Welcome to SIGMOD 2020 — The 2020 ACM SIGMOD International Conference on the Management of Data!

This year, SIGMOD is heading for a new frontier and is being held entirely online, instead of at its originally planned location of Portland, Oregon, USA. The influence of that location is still a bit evident, in the logo and in the schedule, which uses the Pacific time zone. Despite the challenging times that we find ourselves in, we have an exciting program with many more papers than previous SIGMODs. We have tried to maintain as many program elements as possible: technical and industrial talks, keynotes, tutorials, panels, demonstrations, and the awards session.

We are using the latest technologies to keep SIGMOD as vibrant as previous SIGMODs, and we will be archiving more of SIGMOD than for past conferences, for those who want to review the talks and other sessions at a later date.

In the Research Track this year, we received 458 research submissions (159 for Round 1 and 299 for Round 2), which were extensively reviewed by 168 program committee members, 17 area chairs, and the help of several external reviewers. We accepted 123 submissions (a 26.9% acceptance rate).

In addition, with the approval of SIGMOD EC, we introduced a new category called “short paper”. This new category showcases interesting ongoing work, new discoveries, insights or experience, summaries of significant projects, and interdisciplinary work. Short papers might not possess the journal-like quality that reviewers often expect of papers in the regular research category, but they cover interesting work that we (and the reviewers and area chairs) believe should be brought to the wider community’s attention now, to rapidly advance the field. After a rigorous reviewing process, we ended up accepting 21 more papers as short papers.

In addition to the Research Track, the Industrial Track selected 21 papers from 48 submissions; the Demonstration Track selected 36 demonstrations out of 100 submissions; the Tutorial Track selected 8 tutorials from 19 submissions; the Student Research Competition selected 19 from 36 submissions; and the Programming Contest selected 5 finalists from 41 submissions.

This year, we will have three exciting keynote talks, reflecting emerging topics of great interest to the data management community: “Systems and ML: When the Sum is Greater than Its Parts” by Ion Stoica (UC Berkeley), “When the Web is your Data Lake: Creating a Search Engine for Datasets on the Web” by Natasha Noy (Google), and “The Challenge of Building Effective, Enterprise-scale Data Lakes” by Awez Syed (Databricks).

In addition, we will have a timely and interesting plenary panel, organized by Surajit Chaudhuri (Microsoft) and Magdalena Balazinska (Univ. of Washington), on “The Next 5 Years: What Opportunities Should the Database Community Seize to Maximize its Impact?”. There is also an industrial panel on startups founded by database researchers, organized by C. Mohan (IBM Almaden Research Center), probably the first such panel for SIGMOD conferences. The panelists will discuss the trials and tribulations of their entrepreneurial efforts, what worked and
what did not, and cover other topics on startups, spanning early-stage to successfully exited ones, both in the USA and Europe.

Thus, SIGMOD 2020 will feature an exciting and rich program, with 144 research papers, 21 industrial papers, 36 demonstrations, 8 tutorials, 3 keynotes, and 2 panels, together with online social and sponsor events (which are being organized as of the writing of this note). Assembling this program and these proceedings requires an immense amount of effort from numerous people, to whom we are very grateful. We thank the members of the SIGMOD organizing committee and the PC members of the various programs, as well as the staff and volunteers, for doing an outstanding job and going above and beyond what was required. We have been extremely heartened by the level of dedication and professionalism we have seen in the course of organizing SIGMOD 2020, especially during this challenging time.

We are also very grateful to the SIGMOD Executive Committee, as well as former SIGMOD PC chairs, for helping us navigate many issues and for supporting our new initiatives. We thank ACM and Sheridan, especially Lisa Tolles, for helping us put together the proceedings. We are also deeply appreciative of the support team behind Microsoft’s Conference Management Toolkit, who has always been prompt and helpful in answering our questions. Finally, we are extremely grateful to all of our sponsors and supporters. Your continuing backing for our community and for SIGMOD is deeply appreciated.

Welcome to SIGMOD 2020. We hope you will enjoy the conference, and see you online!

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