DOI:10.1145/3338465

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Halfway Round! Growing the Regional Special Sections

IN NOVEMBER 2017, we launched *Communications'* Regional Special Sections with goals to 1) bring all ACM members a deep, insightful window into the most exciting trends and changes in regions around the world, and 2) include diverse, leading computing professionals as contributors to the magazine.^a A year and half later, I'm happy to report we're halfway around the world and gaining momentum!

Our vision is to represent the best of computing leadership and distinctive development for each region, and bring a sharp focus on:

- ▶ Leading technical and research advances and activities;
- ▶ Leading and emerging industry and research players;
- ▶ Innovation and shape of computing in the region; and,
- ▶ Unique challenges and opportunities.

The special sections have emerged as polychromatic windows into each region with widely varied topics and contributors. The China Region special section in the November 2018 issue included 13 articles, mixed short and long, covering topics ranging from tech role models to data markets, from quantum communication to extreme cloud bursting, and fintech and killer-apps for autonomous vehicles. Contributors were split across companies and universities, with 30 of the 40 total authors never previously contributing to *Communications*. The April 2019 Europe Region special section included 14 articles covering topics ranging from data privacy law to Europe's plans for ICT leadership as well as insightful, distinctive views

Bengaluru Workshop participants, February 2019.

on the central importance of informatics and what constitutes responsible computing in the modern world. Of the 28 authors, 23 had never previously contributed to *Communications*, and the authors reflected a diverse mix of corporate, government policy, and university affiliations. The nascent India Region special section for November 2019 is projected at 15–17 articles with nearly all of the contributors likely to have never previously contributed to *Communications*.

While each workshop to kick off regional section teams has been a dynamic, diverse, and creative gathering, the Bengaluru Workshop for the India Region was particularly dramatic as it included participants from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India, and was held on February 23, 2019—right in the midst of international conflict between Pakistan and India over a terrorist attack, aerial bombardment response, and more! Nothing could better underscore the importance of international scientific collaboration, computing professionalism, and human relationships founded on mutual respect.

The Regional special sections will circle the globe—so plans for future sections are exploring how to best cover East Asia, Oceania, North Africa and Arabia, as well as the Americas before circling back around. At current cadence, our period will be three years (a little

slower than Verne's Phileas Fogg!^b)

These sections are thriving because of the extraordinary creativity and enthusiasm of the Regional co-leaders and article contributors. But we now have a strong international team of co-chairs on *Communications'* Editorial Board: Sriram Rajamani (Microsoft), Jakob Rehof (Dortmund and Fraunhofer), and Haibo Chen (SJTU and Huawei) are driving the effort. Thanks also to David Padua, Kenjiro Taura, and Tao Xie who contribute as members of the editorial board. If you have a passion to join this effort, we can always use more talent and energy! Finally, the special sections are thriving because the extraordinary efforts of Lihan Chen, my deputy, and the stellar *Communications'* publication team, led by Diane Crawford. Thanks to all!

The international computing profession's importance has never been greater than in this time of growing distrust and international tension;^c there is much to be done!

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^b J. Verne. *Le tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours* (*Around the World in Eighty Days*), 1873.

^c A.A. Chien. Open Collaboration in an Age of Distrust. *Commun. ACM* (Jan. 2019).

^a A.A. Chien. Here Comes Everybody ... to *Communications*. *Commun. ACM* (Mar. 2018).