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Computers Helping People with Special Needs

18th International Conference, ICCHP-AAATE 2022
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Proceedings, Part I

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Preface

Welcome to the proceedings of ICCHP-AAATE 2022! We are delighted to present to you the proceedings of the Joint International Conference on Digital Inclusion, Assistive Technology, and Accessibility, a conference jointly organized by the International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs (ICCHP) and the Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe (AAATE).

Rapid technological deployments are showing the way to a world with no barriers and more flexibility, with personalized and adaptable technologies that will allow full participation of people with disabilities of all ages. We are in a position to hold high-level discussions on the topics of eHealth and eCare, eLearning and eInclusion, eDemocracy and eGovernment, eServices and social innovation, ambient and assisted active living, accessible traveling and tourism, user centered design for all, and many others.

Within this framework, and after the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to cancel AAATE 2021 and move ICCHP 2020 online, we decided to join efforts and propose a new venue for researchers and practitioners in assistive and access technologies, to showcase their work and mingle together. By merging our bi-annual meetings into a single event, we endeavored to provide a single platform for exchanging ideas, stimulating conversation, and facilitating networking. The result is a success in terms of the number of answers to the Call for Contributions and the broader and richer thematic scope: we received a total of 37 proposals for Special Thematic Sessions (STS). A total of 285 abstracts were submitted from which 112 were accepted for publication in these proceedings. More than 25 proposals for workshops, tutorials, seminars, posters, policy sessions, and a product/demonstrator presentation framed a rich and interesting program for discussion and exchange.

The ICCHP-AAATE joint conference was hosted during July 11–15, 2022, by the Politecnico di Milano at its campus in Lecco, by the picturesque Lake Como. Following the tradition of the ICCHP and AAATE biannual meetings, it was an event open to everyone and anyone interested in new and original ways to put technology at the service of people living with a disability. ICCHP-AAATE 2022 hosted presentations, panels, and forums devoted to the creation of tools, systems, and services that are accessible by design and that can level the playing field for a world where everyone can enjoy equal opportunities. By bringing the AAATE and ICCHP communities together, this joint conference explored the common threads linking policy, practice, research, and advocacy for people living with disabilities, working together towards a more equitable, just, and participatory future.

Participants contributed to the conference in multiple ways. The scientific contributions, which underwent a rigorous peer review process, are now available in two different publications:

- these Springer Lecture Notes in Computer Science (LNCS) volumes, which focus more on the development, engineering, and computer science perspective of assistive technology and accessibility, and

- the open access compendium Assistive Technology, Accessibility and (e)Inclusion, which focuses more on the policy, education, implementation, and social services perspective of the field.

Both publications are structured into 22 Special Thematic Sessions. The review process involved 137 experts from around the globe. Three to five independent reviews of each submitted abstract were assessed by one of the program chairs to allow a fair final decision on acceptance during a two-day decision meeting and to provide professional advice for the submissions of the camera-ready versions of papers for publication.

This three step review process sought to guarantee the high-quality of the ICCHP-AAATE publications. Additionally, ICCHP-AAATE invited selected sessions on topics of high interest to publish new and extended work in their domain in a Special Issue of AAATE's Technology and Disability Journal.

Contributions to the Inclusion Forum, which provided a space for discussion, collaborations, and participation of multiple stakeholders, were reviewed by the Program Committee and presented in the conference in different programs including workshops, tutorials, seminars, poster sessions, and policy sessions with panel discussions. It also included a space where participants showcased projects, products, and services. Inclusion Forum contributions are published in the Book of Abstracts, which collects short descriptions and abstracts of all contributions to the conference. In addition, students presented their ongoing research in the Young Researchers' Consortium.

We would like to thank all the members of the Scientific Committee, the Young Researchers Committee, the Inclusion Forum Committee, the Organization Committee, the additional paper reviewers, and the student volunteers who dedicated precious time and effort to the organization of this event.

Moreover, we want to thank all of the participants at the conference for furthering the mission of AAATE and ICCHP, based on the belief that technology can contribute to breaking barriers, empowering people, and enhancing equity and inclusion for people with all abilities.

July 2022

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