

# The Seventeenth Canadian Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI'2004)

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■ AI'2004 was held at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario from May 17 to May 19, 2004. The conference was held jointly with the Computer and Robot Vision and Graphics Interface conferences. The three conferences attracted more than 200 attendees. Three workshops and a graduate symposium were held in conjunction with the technical sessions.

**F**ounded in 1973, the Canadian Society for Computational Studies of Intelligence (CSCSI) has hosted one of the longest-running conference series in the AI field. The CSCSI conference started in 1976 as a biennial event. Twenty-five years later, the conference became an annual forum, thus making AI'2004 the seventeenth conference in this series. Over the years, the conference has attracted high quality contributions from Canada, the United States, and from around the world. In 2004, approximately 40 percent of the accepted papers had at least one non-Canadian author.

AI'2004 was held from May 17 to May 19, 2004, at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario. As in previous years, the conference was held jointly with the Graphics Interface Conference (GI'2004) (the Canadian conference on computer graphics and human-computer interaction) and the Computer and Robot Vision Conference (CRV'2004) (formerly the Canadian Computer Vision Interface conference). The three con-

ferences attracted more than 200 delegates.

Three preconference workshops were affiliated with AI'2004: The Third Business Agents and the Semantic Web workshop, organized by Harold Boley, Scott Buffett, Bruce Spencer (National Research Council), Ali Ghorbani (University of New Brunswick), and Said Tabet (Macgregor Inc.); the First Agent Meets Robot workshop, organized by Hamada Ghenniwa, (University of Western Ontario), Weiming Shen (National Research Council) and Mohamed Kamel (University of Waterloo); and the First Causality and Causal Discovery workshop, organized by Kamran Karimi (University of Regina).

In addition, the AI'2004 graduate symposium attracted many graduate students. These events turned the city of London into a Mecca for AI and computer science for several days during the middle of May.

Issues related to agents, multiagent systems, and embedded agents were the focus of the Agents Meet Robots workshop, the BAsEWeb workshop, and the first technical session of the main conference. In keeping with this theme, the invited talk by Manuela Veloso (Carnegie Mellon University) presented the AI challenges in multi-robot soccer playing agents.

Nearly half the technical papers presented at the conference dealt with different aspect of learning—including neural and evolutionary learning. Michael Littman's (Rutgers University) invited talk dealt with applying rein-

forcement learning to practical problems. Other technical session topics included knowledge representation and reasoning, natural language processing, search, constraint satisfaction, and uncertainty. Fahiem Bacchus (University of Toronto), the third invited speaker, presented his work on the use of caching in backtracking search.

Greg Kondrak (University of Alberta) was the recipient of AI'2004 best paper award for his paper "Combining Evidence in Cognate Identification," which presented a technique for combining phonetic and semantic evidence to recognize cognate words that share the same origin in proto-languages (such as Latin). The award was announced at the conference banquet on May 18.

AI'2004 had a large program committee comprised of more than 70 members. Ahmed Tawfik and Scott Goodwin (University of Windsor) cochaired the program committee. Kay Wiese (Simon Fraser University) was the conference general chair and Bob Mercer (University of Western Ontario) was the local arrangement chair. The Canadian Society for the Computational Studies of Intelligence (CSCSI) and the National Research Council Canada (NRC) (who also hosted the preconference workshops) cosponsored the AI'2004 Graduate Symposium.

The Eighteenth Canadian Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI'2005) will be held in Victoria, British Columbia, from May 9 to 11, 2005. The chairs for AI'2005 are Guy Lapalme and Balázs Kégl (University of Montreal). More information about the conference is available at [www.iro.umontreal.ca/~ai05/](http://www.iro.umontreal.ca/~ai05/)



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