citations compared to their counterparts. Thus, a value proposition for authors is higher visibility and impact.

ACM's Global Publishing 2020-2022

From 2022 data, ACM has published 25-26k research articles a year. Delman provided a map of the world, indicating, in darker colors, countries where the most published articles come from, which are mostly US, European, and Chinese locations. From Jan 2020 to now, about 805

institutions have joined ACM Open so far, surpassing ACM's initial prediction of 800 by the end of 2023.

Snapshot of 2022 Publications – by region

Delman pointed out that East Asian and Pacific locations, particularly China, has generated enormous growth in ACM publication over the past 5-10 years. In 2021, China surpassed the US in total number of ACM published articles, which continues to grow today.

2023 ACM Open Progress - by Tier

The amount that institutions will pay is tied to their assigned tier, which is tied to the number of articles published in the previous 3 years (articles that are published by corresponding authors affiliated with those institutions).

Transition/Sustainability Risks

Key risks in OA transition include slower transitions to OA for some countries, ICPS quality/quantity risks, holdouts from large and mid-sized research-intensive institutions, long-tail ACM Open cancellations after full-flip, library budgets continue to feel pressure from global economy, and timing of decision versus announcement.

<u>Questions</u>

So starting Jan. 2024, you will get much better estimates of how it'll go with ACM Open because it'll be a live experiment. If we are to have our next meeting in 5 months or so, will you be able to give us whatever data that you have? Our next SGB meeting here in Chicago will be in 12 months; there will be a new SGB chair.

Delman: We'll give you some data; it's going to be phased. The process that's going to happen for ICPS is that all ICPS conferences, where the call for papers has not yet been issued, starting Jan 1, 2024, will be subject to this mandatory OA. If I'm running an ICPS conference, and there are some in-cooperation conferences too, and I've already issued my call for papers November 1st, or Oct., or Sept., you're going to get grandfathered for one more year. We'll have some data by May or June of next year, but it'll be limited, but by the end of next year we'll have a lot of data and a good understanding.

ACM Publications Finance Article

Access article here: https://dl.acm.org/doi/pdf/10.1145/3586184

One of our promises made to the institutions was to show them how well the transition is going by tracking and showing our progress.

Timeline to Full-flip

The Full-flip will take effect on Dec. 31, 2025. The new ACM website is about to launch, most likely at the end of this year, and when it does, CACM will go completely OA. The mandatory

piece of the OA, the requirement that authors pay an APC if they're not an ACM Open institution, will not go into effect until Jan. 01, 2026

Everyone is under the assumption that 2025 go-no-go decision is a go; the EC and Yannis talked at the council meeting in San Francisco, committed to this.

Considerations for the SIGs

It is expected that by Dec. 31, 2025, 60-70% of ACM published articles will be under the ACM Open multi-year licenses, and the remaining 30-40% of articles will require an APC of 700-1k in 2026 if not eligible for economic/financial waivers. It is uncertain what percentage of the DL revenue will be transitioned and secured by 2026. The best way to reduce the number of authors impacted required to pay APCs is writing to department heads and university librarians urging them to sign ACM Open licenses with ACM.

<u>Questions</u>

Donna forwarded a spreadsheet to you this morning, showing that for every SIG lists specific numbers for your SIG of how many percentage of the papers are OA and how many are not.

Graves: Keep in mind it's not necessarily consistent year to year. The locations of the conferences and so on play a huge factor. That's a one year's look.

Delman: I think aggregated; it looked like about 36% of the articles are currently locked into ACM Open.

What about companion volumes of main SIG conferences? Are the papers in these volumes APC eligible? We published tutorials, workshop papers, and posters there.

Delman: Some of them will be and some won't be. I can distribute, after this meeting, that clear definition of what APC eligible is. Tutorials, for example, would be. We have to make sure that those articles are going through the same workflow when they are accepted. Some posters are not, so it will depend.

As a SIG representative, the DL is a good source of income, and I wonder if OA will eliminate that income?

Delman: We've had numerous meetings with ACM's investment committee chair, where we looked a range of scenarios.

People talk about the cost of APCs as being a barrier; 700 to publish a conference paper. For us, some of that is going back to the SIGs. Let's say 2-300 of that 700 is going to that allocation.

Delman: There are all these fees (conference registrations, SIGs, and APCs), so what impact will that have on conferences? Donna, Pat, and myself met with IEEE about two weeks ago to talk about this transition as it relates to co-sponsored conferences and journals; there are only about 3 journals, it's much bigger on the conference side. The challenge is that IEEE is has a very different approach to transitioning to OA.

