Gerrit C. van der Veer,
President, ACM SIGCHI

Supporting Growth

Information and communication technology (ICT) is penetrating a growing number of activity types (e.g., professional, personal, leisure, healthcare, public and private services) and spreading fast geographically. At the same time, the importance of HCI is increasing worldwide and the variety of applications and contexts is in a growth spurt.

SIGCHI maintains its position as the leading society supporting practice, research, and education of professionals in this broadening and expanding field. SIGCHI membership seems to be stable, but the effects of SIGCHI's activities are growing. We view our initiatives as children that grow up. We will not abandon them, but we need to provide our continuing support without trying to be completely in control. In the summer meeting of our Executive Committee, we made a set of plans aiming at precisely that: Communities within SIGCHI, local chapters, new initiatives in developing worlds, and specialized conferences need both SIGCHI's support and the freedom to develop according to the insights of their own domains.

The number of communities within SIGCHI (sigchi.org/communities) is increasing, as is their membership, showing a mix of SIGCHI members and non-members; we are managing to activate people outside our domain to be stakeholders in HCI-related initiatives. Gary Olsen (current vice president for finances) and Dan Olson (adjunct chair for communities) developed a proposal:

For the next three years (our usual period for any experiment that needs to be reviewed and revised), communities with at least 75 SIGCHI members will be able to spend an annual budget of \$100 per SIGCHI member for activities related to the community goal. The budget holder for this initiative is the adjunct chair for communities.

The number of local chapters of SIGCHI (sigchi.org/connect/local-sigs) is growing, both in the “traditional” SIGCHI world of North America and Europe and in “new” geographic areas. Our five newest chapters are in New York (a student chapter), Toronto (a rechartered chapter), Indonesia, Kenya, and Iran. Chapter representatives tell us there should be interactions between them, which we are supporting (e.g., during NordiCHI 2014 and at our chapters workshop). In addition, Tuomo Kujala (vice president for chapters) has been writing columns for *Interactions* to promote awareness within our society and to allow our chapters to be inspired by each other.

SIGCHI is now (co)sponsoring nearly 20 conferences each year. Recently, there was an unexpected problem for some conferences due to decreased national funding for activities such as the Doctoral Consortium. In emergency cases, SIGCHI supported these financially. For the future we decided to provide more financial freedom to these conferences by reducing the budgeted return to SIGCHI considerably and decreasing the ACM overhead fee. This will result in lowering the basic

budgeted expenses by about nine percent for our SIGCHI-only sponsored conferences and three percent for the CHI conference, broadening the freedom of the conference teams to budget for relevant conference initiatives and activities—obviously including the Doctoral Consortium, but that will be for the conference leadership to decide. This is in addition to a rule we installed last year stating that our specialized sponsored conferences, if they returned a surplus for two consecutive years, will have half of the mean return for the two years as part of their financial base for the next year.

We recently saw an increase in requests for collaboration from developing countries (in Asia, Africa, and Latin America) stimulated by the activities of our adjunct chair for developing worlds, Zhengjie Liu, and our IFIP Liaison, John Karat. We use our Development Fund for supporting these activities and initiatives, financially enabling our volunteer leaders to reach out and spread knowledge and expertise to geographical areas where education and industrial practice need support. The Development Fund (sigchi.org/about/policies/devfund) is now set up in such a way that supported initiatives may vary; there just needs to be a clear mutual benefit for the initiating community and the worldwide SIGCHI membership, and a clear intention for increasing HCI-related awareness and connectedness.

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