ACII organization guidelines

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Introduction and general guidelines

The AAAC conference committee is in charge of maintaining the ACII organization guidelines.

ACII is an interdisciplinary conference that caters for all scientists and experts interested in affect, affective processes, and affective computing. Its main aim is to advance high-quality research and facilitate cross-fertilization and an open and inclusive atmosphere. A strategic decision was made to focus on growing the interdisciplinary community and being inclusive with respect to different ways of reporting and communicating about scientific advances, rather than focusing solely on achieving “elite” conference ratings through draconian acceptance rates. However, it also needs to cater for higher-impact publications, as this is important for individuals working in the technical sciences to be able to submit and go to ACII. As such, at ACII there is a difference between the main track, with a competitive selection rate, and other tracks (workshops, special topic tracks, DC track, LBR, demos, blue sky ideas, etc…) focused at coverage of good or late-breaking nascent work rather than publication of highly selective work with a higher acceptance rate. For the main track, only full papers are accepted after review by at least 3 reviewers and a meta reviewer. For all other tracks, at least 2 reviewers review each submission, with the track chairs making the final decisions. Main track papers typically are full papers. Special tracks can choose the paper format they use (either full/extended or both). Please note that conference organizers may choose to disentangle paper format from paper length, i.e., not all full papers have to be talks and not all extended abstracts have to be posters.

AAAC favors inclusion, discussion and cross-fertilization. This relates both to the people involved in the organization of ACII, and to including broad perspectives on the computational study of affective phenomena. This means that sometimes, for the sake of scientific serendipity, individual contributions that are rare, odd, novel or strange, may be favored over high quality standard work. AAAC encourages a special track for the latter in which high quality standard work is covered, e.g., based on submitting an extended abstract potentially already backed up by existing full papers at other conferences or journals. Submissions in the main track may be suggested for acceptance to that special track if organizers choose to have such a special track.

On the financial side of things, note that AAAC does not handle payments or finances for the conference. The host institute has to do this; alternatively, the conference organization has to set up other means of handling payments, e.g. set up a webshop for the conference. The host may not charge excessively for this service as this is part of the scientific duties of organizing a conference. AAAC does cover potential loss up to an amount agreed upon upfront, and, in case of assuming this risk also takes the potential benefit of the conference, the AAAC can advance an amount to the host institution to cover startup costs.

People and tasks

The AAAC recommends the following roles and tasks. We recommend based on experience with previous conferences that, for organization purposes, a tradeoff exists between involving the affective computing community at large and doing so in a manageable way (number of people and timezones). Therefore we recommend grouping chairs if there are many, and appointing a main responsible person per role for taking responsibility and communicating with the general chairs (a lead chair). Below the **grouped roles** are presented. A lead can be chosen from each group.

General chairs (2-4 people, of whom at least one local to the host institute)
Main tasks (can be divided between the general chairs):

1. Finalize the dates and timeline, and set up a quick first web presence for the conference.
2. Coordinating the program across the main conference, workshops, tutorials, keynotes, demo and doctoral consortium.
3. Ensuring that the publication process is happening and securing the relevant endorsement from the IEEE TC-PAMI
4. Coordination of venue, dinner, etc.. and financial and visa activities with local and finance chairs.
5. Communication and coordination with the local institute hosting the conference and the AAAC to manage the finances (accounting) and sponsors and exhibitors.
6. Coordinating with the AAAC to ensure the budget and registration rates are approved
7. Making the conference booklet and writing the chair's message
8. Coordinating with the web chair and publicity chair for effective dissemination and communication
9. Creating the infrastructure for the organization committee communication and coordinates (Slack/Teams/Zoom, etc.)

The general chairs should include someone with experience in running ACII or a significant activity at ACII (e.g. PC chair or special track chair). General chairs do not have to perform all the tasks (above) but should manage other organization committee members and coordinate.

Publication and submission (pub-sub) chairs (2 people)

1. Preparing the submission guidelines and templates.
2. Setting up and managing the paper submission system (Easychair or CMT), to be used by all submissions including workshops, tutorials, etc…
3. Securing the IEEE Computer Society co-sponsorship for both the main (ACII) and the special tracks (ACIIW) including endorsement by TC-PAMI (twice again, once of the main track and once for the workshops/demo/DC).
4. Creating, collecting and compiling the proceedings (two separate volumes, main conference (ACII) and special tracks (ACIIW))
5. Submitting the final camera-ready material to the IEEE to be indexed.