What is happening today with that? I'm an ACM Open institution, so if I publish an ICC paper, which is co-sponsored with IEEE, will it be open on the ACM website?

Delman: You're in a hybrid author choice type of environment. Those types of conferences alternate, so one year ACM runs pubs and the next year IEEE, and it goes back and forth. In the years when ACM runs it, the choice of paying an APC or being tracked by ACM Open is tied to our rights system; we have to be running production and have to be running rights in order for us to identify that paper. So it alternates right now.

There should be a profess where you list your institution, who you are, and that request goes to ACM, where ACM generates a report, that's not public, stating this is what your institution is paying, this is what tier you'll be in, with quotes from other universities who have done it and why they think it's important, that we can give to our libraries.

Delman: What happens in practice, there's a lot of information on the website around how it works, how we're tiered. The way that institutions buy, is typically not institution by institution. We have a hundred consortia that buy from ACM every year and those consortia are buying groups, clubs, etc. Those consortia are marketing, giving a lot of data and information directly to the librarians. In the first year and a half, we found that it was all about training the consortium heads and sharing information with the biggest institutions. What we found in the last year, hearing from institutions from all around the world, is that we don't' have the budget. Additionally, we found that engaging with the department heads and the deans of research within a university can often times help break that logjam; sharing budgets is one of the things that we're seeing starting to happen.

Yannis and I will be going to Singapore next week to conduct an OA workshop; we're bringing in the deans and department heads from about 20 different universities around Asia to talk about this transition. The list of institutions that have joined is up on our website: https://libraries.acm.org/acmopen/open-participants.

Many of you have hopefully received the Blue Diamond, which went out and we will be increasing the frequency of that over the coming months to give the community even more information. We've scheduled in November at least 2 webinars for ACM conferences and SIGs. There is even more information on the author side because there's a whole range of information; how ACM Open works if you're an author, what it looks like when you get accepted into a paper, how the rights management will operate. If you solely rely on ACM's publishing, sales, and marketing staff to do this transition, we won't get as far, whereas if every single ACM member, SIG leader, conference leader, and at every conference, puts this on the agenda to talk about, we'll get much further. The biggest impact institutions are of focus first because we need to get the numbers, we need to get that transition.

Do we need to list the 700-1k as the OA fee charge to the authors? And is Georgia Tech part of OA? If so, does that mean papers coming from Georgia Tech to ACM, are automatically OA?

Delman: Yes, but not now. This will go into effect Dec. 2025. You should be talking to the authors and the community, so people are not surprised by this at the last minute.

Yes, Georgia Tech is part of ACM Open, and yes, they have been for the last year.

: We were not informed that Georgia Tech went OA. Could we get information here?

Delman: I'll send you the information. When we sign on with these licenses, the libraries themselves have an obligation to educate their faculty and students; in some cases, that's happening and other cases it's not.

We just finished a new conference two months ago, is that too late to go back and make that paper OA?

Delman: Yes, it's too late; we are not going back retroactively; if your institution is not in ACM Open, we are not going to go back and open it, nor are we going to go back and ask authors to pay a retroactive-APC. We are thinking ahead to 2026, when the full flip takes effect, and institutions have to transition to ACM Open or pay an APC.

We are going to China next year; how do you deal with currency exchange for the APC cost?

Graves: We go by whatever the exchange rate is at the time.

Delman: The moment that the APC is paid, the conversion is done.

My understanding is that research papers coming out of industry would also be APC eligible. In thinking about how to approach industry like places that don't have established research labs but still have a lot of papers coming out.

Delman: We have about 100 corporates, globally, that subscribe to the DL. Less than 20 of those publish any significant number of papers with ACM; financial risk for sure, from the bottom 80%. The big ones that you can think of already have arrangements or have already transitioned, so Microsoft, Google; we essentially transitioned their DL licenses over to OA licenses; different pricing model than the academics, so they are not tiered the same way that academics are. The reality is that those small corporates that subscribe and don't publish anything, are most likely going to fall into the same category as those small universities, and they are a risk; we are thinking about ways to mitigate that risk.

The motivation for transitioning is coming from the community; people have been expressing for years to do this transition.

Is there an equity concern here regarding corresponding authors being from a big institution, so people are likely to want to collaborate with someone from one of these institutions for this reason.

