

PLERCIM's Unit Awarded the Status of Leading National Research Centre in Poland

The Warsaw Centre of Mathematics and Computer Science comprises the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Mechanics of the University of Warsaw (a member institution of PLERCIM) together with the Institute of Mathematics, Polish Academy of Sciences. This Centre has won the status of Leading National Research Centre in Mathematical Sciences (Krajowy Naukowy Ośrodek Wiedzy, KNOW). In total there have been only three winning nominations (Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry) in Science and three in Health Sciences, as the Polish Minister of Science and Higher Education, Barbara Kudrycka, announced on 12 July in the presence of the Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk. The award comes with a substantial grant which will provide financing of the Centre for the next five years with an option of an extension for another five years. The money will be used to enhance the research potential of both participating institutions and to develop the Centre into a recognizable brand. The plans include vast extension of the graduate school aimed at the best students in this region of Europe. In addition, the grant will provide financing for a number of post-doctoral and visiting positions (both senior and junior levels).

Information regarding open positions and other activities of the Centre will be available at <http://www.wcmcs.edu.pl>

PROMISE Retreat 2012 report on Prospects and Opportunities for Information Access Evaluation

The PROMISE network of excellence organized a two-day brainstorming workshop to discuss and envisage future directions and perspectives for the evaluation of information access and retrieval systems in multiple languages and multiple media.

Twenty-five researchers from ten European countries attended the event, covering many different research areas including information retrieval, information extraction, natural language processing, human-computer interaction, semantic technologies, information visualization and visual analytics and system architectures.

The ultimate goal of the PROMISE retreat is to stimulate and involve the research community along the identified research lines, gathering feedback and improving them, and to provide funding agencies with effective and scientifically sound ideas for coordinating and supporting information access research.

The report is available online at <http://www.promise-noe.eu/promise-retreat-report-2012/>



ERC president Helga Nowotny (left) and Lynda Hardman, CWI

ERC President visits Turing Exhibition

On 20 September Prof. Helga Nowotny, President of the European Research Council (ERC), visited the Turing exhibition at CWI, which was designed for the Turing Year 2012. She was accompanied by Prof. Lynda Hardman from CWI and Prof. Marijk van der Wende, dean of the Amsterdam University College (AUC). The next day Prof. Nowotny gave the keynote speech during the opening of the new AUC building, discussing the relationship between teaching and research. The ERC President, who is a member of the International Advisory Board of AUC, is responsible for many European research funds. Picture: Helga Nowotny (left), and Lynda Hardman (right) in front of the LEGO Turing machine.

Obituary

Horst Santo one of the pioneers of Interactive Digital Broadcasting has sadly died in July 2012 at the age of 70.

I had the great honour and privilege of working with Horst for over 13 years. Horst Santo was truly a remarkable individual; a man of highest integrity who concealed his extensive and detailed knowledge of many subjects with an impeccable modesty.

After his graduation from the Technical University of Karlsruhe in 1975 Horst was employed at GMD (later Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft) in St. Augustin near Bonn a research centre which he served for 30 years till his retirement.

At GMD/FhG Horst Santo held various positions such as deputy head of Planning and Decision Support Systems of IPES, later FIT. This was later followed by his appointment as the head of successful R&D Interactive Television (iTV) group of Institute for Media Communication (IMK). During this time Horst Santo was also elected as a member of the Media Council of German state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

Horst's pioneering works in the areas of Internet streaming systems and interactive broadcasting technologies were numerous and recognised and valued on a global scale. These included the implementation of the first European Internet "Radio & TV" systems and the development of the first ever interactive digital infotainment platform for ZDF (German second national TV channel).

Horst Santo was a man of great vision and tenacity, who always supported, motivated and encouraged any young researcher who would come in his vicinity. I like many of my colleagues who had the pleasure of knowing Horst owe him, a great deal.

Horst is greatly missed.

Sepideh Chakaveh,
Head of ERCIM Media Technology & Edutainment Working Group