Program chairs (2-4 people)

The program chairs are in charge of the main conference's program and selection of papers for the main track (*excluding the review and selection process* for the demos, workshops, tutorials and doctoral consortium). Program chairs do not have to be local.

1. Preparing the call for papers for the main track.
2. Coordinating with the publicity chairs for the timely dissemination of the call for papers
3. Managing the main track paper submission and review timeline.
4. Forming the senior program committee and inviting the reviewers
5. Defining the exact review criteria and ensuring that they are followed and are in line with the AAAC guidelines.
6. Coordinating the review process and ensuring quality through supervision and communication
7. Making the final decisions for the main program.
8. Make sure the program is in line with coffee, slots, rooms etc, coordinating with local chairs.
9. Selecting and inviting the keynote speakers in collaboration with the general chairs.
10. Coordinating with the IEEE TAC and the AAAC for their sessions at the conference.
11. Organization of panels (this has been organized and coordinated at time by the special session chairs or the general chairs)
12. Organization of (slots for) special sessions (see below)
13. Coordinating camera-ready submissions with pub and sub chair.

Special tracks chair (demos, workshops, tutorial, special conference tracks, DC) (4-6 people)

1. Prepare the call for demos, tutorials, workshops and special tracks.
2. Note that demos, workshop papers, DC papers, and other special tracks follow main program submission deadlines.
3. Coordinate with the publicity and web chairs for dissemination.
4. Review of the submitted tutorials, workshops and special tracks proposals (form a small committee if necessary) and select them (merging and modifications can be requested)
5. Coordinate with the general chairs to learn about the limitations of the number and timing of themed activities.
6. Coordinate with the workshops and special track organizers to ensure timely submission and review of the submitted papers to ensure quality through supervision and communication and alignment with AAAC guidelines.
7. Coordinate with the pub-sub chairs to allow using the same conference management system (easychair or CMT) for all special tracks.
8. Coordinating camera-ready submissions with pub-sub chairs for the ACIIW proceedings.
9. Collection of workshops, tutorials, demos, special tracks for the booklet.
10. Make sure the program is in line with coffee, slots, rooms etc with local chairs.
11. Ensure the presence and smooth running of all special tracks.
12. Run at minimum a special DC track
    A. Prepare the call for papers in line with main deadlines.
    B. Form a review committee.

C. Collect the submissions (using the same conference submission system as the main conference) and coordinate the review process according to the AAAC guidelines.
D. Select the successful DC papers and coordinate camera-ready submission with the pub-sub chairs and special tracks chairs for the ACIIW proceedings.
E. Invite mentors corresponding to the DC participant topics
F. Run the DC session (oral on the workshop date and poster during the conference). This needs coordination with the general and program chairs

Local organization chairs (2 persons)

1. Visiting and securing the venue (including coffee break/catering contractors - they usually come with the venue)
2. Visiting and securing the banquet, social program and/or reception locations
3. Coordinate with the general chairs to sign the contracts and execute the payments for catering and venue
4. Secure local sponsorship if available (some cities provide sponsorship to events to attract them)
5. Assist the visa chairs for issuing visa letters.
6. Managing a group of volunteers during the conference for manning the registration desk and ensuring the smooth running of the conference
7. Choose, order and distribute swags
8. Running the physical, in-person event (guiding the participants, coordination with the venue for reserving the rooms and ensuring the availability of technical support)

Publicity and social media chair (1-2 persons)

1. Regularly Disseminating calls on the mailing list and social media
2. Keep the website up to date.

Finance and sponsorship chair (1-2 persons)

1. Compiling a list of potential sponsors in coordination with the general chairs and with the assistance of the last year's conference organizers
2. Reaching out and soliciting sponsors
3. Arrange the payment and web and general chairs for logo placement and other agreed benefits (free registration, booth, etc.).
4. Assisting the general chairs with the accounting.
5. Ensuring on-time payments.
6. Performing a final report at the conclusion of the conference.