Delman: There are standards of practice now that most publishers and societies have adopted. We participate in two very large initiatives: Research for Life and Eiffel; these are nonprofit organizations that we've been giving free access to the DL to any institutions that would be defined by World Bank economic statistics. We flipped those organizations deals over from DL read to OA; if you are a corresponding author at any one of the over 100 countries that fall into those categories, you just go through the system, you don't have to pay an APC; effectively, there are 3 ACM open licenses. That doesn't solve the entire problem because there are going to

be authors who fall through the cracks who are in top tier countries that are, even at well-funded institutions, haven't joined ACM Open, they're not in the CS department, they're in humanities and they don't have access to research grants. There is an entire process that we're in criteria that we're coming up with to determine what we're calling discretionary waivers; we want that to be much more objective.

You said that big tech corporates have transitioned but only US big tech corporates. Are there any big tech corporations in China that have transitioned?

Delman: Not in China; we don't have any corporate customers in China. We have hundreds in Korea and Japan, and I think about 30-40 of them have transitioned.

You mentioned discretionary waivers, would SIGs have access to that?

Delman: It's one of the things we are looking at and looking at other societies and publishers. We are looking at the numbers and that needs to be a dialogue with the SIGs.

Research Integrity in ACM Publications (Scott Delman, Dir. of Publishing)

Ethics & Plagiarism Committee (E+P)

Publication related violations go to the Director of Publishing, the chair of the COPE committee, and/or the chair of the Ethics and Plagiarism Committee, to investigate and adjudicate allegations of ethical misconduct. The E+P Committee (chaired by Michael Kirkpatrick, with Shan Lu as VP), was established by the Publications Board in 2012. The E+P Committee investigates level 3 or above violations (there are 5 total).

Since 2017, the E+P Committee has investigated ~225 cases, with 40-50 active cases under investigation today (https://www.acm.org/publications/policies/ethics-and-plagiarism-update). Around 50-55% of cases result in proven violations or a guilty verdict with a range of penalties; retractions are the only ones made public.

It is unclear if increased cases in misconduct is a result of more misconduct, but with better tools and resources, detecting such activity results in action.

Governance structure/oversight – pubs cases

The Publications Board is co-chaired by Wendy Hall and Divesh Srivastava. The Program Committee (PC) chairs for pre-publication cases have updated their policies in the last year and are currently working on authorship policies with respect to guidance on generative AI. Once a violation has been committed but the article has not been published, the PC chairs make decisions; if the article has been published, the E+P Committee and Publications Board hold jurisdiction. Both entities will often work together and sometimes with conference organizers.

Scott Delman and Barbara Ryan (Intellectual Property and Rights Manager) at ACM HQ, are directly involved with conducting investigations and collaborating with the Publications Board. J Around 60% of cases that come across their desk do not proceed to the full committee, as many

are minor plagiarism cases or other minor cases, whereas the more severe cases with collusion and compromised peer review do proceed to the full committee.

ACM Publications Policies

Policies are updated regularly and approved by the Publications Board. Currently, a peer review portal is developing, with an online course to educate PC members and reviewers about acceptable practice for conducting peer review. The ACM Publications Policies are clear that all named co-authors on a paper is responsible for any wrongdoing, while not necessarily equally responsible. Policies include a range of areas, such as publication rights and licensing, inappropriate content, conflict of interest, and so on. https://www.acm.org/publications/policies

Investigations

Investigations begin with ACM's web form: https://services.acm.org/policy_violations/policy.cfm

Allegations must be accompanied by evidence for action to be taken. COPE also provides guidance and best practices for investigating allegations of publishing-related misconduct. Investigations take between 3-12 months on average, which is too long but largely a function of the volume of cases and bandwidth of staff/volunteers. Currently, ACM's Disclosure Policy is developing, defining what information can and cannot be publicly disclosed, including to employers.

Types of Cases:

Cases range from paper mills to gift authorships, to machine generated papers. A conflict of interest (COI) detection system is currently in development. This project is led by Wayne Graves, the Director of the DL, and his team, and is in collaboration with the DL and DBLP (https://dblp.org/), to identify undeclared COIs and identify individuals who should not be working together.

There are many other systems and tools that are used today for investigations, such as *iThenticate* (for plagiarism related allegations).

Recommendations to SGB

The computer science community needs to educate others on acceptable standards of good behavior for ACM conference publication. The Program Committee chairs should utilize violations database before PC invitations go out to ensure they are not inviting violators to participate. PCs need to clearly communicate policies and acceptable standards of behavior in Calls for Papers and PC and Reviewer Instructions. Utilize ACM's upcoming Peer Review Portal to educate the community, and encourage, not pressure, the community (e.g., claimants, witnesses, etc.) to act.

