



# NEWSLETTER

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## Editorial Hail and Farewell

This edition is the last that I shall edit. I took the job on some three years ago as a stopgap. "Just an issue or two," I said. Well, it has been a little more than that. I feel pleased that we have produced four solid issues a year. And personally I am very pleased that I passing the reins over to a new editor.

Stephen Fortier has agreed to take over the task. I am delighted to be able to hand the Newsletter over to such a safe pair of hands. Steve is a member of the Engineering Management and Systems Engineering of the George Washington University. He is also a long time member of ISCRAM, a graduate, I believe, of our Doctoral Colloquia and Summer Schools.

The last three years have been made so much easier by the help of many people. The Marketing and Communications Committee have provided a backbone to the whole enterprise, as have the ISCRAM Board. My thanks to all.

This last issue of the year is when I encourage you to submit short papers to ISCRAM2014: long papers are currently being reviewed – too late to submit them. Also it is time to begin thinking about registering. Andrea and her team are working to produce the best conference yet. Further details of ISCRAM2014 may be found on page 3. Registration opens in January: see page 9.

ISCRAM Asia 2014 has been announced: see page 9. It will take place in Sri Lanka in June 2014 as part of a week of reflections on the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami.

For those of you thinking of submitting a paper to either – and any other ISCRAM event, for that matter – reviewing guidelines have been published (see page 2). Not only will these be helpful to reviewers, but they all act as a guide

### Institutional Members



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to all of us writing papers: what will our peers be looking for as they review our work.

So all that remains is for me to wish Steve good luck and to exhort all of you to send him material for the first issue of 2014.

With all best wishes for 2014

Simon French  
Newsletter Editor  
but send your comments and materials to Steve Fortier:  
[sfortier@gwu.edu](mailto:sfortier@gwu.edu).

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### Partners



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## ISCRAM Board

The ISCRAM Board has been busy over the last few months, working primarily on operational issues for the organization. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the Events Committee and the Publications and Academic Standards Committees worked on clarifying and updating the reviewing guidelines for conference submissions, along with the more general Track Chair guidelines. The Board has approved these guidelines, and they are now in effect for ISCRAM 2014. (See the following article.)

As always, the Board is considering bids for future conferences. They are also working on developing an Association-level sponsorship policy in order to further support the future growth of the organization. John Merrell and the Marketing and Communication committee have been developing a slide presentation to market ISCRAM to potential sponsors as an important part of this effort. In a related initiative, the Board also has been exploring affiliations with other professional organizations and conferences. The hope is that this will provide the opportunity for ISCRAM members to receive additional benefits, such as discounted registration fees at the annual conferences of affiliated organizations.

The Members-only portion of the ISCRAM website is continuing to progress and additional functionality is in the works; all members should please update their profile information on the site if they have not yet done so. Members should always feel free to contact the Board with any questions or suggestions that they might have regarding member benefits.

Along with their regularly scheduled monthly Skype meetings, the Board will be having its annual Face-to-Face meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from January 17th-19th, 2014. This will provide the opportunity to refocus efforts after the break for the Holidays, and to further pursue some of the longer-term strategic initiatives that are currently working their way through preliminary discussions.

Chris Zobel  
ISCRAM Board Secretary  
[czobel@gmail.com](mailto:czobel@gmail.com)

## New ISCRAM Reviewing Guidelines

On 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013 the ISCRAM Board approved new guidelines for reviewing papers at

ISCRAM events. This is the culmination of two year's work by the Events and Publications & Academic Standards committees, incorporating all that we have learned from ISCRAM conferences from 2008 to 2013. We unified the guidelines of the various types of papers to just one document that will guide you through the reviewing process in a more clear and efficient way. The changes will effect paper authors, reviewers and meta-reviewers, and track chairs. The primary goal of these changes is to ensure that ISCRAM papers, of whatever type or length and for whatever event, are reviewed to the highest standards.

The main changes are:

- There are 2 types of paper: *Research* and *Insight*.
- Research papers are reviewed to *academic* standards, and Insight papers are reviewed to *practical* standards.
- Anyone can submit either type of paper, although Research papers are primarily intended for Researchers and Insight papers for practitioners, professionals, (emergency) managers, experts, and policy makers.
- There are 2 lengths of (Research or Insight) papers: *full* (max 10 pages) for reporting completed work, and *short* (max 5 pages) for reporting on work in progress or proposing an idea.
- All papers (whatever type, length, or event) are reviewed according to the *same set of criteria*: relevance, significance, originality, validity, and clarity. The definitions of significance, originality, and validity differ between Research and Insight papers.
- The reviewing process *varies in depth* according to the type and length of paper. Research papers (full or short) are reviewed the most thoroughly, with extra attention to methodology, mathematical equations (if any), statistics (if any), and references. Full insight papers receive a medium depth of reviewing, and short insight papers are the most lightly reviewed.
- We have also introduced best-practice ethical guidelines for reviewing.