Visa and registration chairs (1-2 persons)

1. Maintaining a list of registered participants
2. Running the registration system
3. Issuing visa support letters

Conference organization timeline (deadlines)

The following planning is recommended. Please note that the times are meant as deadlines for activities. Some universities for example need 2 years to secure large lecture rooms, so starting early with some local feasibility check is important.

When (t - X)	What	Who
18m	Call for ACII out	AAAC conference comm
15m	Bid deadline (bid includes: Chairs, PC chairs, location, draft budget), selection	AAAC conference comm
14.5m	Bid discussion, selection and notification (private)	AAAC conference comm
12m	Present next conference at ACII	Chairs
10m	Organization comm formed	Chairs
10m	Secure location and capacity	Chairs/Local Chairs
10m	Draft budget finalized including social/location/publication costs	Chairs
9m	Website up with dates	Chairs/Publicity chair
9m	Calls out (special tracks proposals and main program)	PC chairs, Special track chairs
8m	Start sponsor search based on budget, and local sponsoring (e.g. city)	Sponsor chairs/Local chairs
7.5	Contact and secure publication process with publisher	PC chairs
7m	Submission deadline special track proposals	Special track chairs
6.75m	Selection of special tracks	Chairs/PC chairs/Special track chairs
6.5m	Notifications all special tracks	Special track chairs
6.5m	Submission system open with correct tracks and processes	PC chairs/Special track chairs
6.5m	Call for special track contributions	Special track chairs in collaboration with workshop organizers and DC chair

5m	Registration system open	Visa and reg chairs
5m	Submission deadlines for all contributions	PC chairs/Special track, DC chair chairs
4.5m	Reviews in for contributions	PC chairs
4.25m	SPC Meta report for contributions that follow main conference review process (tracks, main, demo)	PC chairs
4m	Notifications deadline for all contributions	PC chairs/Special tracks chairs/DC chair
3.5m	Late breaking reports track deadline (if LBR)	Special tracks chairs
3m	LBR reviews in	Special tracks chairs
2.75	LBR notifications	Special tracks chairs
2.75m	Preliminary program online	PC Chairs/Special tracks chairs/DC chair/Publicity chairs
2.75m	Sponsor budget known	Sponsor chair
2.5	Final budget calculation, additional sponsor search	Chairs/Finance chair/Local chairs/Sponsor chairs
2.5	Early bird reg deadline	Visa and reg chairs
2m	Visa letters all out	Visa and reg chair
2m	Finalize social activities and catering contracts	Local chairs
2m	Updated program with social	Local chairs/Publicity chairs
2m	Cam ready deadline for **all contributions**	PC Chairs/Special tracks chairs
1m	Cam ready to publisher	PC chairs
1m	Finalize local organizations (volunteers, badges, signs, etc.)	Local chairs
2w	Final program and booklet	Chairs/PC Chairs/Publicity chairs
0	Conference	All

Review and publication guidelines

General guidelines for the ACII review and publication process are listed below.

Review Criteria (all tracks)

At least the following criteria are used for the review process.

- Originality: Paper describes original results, reasoning, or modeling, or original analysis of previously published results. If the paper includes any results or analysis previously published by this or any other author, the boundary between published and novel work is clearly delimited by appropriate citation.
- Significance: Results and/or analysis are of interest to others working in the field of affective computing and the work is well contextualized (including appropriate related work). *Pay special attention to the fact that judgements about the future impact of a work should not be made.*
- Correctness: Derivations, methods, experimental approaches, statistics, and algorithms are correct.
- Clarity: Motivation, methods, results, and analysis are clear and clearly reported.
- Ethics: Did the authors include an ethics section/paragraph in which they reflect on the ethical, societal and environmental impact of their work (if any) and explain how they got approval OR explain why that was not needed / not relevant.

Review Process (all tracks)

- Double-blind process: papers are submitted anonymously; reviewers are anonymous, 3 reviews per paper for main track, 2 for special tracks (including workshop and demo papers).
- Program committee (PC): members of the PC cover the various domains of ACII. Their role is to review a certain number of papers following the review criteria listed above.
- Senior program committee (SPC, only for main track): for each assigned paper, their role is to check the quality of the reviews and open discussions among reviewers to arrive at a consensus, if possible, for each paper.
- The AAAC is not in favor of a rebuttal procedure. As this typically induces more workload for both authors and reviewers and often has no real effect on opinions. A possible alternative is the **revise** option as recommended by the SPC for papers that are of potential high quality but lack clarity, in which case the authors have to prepare a revision that is judged only by the SPC after which it is accepted or rejected.
- PC and SPC are invited/selected by PC chairs.
- PC and SPC bid on papers and provide topics.
- PC chairs (auto)assign papers to SPC **and** PC members based on bids and topics, i.e., global overview/management over assignment of papers to SPC and PC.
- The use of subreviewers by PC is discouraged unless that person is truly a better reviewer for the paper.