Questions

In SIGIR, every year we have collusion rings, and it amounts to hand crafting the reviews so that reviewer assignments are less likely to happen, but we only have is a bunch of people reporting

that they got these invitations, they don't want to name names, they don't want their names associated with it. I don't see how we would ever have evidence beyond that.

Delman: Often, 75% of cases happen, and we are notified after the fact; usually it's a PC chair that comes to us and says that people know this is going on; usually there is one unnamed person. We can't act on anonymous witnesses and need to be confidential; we don't disclose the names of witnesses who accuse individuals or anyone else outside the investigation itself. At the end of the day, people need to come forward.

I'm wondering if the most severe penalty is still not severe enough. In my university, if a person cheats 2-3 times, they are kicked out of the school.

Delman: For an individual that receives a 5-year ban, depending on where they are in their career, it could end their career. If you are in graphics and you're not able to publish in SIGGRAPH for 5 years, that's a career killer. It's been a while since we've revisited those periods.

In the case that sub-committee chairs have found there to be plagiarism in submissions and the submission doesn't make it to the publication stage, who should flag this? Should they be flagged?

Delman: Yes; the program chairs would flag this.

SIGUCCS Request for Term Exception (Lisa Brown, Chair of SIGUCCS)

Motion: Move to grant an exception to ACM's 2-term limit to SIGUCCS for their elected board members.

The motion passed.

Conference Locations - SIG Best Practices (Neha Kumar, SIGCHI President)

Neha reviewed issues surrounding conference locations, using SIGCHI as a model:

- Hybrid - is there a low-cost version?
  - SIGCHI'22 (hybrid) lost revenue, encountered issues related to virtual programming
- Sustainability - site selection and indigeneity
- Safety - policies that are harmful to women
- Equity - registration and conference fees
  - SIGCHI'23 lost revenue due to inflation costs
- Globalization - should we go global?
- Accessibility - conferences should budget for this

Kumar pointed out that these priorities come with financial implications, raising questions, such as how much of the costs are the SIGs able to and willing to bear, and how does the community feel about higher registration fees.

SIGCHI'24 is planned for Hawaii and encountered further tensions after the Aug. 2023 wildfires; around 500 anonymous protesters signed a petition (https://www.chiinhawaii.info/), and peer reviews were withheld until the conference meets their demands for a virtual conference or change location. In response to the protests, Cliff Lampe, the SIGCHI Steering Committee Chair, the organizing committee, and the EC wrote block posts explaining why the conference cannot be canceled, the burdens that have been placed on volunteers, desire for safety, and commitment to hold an open session with the community and set up a site selection and hybrid working group to challenge protesters to help create conference guidelines, which will require mediation as to not pressure or shame conferences into abiding.

Questions

The ultimate professional society value proposition is to give people a sense of belonging. We should build on the foundation of bringing a sense of inclusion and belonging to the community; have multiple forms to support them, and at the same time, set a clear boundary.

Kumar: People are upset when they are not heard; we are trying to make sure we're listening to all these perspectives and channel that energy.

California had a law stating that state employees cannot spend California state money in certain states because of anti-LGBTA and other discriminatory laws but has since been repealed. Our SIG relied on that law as a guidepost of places our community may not want to go. Without that guidepost, is there something that the SIGs could use to help guide us?

Kumar: One of our conferences used to go to Florida every year but they've decided to change location.

We held a SIGBio conference in Texas this year. We did not know that the Texas governor said that anyone involved in a public university cannot promote DEI, so as a result, our sponsor organizer told us that we could not put that word publicly on our website.

I had a transgender student who didn't feel comfortable going to Florida for FCRC. This is a big concern and something I've tried to be active about. We should pay attention to the safety issues because they prohibit people from participating.

SIGIR was in Taipei this year, and about 200 Chinese researchers couldn't gain entry. In the opening ceremony. One of the Taiwanese organizers had a slide listing countries on the x-axis and rates on the y-axis, with Taiwan as a country. This became a source of political protest by a remote presenter from China, which later went viral on Chinese social media. They threatened SIGIR's standing as a top-rating conference and 50k in sponsorship money from Alipay and Baidu. I asked Donna for the right statement to make to apologize for the situation; it would be helpful to have ACM guidance on how to respond publicly to some of these cases.

Palsberg concluded the meeting and stated that the next one will be held in spring.