The newly-approved guidelines are available on the ISCRAM website under the Publications tab. There are two versions: [a condensed version](#) (4 pages) for experienced reviewers, and a [full version](#) (16 pages) for less-experienced reviewers. Both versions describe the types and lengths of paper, the reviewing criteria, and the reviewing ethics and etiquette. The full version also provides a set of questions for each criterion that reviewers can ask themselves in

giving a score for that criterion, a detailed description of the recommended reviewing procedure, recommendations for writing comments to paper authors, and suggestions on how the reviewer can balance his or her workload.

The Events and Publications & Academic Standards committees are now updating the matching guidelines for Track Chairs and for the selection of the Best (Student / Insight) Paper.

The newly-approved guidelines have been issued to the ISCRAM 2014 and ISCRAM-Asia 2014 Program Committees, reviewers, meta-reviewers, Track Chairs, and members of the Scientific Committee. We welcome any feedback, comments, or suggestions on how these guidelines work out in practice during the course of preparing for ISCRAM 2014 and all future ISCRAM events.

Tina Comes and Tim Grant  
Chairs, Events and Publications &  
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## ISCRAM2014

### The 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management

*"Empowering citizens and communities through  
information systems for crisis response and  
management"*

State College, Pennsylvania, USA  
May 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014

[www.iscram2014.org](http://www.iscram2014.org)

### ISCRAM 2014 Program - Shaping Up to Be an Exciting Meeting

About 85 long papers were submitted by the December 1 deadline, and we look forward to receiving at least as many short papers by January 13. Many of them focus on the latest Information Technology related to recent disasters, such as Sandy, Yolanda, and the Boston Marathon bombing. The program will be three full days, Monday through Wednesday, so please plan on staying until at least 6 pm Wednesday evening. Meanwhile, the program for workshops/ tutorials and panels has been firmed up too, and Andrea Tapia is planning many enjoyable social events. So get out your dancing shoes! ( see the accompanying article on social events...)

Sunday features several workshops and tutorials, in addition to the Doctoral Consortium and the

traditional beer night. This year, there will be a \$25 charge for each half-day of tutorial or workshop, to cover the expenses of coffee breaks, breakfast, lunch, and technical support. Registration will be open shortly; some Sunday events have limits on attendance, so early registration is recommended.

Remember that to receive the ISCRAM membership discount for the conference, you must be, at the time of registration, a 2014-2015 member. To join or renew your ISCRAM Association membership, go to <http://www.iscramlive.org/portal/join-iscram>. If you have any questions regarding membership, contact Linda Plotnick at [linda.plotnick.iscram@gmail.com](mailto:linda.plotnick.iscram@gmail.com).

#### Workshops and Tutorials:

1. Tutorial – Delphi and Cross Impact Analysis for Generating Dynamic Emergency Scenarios  
Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>: 8:30am-12:30pm  
  
Explanation of the combined use of the Delphi Method, Cross Impact Analysis, and Interpretive Structural Modeling to create Dynamic Emergency Scenarios by soliciting subjective estimates from professionals; capable of being used for planning, foresight, and/or training. (Murray Turoff, Victor Banuls, and Linda Plotnick)
2. Workshop – Delphi and Cross Impact Analysis for Generating Dynamic Emergency Scenarios  
Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>: 1:30pm-5:30pm  
  
After explanations of two examples of the combined use of Delphi, Cross-Impact, and Interpretive Structural Modeling to produce dynamic scenarios for use in emergency management, participants will be shown how to set up and analyze an online survey instrument to collect the data; take the sample survey based on their inputs; and then break into small groups to generate examples of types of scenarios they would like to generate and preliminary ideas for doing so. (Murray Turoff, Victor Banuls, and Linda Plotnick)
3. Tutorial – Visual Analytics with Social Media for Crisis Management  
Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>: Full day, 8 hours  
  
A hands-on tutorial that will explore freely available open source tools to extract, organise and visualise social media data for crisis management. Participants will be provided with coding material in advance and will be required to have appropriate software and API keys available before joining the tutorial. Limited to 20

participants. (Vitaveska Lanfranchi and Suvodeep Mazumdar)

4. Workshop – Educational Games for Crisis Response and Management  
Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>: 1:30pm-5:30pm

This workshop will demonstrate how to convert educational objectives related to crisis response and management into educational video games, focusing on game development and instructional design. (David Thornton and Guillermo Francia III). Limited to 25 participants.