Submission format

Papers and extended abstracts can be submitted. For the main track, only full papers are submitted. For all other tracks the track chairs can decide to use either full or extended or both. Publishing is with IEEE and as such the IEEE conference format should be used.

- Long papers are 6-8 pages.
- Extended abstracts are 2-4 pages.

Publication Guidelines

- The AAAC logo must be included on the front cover of the proceedings
- The title of the proceedings is to be “Proceedings of the Affective Computing and Intelligent Interaction Conference [YEAR] – ACII [YEAR]”, and “Proceedings of the Affective Computing and Intelligent Interaction Workshops and Special Tracks [YEAR] – ACIIW [YEAR]”

Other guidelines

Registration Fees

Pricing for the conference must be approved by the AAAC conference committee. The committee will judge pricing on fairness and a number of other criteria.

- Organizers may require that at least one author registers for the conference for a paper to be included in the proceedings.
- AAAC members must be offered a reduced fee.
- Non-AAAC members must be offered membership in the AAAC Association. The fee for non-AAAC members has to be equal to the fee for AAAC members plus the AAAC membership fee. More precisely: (1) non-AAAC members have to pay extra (at least more than the current AAAC Membership Fee), (2) this “fee” part will be transferred to the AAAC association, (3) Non-AAAC members can decide whether they become members or not (but have to pay in any case).
- Students pay a reduced registration fee.
- Organizers may also allow workshop only registrations, although this is not encouraged for the sake of community and cross-fertilisation.

Budget Guidelines

The budget for the conference has to be approved by the AAAC conference committee. Budgets will be judged on a number of criteria. ACII conferences are intended to be non-profit, as is the AAAC Association. To keep the registration fees as low as possible, the work inside the organizing group is not to be charged to the conference budget, but is regarded as internal sponsorship. An exception is if this is previously negotiated with AAAC, or, these are costs of external hires necessary for running the conference. Engagement of external sponsors is encouraged. These could either be local (e.g. university, industry or grant-giving agencies) or co-organisers such as EU organizations (ESPRIT/COST).

AAAC is able to cover losses up to 20k GPB. However, surplus (profit) must also be transferred back to AAAC. Conference proposals must include a 10k GPB “risk fee” in the budget to be paid to AAAC.

Special Sessions at the conference

As AAAC wants to facilitate knowledge transfer, workshops and tutorials have a joint session at the conference at which the WS and tutorial organizers present outcomes, insights or main messages.

Further, a best of TAC session is hosted at the conference for the papers that were shortlisted in the best of TAC election.

Finally, a doctoral consortium (DC) should be organized. As for the main conference, the DC chair should ensure that. Long papers are submitted for the DC, 2 reviewers review each paper, the review is geared toward the pertinence and originality of the subject as well as the proposed methodology, papers are presented during the DC session and published in the ACIIW proceedings.

Website Guidelines

- The website of the conference may use the website framework as made available by the AAAC. In any case, the conference website must be made such that it can be added to the online AAAC conference archive.
- The AAAC logo must be included on the website.
- The website needs to clearly mention that this is the: Annual Conference of the AAAC Association.
- The website of the ACII conferences must contain a link to the AAAC website.

Formal AAAC activities at the conference

- Fellow award
- Best dissertation award
- AAAC town hall meeting
- Transactions on Affective Computing report

Diversity, ethics and inclusion

- All conference participants (regardless of registration status student/full registration) should be invited to all events (banquet, social events, etc.)
- ACII needs to ensure that all participants, organizers, reviewers, etc., are treated equally and respectfully.
- ACII needs to promote ethical use of technology.
- ACII needs to promote scientific serendipity across disciplines.
- ACII needs to have an organizing committee in which diversity is taken into account to ensure the above.