

# **Report on ‘Women’s Research Meeting’ Lunch at ACM Multimedia 2010**

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On Tuesday, October 26, 2010, the “Women Research Meeting” lunch took place at the ACM Multimedia 2010 conference in Florence, Italy. The event was sponsored by the Simula Research Laboratory, Oslo, Norway and the ACM Special Interest Group (SIG) on Multimedia. This was the first meeting of SIGMM female researchers only within the ACM SIGMM organization.

## **Goal:**

The goal of the meeting lunch was to strengthen the social networking among junior and senior female researchers of the SIGMM community, as well as discuss further steps how to increase the participation of women in the SIGMM community and ACM.

## **Process:**

The process of organizing this meeting was as follows: (1) The SIGMM chair, Klara Nahrstedt, sent out invitations to all female researchers registered at ACM Multimedia 2010 in September 2010. The invitation letter can be seen in Appendix 1. (2) In agreement with the ACM Multimedia 2010 general chair, Alberto Del Bimbo, invitees were asked to RSVP the invitation by early October 2010, so that the conference room size and food amount could be determined. (3) Forty female researchers responded positively to the invitation and met in the Limonaia room of the conference location, at noon on October 26, 2010. (4) During the lunch, questionnaire has been distributed to gather further feedback about future activities to increase women participation in ACM and SIGMM. The questionnaire is attached as the Appendix 2 to this report.

## **Results:**

The lunch was informal and enjoyable. We have started the lunch by brief introductions of each participant. The researchers from many different countries mingled and exchanged information about their research, families and observations about the conference. Many female researchers asked to be involved in organizations of any future events.

The questionnaire was well received and many female researchers responded with excellent suggestions. We have received 21 responses to the questionnaire. Some examples of suggestions were as follows:

1. Introduce quota on all levels of SIGMM events (conference organization, workshop organization, panels, special sessions, etc).
2. Record participation of female researchers in SIGMM sponsored venues.
3. Provide travel grants for female researchers (students).

4. Organize an annual event (Women's Workshop) at one of the SIGMM sponsored venues where female researchers discuss (a) balancing of research and family, (b) balancing of research and care of elderly parents, (c) different aspects of research in academia and industry, (d) peer guidance, mentoring and advising in preparation of scientific contributions presented at a SIGMM-sponsored event, (e) child care at SIGMM-sponsored venues, (f) career choices.
5. Organize leading female speakers and panelists at SIGMM sponsored venues.
6. Establish online platform, network list to share upcoming events, LinkedIn presence

**Moving Forward:**

(a) Based on the suggestions from the questionnaires, the SIGMM chair will put together a small program committee of female volunteers and propose a workshop (**Workshop for Networking of Women in Multimedia**) for ACM Multimedia 2011 (either ½ day or full day) addressing some of the topics outlined above in the form of panels, and discussion forums.

(b) SIGMM chair will establish presence at LinkedIn for "Women in SIG Multimedia".

(c) SIGMM chair will work with the chairs of SIGMM-sponsored venues to consider more closely the female researcher participation in their organizational structures (organizational chairs, TPC committees, female reviewers) as well as in invitations of leading female speakers and panelists.

(d) SIGMM chair will work with organizers of SIGMM-sponsored venues to collect statistics of female researchers' participation next year (2011) in SIGMM-sponsored venues to understand the participation of female researchers and address issues where they are needed to be addressed.

(e) At ACM Multimedia 2011 SIGMM will evaluate (during the workshop on networking of women in multimedia), where we are and what next steps in SIGMM-sponsored venues need to be taken for 2012 to increase participation of female researchers.

(f) Student travel grants will be considered for female researchers to attend SIGMM-sponsored venues in 2011.

**Acknowledgement:**

The female participants of the "Women's Research Meeting" lunch would like to thank Simula Research Laboratory and ACM SIGMM for sponsoring the lunch event, and the ACM Multimedia 2010 organizers, especially the general chair Alberto Del Bimbo, for arranging the meeting room and food for the participants.

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Invitation to the "Women Research Meeting" Lunch**

Place: ACM Multimedia 2010, Florence, Italy

Date/Time: Tuesday, October 26, 13:00-14:30

Dear Female Researchers,

hereby we would like to invite you to a working lunch ("Women Research Meeting"), held at the ACM Multimedia 2010, in Florence, Italy. The reason for organizing this lunch is to enable stronger social networking among senior and junior female researchers in our multimedia community. During the lunch, our goal is to have multi-facet discussions on various issues such as what are some of the hurdles that hinder female researchers towards stronger attendance and participation at SIGMM-sponsored conferences or what are some of the difficulties that female researchers face in multimedia research, teaching and service participation. We anticipate that the discussions will yield proposals and initiatives towards improvements, and suggestions for ACM SIGMM organization and SIGMM sponsoring organizations how they can assist to increase the participation of female researchers at SIGMM-sponsored events as well as how to strengthen participation of female researchers in multimedia research, teaching and service areas.

We are looking forward to see you at the "Women Research Meeting" lunch.

Best regards,

Klara Nahrstedt, SIGMM Chair  
(on behalf of SIGMM leadership and our sponsor(s))

## Appendix 2:

### Women Research Meeting Lunch

Time: Tuesday, October 26, 13:00-14:30; Room: Limonaia

**Sponsored by Simula, Oslo and ACM SIGMM**

Dear Participants of the Women Research Meeting,

This is the first lunch organized by SIGMM and sponsored by Simula and ACM SIGMM with the goal to increase participation of female researchers in Multimedia Application, Content, System and HCI areas. The goal of this meeting is to network among female researchers, and find new connections and collaborations. Furthermore, the goal is to give ACM SIGMM feedback how to help increase participation of women in multimedia and how to bootstrap longer term activities and new initiatives. For this reason, it would be great if you could write down your thoughts and ideas to the below specified questions.

Thank you, Klara Nahrstedt (SIGMM Chair)

1. What activities would you like to see at SIGMM-sponsored events (e.g., ACM Multimedia Conference) that would help increase the participation of female researchers in the event (e.g., women lunch, panel, workshop)?
2. What would it take to have more female researchers participate in the organization of SIGMM-sponsored events (e.g., ACM Multimedia Conference)?
3. What support would you like to see from ACM SIGMM organization to improve participation of female researchers at SIGMM-sponsored events?
4. Any other suggestions and proposals towards new initiatives are very welcome.