*Program Summary*

Each day of the program will feature at least one panel in addition to keynote speakers, papers, posters and demos. Tentatively planned panels include ; Humanitarian Response to Cyclone Yolanda; Doing IT right: Ethical, Legal and Social issues of IT- Supported Emergency Response; Crowdsourcing to Create a Common Operating Picture for Crisis Management; and Social Media and the Boston Marathon Bombing.

Starr Roxanne Hiltz,  
Program Chair

**Fun at ISCRAM2014!**

*Come to State College, Pennsylvania, USA!*

*Come to Happy Valley!*



"Happy Valley" is sometimes used as a colloquialism for the State College area. In 2013, it was ranked second smartest city by Lumosity and third best college town in the United States by the American Institute for Economic Research. Penn State was ranked 9th in The Princeton Review's 2014 list of top party schools.

We work hard and we play hard.

ISCRAM 2014 will continue this grand tradition with the equally energetic and fun traditions of ISCRAMs past.

Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> — We will host a casual beer night on Sunday at a local pub. Come by after a long day of workshops and tutorials or straight

off the place and raise a glass with old and new friends.



Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup>—Stroll the beautiful botanical gardens and arboretum during our welcome reception. Enjoy a glass of wine, a bite, beautiful music and nature's glory after a long day of work.



After the reception on Monday—Penn State Bar Tour. Led by graduate students in the College of Information Sciences and Technology and the GeoVista Center, visit the ten best bars in a college town that boasts over 200. Join the tour. Get the T-shirt.

Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> — All are encouraged to attend the conference banquet in the grand ballroom of the Nittany Lion Inn. Delicious food and drink will be served. Awards will be presented. Jokes will be told. Promises and plans for ISCRAM 2015 will be made.



After the banquet on Tuesday—we will hold the first ever ISCRAM dance party. We'll offer an awesome local band, drinks and a spacious dance floor. Zeno promises to get us started. Kick up your heels! Get down and boogie! Shake your groove thang!

Outside of regularly scheduled, official activities we will also provide guided tours of Penn State University, the College of Information Sciences and Technology, The GeoVista Center and all of the lab spaces. We have planned guided trips to our world-famous Berkey Ice Creamery, the University Palmer Art Museum, and the Football stadium. We will also schedule a guided hike up to the top of Mount Nittany and tee times for those that wish to take advantage of our golf courses.



### **ISCRAM 2014 Welcomes Exhibitors, Vendors and Sponsors!**

The ISCRAM 2014 conference organizers invite you or your organization to participate in the 2014 meeting as a sponsor, vendor or exhibitor.

We welcome exhibitors and vendors from government, academia and industry to demonstrate their products and services at the ISCRAM 2014 conference to be held at Penn State University May 18-21, 2014. Booths or tables can be rented for \$500. Larger demonstrations can be accommodated as well.

ISCRAM 2014 welcomes direct sponsorship at four distinct levels: Bronze (\$1000), Silver (\$2500), Gold (\$5000) and Platinum (\$10,000). At the Bronze level a sponsor will receive logo placement in the Conference Program, a logo on Display at the Registration desk, a logo on the Conference Website and a free student registration. Higher level sponsorships will receive not only these benefits but also a progressively increasing number of full and student registrations and complementary booth space.

Sponsors also have an opportunity to offer conference program inserts, lanyards and name badges at the Bronze level, and T-shirts and conference bags at the Silver level.

At the Gold and Platinum levels, hosting opportunities are available for coffee breaks and receptions.

We are so pleased to announce that Virginia Tech's Global Forum on Urban and Regional Resilience has decided to sponsor ISCRAM 2014 at the "Gold" level. Congratulations to both Virginia Tech and ISCRAM 2014 for a fruitful partnership in the making.

To learn more about exhibitor, vendor and sponsor opportunities please visit: <http://iscram2014.ist.psu.edu/sites/default/files/misc/ISCRAM2014Sponsorship.pdf>

If you have any questions please contact Andrea Tapia at [atapia@ist.psu.edu](mailto:atapia@ist.psu.edu) or David Jordan at [djordan@ist.psu.edu](mailto:djordan@ist.psu.edu).

## **ISCRAM Summer School 2013: Play the Game**

In a [previous ISCRAM Newsletter](#) (Vol 2, No. 3) you could read about the serious game we played during the ISCRAM summer school in 2012. The 'disaster in my backyard' game was for the first time played then, and was highly appreciated by the participants, the professionals and the 'victimized' volunteers.

Also this year, during the 2013 edition of the summer school, the 'Disaster in my backyard' game gave the PhD-students an impression of the many challenges that originate during sudden on-set disasters in an unknown setting. With the help of the team of the University of Munster (special thanks to Daniel Link, Carsten Bubbich, and Basheer Sayed) a comprehensive scenario was designed that required participants to work together while taking on the role of emergency coordinators, rescue workers, assessment team members and humanitarian logisticians.



In this year's scenarios severe storm reached the Belgian city of Ranst in the evening of August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013, and caused floods, leaving

people stranded and in need of rescue, and the summer school participants were called in to respond. After a short briefing by the game coordinators, the different summer school teams ventured into the field in search of the people in need.



Shortly after their arrival on site, the teams successfully identified the first victims, stabilized them and managed to get them evacuated. However, soon after that initial success, conditions worsened. The teams had to work against a never ending flow of problems: drivers went missing or suddenly didn't speak English anymore (only Flemish), the internet connection went down (which was actually unintentionally, but integrated nicely in the game☺), and rebels raided the supplies of the rescue teams.

But none of these problems could deter the ISCRAM summer school teams. With support of the Belgian First Aid and Support Team (B-FAST) and the Standby Task Force (Svend-Jonas) the ISCRAM rescue operation managed to stay in control and successfully rescued pregnant women, helped lost Chinese kids and healed dozens of victims. Of course the 'locals' were immensely grateful for the hard work of the participants, but also the participants themselves valued this opportunity to experience first-hand the difficulties faced by emergency responders.

All in all a very successful continuation of the initial game last year, and yes: to be continued in the 2014 edition of the summer school!

Kenny Meesters  
[k.meesters@gmail.com](mailto:k.meesters@gmail.com)

## Research Field Trip to the Philippines

The Typhoon Haiyan that hit the Philippines in November 2013 has brought together researchers and practitioners from Tilburg University (The Netherlands), the University of Agder (Norway), Northwestern University (Chicago, USA), Cordaid (The Netherlands) and other supporting institutions to unite their forces in response to one of the greatest natural disasters ever. To coordinate their efforts they have established the Disaster Resilience Lab ([www.disasterresiliencelab.org](http://www.disasterresiliencelab.org)) as a temporary platform for joint work. We aim at connecting to academic researchers and crisis managers working in disaster response in the field to improve disaster resilience.

Our main interest is the use of information for decision support and sensemaking in disasters. Following the Typhoon Haiyan, thousands of tweets, photos and videos are posted on the internet. Cries for help; searches for people or information; pictures of devastation. Throughout the world, 'digital humanitarian volunteers' have responded to many crises from behind their laptops. On 12 December, we leave from Amsterdam on a 12-day research trip to the disaster-struck Philippines to study the impact of digital information on the work of humanitarian response teams. We plan to visit several agencies that are responding to the disaster in the Philippines, such as the UN-OCHA, *Unicef* and the Red Cross. How have they used the information provided by the 'digital volunteer network' in their decision-making, given the difficulties such as time pressure, stress and an often damaged digital infrastructure? How is information shared between aid agencies?

While the on-site research in the Philippines will be challenging, we also had to overcome another challenge: to raise last-minute funds for their field trip. Traditional funding application processes take too long, while we needed to leave as quickly as possible. Luckily, both Tilburg University's Board and CIEM have made a donation to this unique project, as well as the Flemish Institute for Technology Research VITO.

Yet even more remarkably, Belgian fire officer and digital humanitarian volunteer Bert Bruggemans initiated a crowd-funding platform to raise additional funding for our trip. While we have funds to travel to the Philippines and conduct our basic research, the extra money collected from 'the crowd' worldwide will allow us to travel to even more remote areas to assess the situation there. The crowd-funding platform, launched by supporting researcher Bert Bruggemans, can be found [here](#).

<http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/disaster-research-for-the-philippines-project>. It is not too late to contribute and support our research field trip!

We hope to share our first results with you in the next edition of this Newsletter!

Tina Comes  
University of Agder

Bartel Van de Walle  
Tilburg University

## COBACORE

### A new EU FP7 project on Community Based Comprehensive Recovery

Imagine that the city in which you live gets hit by floods. A wet spring, combined with heavy rainfall, raises the rivers in your city to dangerous levels. Fire brigades, rescue workers and support teams rush in to help those in need. But the affected area is large and the capacity is limited, leaving you with empty sandbags to be filled. Then groups of spontaneous volunteers come into town. Help you fill the sandbags to protect your house and property. They prepare a much needed hot meal for you and your neighbours after working through the night. One of the volunteers is a care taker and helps the older couple down the street to get dressed and to get ready for transport to an evacuation centre.

This scenario is what happened during the floods in Germany in June 2013. The levels of flood waters in Germany exceeded in some areas those seen in the "once in a century" floods of 2002 along the river banks of Elbe and Danube. In addition to the thousands of rescue workers numerous volunteers from other parts of the city, from other places or even from other regions arrived on site to render assistance as part of the crisis response to the floods. These spontaneous volunteers most of the time arrived on site as a reaction to initiatives setup by community members in different Facebook group pages.

Communities possess valuable skills, capacities and even supplies that can make a significant contribution to the crisis response. These may range from the filling of sandbags to providing a blanket and from restoring parks to providing a listening ear. The key challenge is to identify these capabilities and leveraging that potential in a crisis response, augmenting the rescue and relief efforts provided by professional agencies.

COBACORE (Community Based Comprehensive Recovery) is an EU FP7 project that aims to create a platform that aims to help engage, coordinate and facilitate community responses. COBACORE aims to facilitate the interaction between needs of the affected population, the response of the professional organizations and the capabilities of the responding –volunteer-community.



Of course this concept also poses some challenges. First we need to know what the needs are of the community, what needs are being addressed and identify what capabilities are available and offered in the responding community. Next we need to facilitate this exchange of 'demands' and 'offers'; information plays a key role in aligning these. Through information responding agencies can also direct the community response, for example to remote areas that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. Finally COBACORE would also enable professionals and trained volunteer to build additional capacity in the community, for example through additional training.

As one of the partners of the COBACORE project, Tilburg University is working on these challenges and the initial results are promising. We welcome everyone who wants to engage with us and contribute to this project!

Find more on: [www.cobacore.eu](http://www.cobacore.eu).

Kenny Meesters  
Bartel Van de Walle  
Tilburg University

## News

### European Satellite Navigation Prize 2013

Hussain Saleh writes that *The design of the Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSSs) Positioning Networks using Dynamic Optimisation for Real-Life Applications based on Disaster Management and Risk Reduction* won the ArabMENA Challenge of the European Satellite Navigation Competition 2013.

The design addressed the following problem. Geo-information applications aimed at solving real large-scale problems based on GNSS networks must deal with huge volumes of dynamically varying data; multiple, potentially conflicting, and often changing objectives; and highly complex models for describing the

problem environment. For critical real-life applications, the ability to rapidly develop an efficient, robust, and accurate working model that quickly produces solutions is essential for their outcome to be of value. Even a few minutes' delay in reaching a decision could make the difference between life and death. The solution: Our idea, a generic GNSS network for disaster monitoring and a management-modelling tool that combines large-scale database searches with artificial intelligence techniques at the core of its decision making calculation engine. This system is capable of dealing with dynamically evolving and potentially unpredictable environments and constraints. Key to the capabilities of this tool is real-time dynamic optimisation and the development of an intelligent self-learning system upon which the decision-making criteria are based. The system can easily be modified and adapted in near real time.

Congratulations from us all!

### **Call for Interest: Hosting ISCRAM 2016 Conference**

The Board of the ISCRAM Association is preparing for the organization of ISCRAM2016, the 13<sup>th</sup> international conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management. The Board wishes to invite people and organizations that are interested in organizing the event to reply to this call for interest.

The proposed conference venue for ISCRAM2016 should be in America, and the dates should be in the month of May.

ISCRAM has grown from an attendance of 72 people in 2004; for the last four years we have had an average of over 200 participants. The conference itself is a three-day event (Monday to Wednesday), preceded by a day of doctoral colloquium and tutorials on the Sunday.

If you are interested, please:

- Send a notification of your intent to [events.iscram@gmail.com](mailto:events.iscram@gmail.com) saying: " I, <name>, <affiliation> confirm, as a point of contact for my organization, that we have the intention of preparing a proposal for organizing the ISCRAM2016 conference." Please include your contact information.
- By sending your notification of intent, you are stating that you are willing to prepare a proposal within the timeframe set out below.

If you have any questions, please contact Tina Comes and Zeno Franco, ISCRAM Events committee chairs, at [events.iscram@gmail.com](mailto:events.iscram@gmail.com). We will also provide a Survival Guide for Organizers of ISCRAM events to support you and

your team through all phases. To find out more about ISCRAM Events, please visit our website: <http://www.iscramlive.org>.

Based on the notifications received, the ISCRAM Board will decide on the official invitations to submit a complete proposal. Invited candidates will be assisted by an ISCRAM liaison to help them prepare the document.

- Completed proposals will be reviewed by the ISCRAM Board, which will make the final selection. The selected organization and venue will be announced at the ISCRAM2014 Conference (Penn State, US) and presented in detail at ISCRAM2015 in Kristiansand, Norway.
- All candidates will receive feedback on their proposal in the week of the 1st of April 2014.
- At least one representative of the selected proposal is expected to visit the ISCRAM2014 conference and meet with the ISCRAM Board at that time.

Time line:

Deadline for the notification of intent:	10 January 2014
Official invitation from ISCRAM Board to submit a proposal:	20 January 2014
Deadline for the submission of completed proposals:	1 March 2014
Review committee feedback to candidates:	1 April 2013
Review committee recommendation to ISCRAM Board:	9 April 2014
Selection of ISCRAM 2015 host and venue:	17 April 2014

### **Partner and Sponsorship Pack**

Many of us find ourselves explaining what ISCRAM is to a range of organisations, often potential partners and sponsors. It is not easily to summarise quickly, effectively and proudly our aims, objectives and achievements. To help with this, John Merrell ([john@merrellav.com](mailto:john@merrellav.com)) has put together a short slideshow which illustrates our history and achievements since ISCRAM's inception in 2004.

## Successful PhD Defences

Congratulations to Steve Way who has been awarded his PhD by McMaster University. His thesis was titled: Information Requirements for Context-Aware Multi-Agency Real-Time Coordination during Crisis Response. He used grounded theory as his research methodology.

Abstract: Society faces many natural and man-made disasters which can have a large impact in terms of deaths, injuries, monetary losses, psychological distress, and economic effects. Society needs to find ways to prevent or reduce the negative impact of these disasters as much as possible. Information systems have been used to assist emergency response to a certain degree in some cases. However, there is still a lack of understanding on how to build an effective emergency response system. To identify the basic requirements of such systems, a grounded theory research method is used for data collection and analysis. Data from firsthand interviews and observations was combined with literature and analyzed to discover several emergent issues and concepts regarding disaster response. The issues and concepts were organized into four categories: i) context-awareness; ii) multi-party relationships; iii) task-based coordination; and iv) information technology support, which together identified the needs of disaster response coordination. Using evidence from the data, these factors were related to one another to develop a framework for context-aware multi-party coordination systems (CAMPCS). This study contributes to the field of emergency management as the framework represents a comprehensive theory for disaster response coordination that can guide future research on emergency management coordination..

## Call for news items

We want your news and will, within the bounds of relevance to ISCRAM, publish most things here: News of Members, including changes of job/address; New Research Projects; PhD defences; and so on. Please keep items to about 300 words. For successful PhD defences, please include the title, a short abstract (~250 words), the name of the awarding institution and any other details, such as being an Alumnus of an ISCRAM summer school. Please send all items to the Editor ([sfortier@gwu.edu](mailto:sfortier@gwu.edu)).

## Upcoming Conferences and Seminars, Journal Calls for Special Issues

### ISCRAM 2014

#### The 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management

*"Empowering citizens and communities through information systems for crisis response and management"*

State College, Pennsylvania, USA  
May 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014

[www.iscram2014.org](http://www.iscram2014.org)

#### Conference Registration Opens January 2014!

To register go here

<http://iscram2014.ist.psu.edu/node/2>

Early registration ends March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

Become an ISCRAM member and get a reduced rate on the conference registration.

To become a member go here

<http://www.iscramlive.org/portal/join-iscram>

You will need your membership number in order to get the discount while registering for the conference.



### ISCRAM ASIA 2014

#### The 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management

*"10 years of post-tsunami recovery: the role of ICTs in building disaster resilience"*

Columbo, Sri Lanka

June 20-21<sup>st</sup>, 2014

<http://iscramasia2014.org/>

ISCRAM-Asia 2014 will bring together top researchers and practitioners working in the area of information systems for crisis response. The conference provides an opportunity for academic researchers in Asia to present new

research and for practitioners to discuss best practices.

The ISCRAM-Asia 2014 conference is anchored on the [2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami Tenth Year Anniversary](#) (IOTX) convention organized by [LIRNEasia](#) and several partner organizations. The six-day IOTX convention comprises a combination of expert and technical workshops, a public lecture, and this conference.

The IOTX events are open to ISCRAM-Asia conference participants for no additional registration fee. Visit the website to learn more on the IOTX event: [www.iotxconvention.org](http://www.iotxconvention.org)

Submissions are invited for the following planned conference themes and topics:

1. Disaster Preparedness
  - Disaster Education and Learning (Awareness education training)
  - Functional Early Warning Systems (sensor, detection, decision, broker, and response subsystem cohesiveness)
  - Innovative Multi-stakeholder Community-focused Partnerships in Disaster Risk Reduction and Early Warning Systems
  - Innovative approaches, methods and tools for assessing vulnerability and resilience of people at risk
  - Disaster risk assessment and management
  - Planning, Foresight and/or Risk Analysis
2. Response
  - Humanitarian and Disaster relief supply chain management
  - Information Systems Supporting Situation Awareness (SA) for Enhanced Disaster/Emergency Management
3. Cross Cutting Issues
  - Decision support systems for emergency preparedness and management
  - Use of ICTs in public health and emergency medical management
  - Modelling and Simulations
4. Other Related Topics
  - Any other topic you feel is relevant to the aims of the conference

Selected papers will be published in the conference proceedings.

*Deadline for submission of full and short papers, as well as panel discussion proposals: February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014.*

Further details are on the conference web-site: <http://iscramasia2014.org/>

## **Humanitarian Technology: Science, Systems and Global Impact 2014**

Boston MA, USA

May 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014

<http://www.humanitariantechnology.org>

### *Call for Papers*

Humanitarian Technology: Science, Systems and Global Impact is being held on 13 ? 15 May 2014 at the Marriott Courtyard Boston Cambridge. Situated on the banks of the Charles River, the conference venue is conveniently located in Boston?s world-renowned vibrant innovation district, home to high-tech firms and leading academic institutions.

HumTech2014 will provide a forum for scientists, engineers, technologists, field workers and policy makers to discuss recent research and exchange technical ideas.

Technical sessions and technology and policy panels will focus on all aspects of technology, from science to systems, that have a global humanitarian impact. Conference tracks will be presented within an operationally-relevant context, drawing as much as possible from real-world experiences in humanitarian operations and logistics, disaster relief, emergency management, disease management, global health initiatives, international development, and other areas. This will be achieved through talks and panel sessions presented by current practitioners, including professional responders, service workers, and government officials.

HumTech2014 is pleased to be working with ISCRAM and the ISCRAM2014 organizers. ISCRAM2014 will be held the following week at the Pennsylvania State University. Conference organizers are working to link these events to facilitate attendance at both conferences.

### *Tracks:*

- A. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
- B. Health and Disease Management
- C. Public Safety and Emergency Management
- D. Emerging Technologies
- E. International Development, Poverty Alleviation and Food Security
- F. Water, Energy, Agriculture, Policy, Security, Education, ...

Paper Submission Deadline: *31 January 2014*

*Submissions and General Registration Now Open*

You are invited to submit papers in all areas of humanitarian engineering and technology development. Papers describing academic research as well as field work are encouraged.

Proceedings to be published in a dedicated journal issue by Elsevier

## **RMCI 2014: Special Track on Risk Management and Cyber-Informatics**

### **18th Multi-conference on Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics: WMSCI 2014**

Orlando, Florida, USA

July 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014

[www.2014iisconferences.org/rmci](http://www.2014iisconferences.org/rmci)

#### *Call for Papers*

Risk management has been related, in increasing degree, to Informatics and Cybernetics. Today, almost every organization depends on Information and Communications Technologies. Software and networks supporting organizational everyday activities must be reliable, secure and safe. Flawed or failed software can present severe organizational and business risks that include liability costs, productivity loss, quality decreasing, brand damage, revenue loss, etc. Simultaneously, cybercrimes (cyber frauds, sensible data protection, etc.) and liability in the "electronic workplace" are requiring, with increasing urgency, an adequate risk management. Consequently, Organizational/business risk management is increasingly including informatics and cybernetics in their planning and activities. And vice versa, Informatics and Cybernetics technologies, concepts and theories are increasingly being used in risk management's research, consulting, studies, projects, training, and activities.

Accordingly, the main purpose of the Special Track on Risk Management and Cyber-Informatics (RMCI 2014) is to bring together researchers, practitioners and consultants from both Risk Management areas and informatics and cybernetics fields and disciplines to presents results of their research, as well as their problems and solutions in Risk Management, the reciprocal applications between both field, and the application of both fields in other areas. Consequently, the major areas of the track are:

- Risk Management
- Risk Management in Informatics and Cybernetics
- Applications of Informatics and Cybernetics to Risk Management problems and solutions
- Applications of Risk Management and Cyber-Informatics (RMCI)
  - Applications of RMCI in Energy Systems, Technologies, procedures and Methodologies

- Applications of RMCI in Economics and Finance
- Applications of RMCI in the War on Terrorism
- Other Applications of RMCI

Submissions for face-to-face and virtual presentation (via asynchronous communication) are invited.

Collocated events and possible extensions in the deadlines can be found at

<http://www.2014iisconferences.org/current-deadlines.asp>.

Technical keynote speakers will be selected from early submissions because this selection requires an additional evaluation according to the quality of the paper, assessed by its reviewers, the authors' CV and the paper's topic. Submitted papers/abstracts will go through at least two reviewing processes: (1) double-blind (at least three reviewers), (2) non-blind, and/or (3) participative peer reviews.

Authors of accepted papers who registered in the conference can have access to the evaluations and possible feedback provided by the reviewers who recommended the acceptance of their papers/abstracts, so they can accordingly improve the final version of their papers. Non-registered authors will not have access to the reviews of their respective submissions.

Authors of the best 20%-25% of the papers presented at the conference (included those virtually presented) will be invited to adapt their papers for their publication in the Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics.

#### *Submission Deadlines:*

Abstracts/Draft Papers: November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
Notification to Authors: January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Camera Ready: February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014

## **i-ASC 2014: Information Access in Smart Cities**

Workshop in conjunction with ECIR 2014

Amsterdam, Netherlands

April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014

<http://dcs.gla.ac.uk/workshops/iASC2014>

#### *Call for Papers*

#### *Overview*

Cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century do not only have the physical infrastructure of roads, buildings, and power networks, but also have the knowledge infrastructure represented with heterogeneous systems and big data platforms. These systems

vary from low-level sensing devices including environmental sensors and CCTV cameras, to public databases, and social network streams. On the other hand, recent research has identified a variety of emerging information needs that citizens often have in their public urban spaces. These local information needs may be complex and are not necessarily served by existing systems such as web search engines. These include obtaining real-time information about local events in the city or finding free parking spaces.

The aforementioned knowledge infrastructure opens up opportunities for cities to become smarter and serve the emerging information needs of their citizens by harnessing the vast amount of diverse information stemming from the various systems within the city. The workshop would be an opportunity for researchers from the information retrieval (IR) community, and other related communities, to discuss the emerging research topic of information access in smart cities, identifying its unique challenges, opportunities and future directions.

In particular, we identify four main research themes that we aim to cover

- Acquiring and digesting heterogeneous city data
- Searching smart cities
- Human interaction and context in smart cities
- Smart city applications

The goal of the workshop is twofold. Firstly, we aim to foster building a research community to work on the aforementioned research themes within smart cities. We envisage that this community will be inclusive of academics and practitioners not only in IR, but also in a variety of disciplines such as knowledge management, databases, machine learning, and human computer interfaces. Secondly, we aim to define a roadmap for developing information access systems in smart cities, where we identify the key challenges in each of the four themes and instantiate concrete tasks we can start working on as a community.

#### *Topics of Interest*

The relevant topics of interest for i-ASC include but are not limited to:

- City data
  - City data acquisition and integration
  - Mining city databases and semantic knowledge sources
  - Linked data for smart cities
  - Fusing multiple sensor and social streams
  - Big data platforms
- Searching smart cities

- Localised search
- Searching structured city data
- Real-time search over multiple data streams
- Real-time filtering of multiple social and sensor streams
- Searching location-based social networks
- Human interaction and context
  - Zero-query access in smart cities
  - Modelling contextual information
  - Modelling personal and social interests
  - Personalisation and recommendation
  - Mobile interfaces
  - Exploration and discovery in smart cities
- Applications
  - Monitoring transportation
  - Tourism accessibility
  - Security and disaster management

#### *Submission Details*

We welcome submissions of technical papers (4 pages max) and position papers (2 pages max).

All papers should be formatted in the standard ACM conference format, with a two-column layout and must be submitted electronically in a printable PDF format through the Easy Chair submission page:

<https://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=i-asc2014>.

Please see the full Call for Papers at <http://dcs.gla.ac.uk/workshops/iASC2014/cfp.html>.

#### *Important Dates*

Submission deadline:	5 February 2014
Notification of acceptance:	28 February 2014
Camera-ready due:	15 March 2014
Workshop date:	13 April 2014

## Diary of Upcoming Events and Calls

When and Where	Event/Call	Contact
10 Jan 2014	Call for Interest: Hosting ISCRAM 2016 Conference	<a href="http://www.iscramlive.org/portal/node/2821">http://www.iscramlive.org/portal/node/2821</a>
13 Apr 2014 Amsterdam	i-ASC 2014: Information Access in Smart Cities. Workshop in conjunction with ECIR 2014	<a href="http://dcs.gla.ac.uk/workshops/iASC2014">http://dcs.gla.ac.uk/workshops/iASC2014</a>
13-15 May 2014 Boston MA, USA	Humanitarian Technology: Science, Systems and Global Impact 2014	<a href="http://www.humanitariantechnology.org">http://www.humanitariantechnology.org</a>
18-21 May 2014 Penn State College, USA	The 11 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management: "Empowering citizens and communities through information systems for crisis response and management"	<a href="http://www.iscram2014.org">http://www.iscram2014.org</a>
20-21 Jun 2014 Columbo, Sri Lanka	The 2nd Asia Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management. "10 years of post-tsunami recovery: the role of ICTs in building disaster resilience"	<a href="http://iscramasia2014.org/">http://iscramasia2014.org/</a>
15-18 Jul 2014 Orlando, Florida, USA	RMCI 2014: Special Track on Risk Management and Cyber-Informatics at the 18 <sup>th</sup> Multi-conference on Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics: WMSCI 2014	<a href="http://www.2014iisconferences.org/rmci">http://www.2014iisconferences.org/rmci</a>
24-28 Aug 2014 Davos, Switzerland	5 <sup>th</sup> International Disaster and Risk Conference IDRC Davos 2014	<a href="http://www.idrc.info/">http://www.idrc.info/</a>