
Decision: AAAI-2021 submission 1692

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Dear Suping Zhou

Congratulations! We are delighted to inform you that your paper 1692 (Inferring Emotion from Large-scale Internet Voice Data: A Semi-supervised Curriculum Augmentation based Deep Learning Approach) has been accepted for presentation at the Thirty-Fifth AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-21). This year we received a record 9,034 submissions, of which over 7,911 were reviewed. Based on a thorough and rigorous review process we have accepted approximately 1,692 papers (this final number may fluctuate slightly based on pending dual submission and plagiarism investigations). This yields an overall acceptance rate of 21%. Given this very high bar for acceptance, you should be proud of your success!

To view your final reviews please visit the CMT web site:

<https://cmt3.research.microsoft.com/AAAI2021/>.

Our review process was elaborate and thorough, involving approximately 9,492 PC members, 606 SPC members, and 246 Area Chairs. We pioneered a novel two-phase reviewing system that led to much more intensive consideration of papers near the decision boundary. In Phase I, we solicited two reviews per submission and rejected those that did not receive at least one positive review. We also offered a "Fast Track" for NeurIPS and EMNLP papers that were rejected after the AAAI main track submission deadline and that received above-average scores; these submissions were all evaluated in Phase II, with reviewers also considering both their NeurIPS or EMNLP reviews in place of Phase I reviews and a cover letter summarizing changes made in response to these reviews.

Every main-track Phase II paper received at least three reviews across both phases; over 93% received four or more reviews. Every fast-track paper received at least two AAAI reviews in Phase II; over 95% received three or more new reviews. Additional expert reviews were solicited as needed, with many papers receiving five, six, or even seven reviews. Every paper also received an additional meta-review written by a senior member of the program committee. For over 97% of submissions--even in most cases where papers received unanimous review recommendations--reviewers, SPC and AC members discussed the merits of the paper and the author response. Discussions were often detailed and, in most cases, led to resolution of issues raised by the reviewers. Author responses

featured heavily in these discussions and often played a pivotal role in accept decisions. Area chairs oversaw the review of each paper, providing expertise and guidance where needed, handling issues that arose, consulting on meta-reviews, and ultimately making final recommendations. Finally, the four program co-chairs individually considered each paper, flagging hundreds for intensive review and where needed departing from AC recommendations to ensure that each paper was held to a uniform standard.

We note that decisions did not solely depend on average reviewer scores; we did not decide acceptance and rejection using a numerical cutoff. The score intervals for accepted and rejected papers overlapped considerably, with rejected Phase II papers having average scores between 2.0 to 7.0 and accepted papers having average scores ranging from 4.5 to 9.3. Discussions often led reviewers to change their minds; in such cases they often but not always changed their scores. In some cases papers were accepted or rejected based on a single expert opinion, even when it differed from the majority opinion. Senior members of the committee (SPC members, area chairs and program chairs) also sometimes overruled decisions at various steps of the review process. Our process paid particular attention to papers near the threshold of acceptance, and scores were particularly weak indicators of final decisions for such papers.

Acceptance of your submission reflects our confidence that your paper will enhance the AAI-21 technical program. Whereas the program committee expended tremendous effort in an attempt to be both as fair and accurate as possible, we recognize that the conference reviewing process is inherently limited. Evaluation is subject to random and subjective factors, so no doubt some reviewer comments are spurious and some decisions could have justifiably gone the other way. While we tried hard to ensure that the reviews and meta-reviews give an accurate and complete picture of the program committee's final assessment, we did not always succeed.

Nevertheless, we urge you to take very seriously the guidance of reviews and meta-reviews in preparing a preprint that will be included in all electronic conference materials. This preprint is due December 15th 2020, which is a firm deadline. Please prepare this preprint in the submission format (however, please remove line numbers if you used them for submission). As before, you are allowed 7 pages of technical content plus two pages that may include an ethics statement, references and acknowledgements; if you choose, you may additionally purchase up to two pages of technical content. We will send detailed instructions for preparing your preprint in a separate message in the next few days.

The final camera ready version of your paper is not due until March 2, 2021, providing you with further opportunity to improve your manuscript based on

comments you receive at the conference.

AAAI will be held virtually from Feb 2nd to 9th. All AAAI papers will be presented via a pre-recorded video talk, which will be made available to attendees prior to the conference. Additionally, there will be interactive poster sessions in which you can discuss your work with other attendees. We will send you more information about these details shortly.

At least one author of every accepted paper is required to register for the conference and attend to present the paper; we encourage all authors to attend if possible. Registration information and the online form will be available by Dec 4th, and you will receive a separate message with details at that time. In addition to the outstanding technical program, AAAI-21 continues the tradition of a series of provocative panels and prominent invited speakers (this year, including Regina Barzilay; Daphne Koller; Tuomas Sandholm) and exciting co-located events including IAAI-21 and EAAI-21. Information on the conference will be continually updated at <https://aaai.org/Conferences/AAAI-21/>.

Again, congratulations!

Sincerely,

Kevin Leyton-Brown and Mausam
Program Co-Chairs

Yan Liu and Gabriele Röger
Associate Program Co-Chairs

Fei Fang, Eric Sodomka, and P. Anandan
AI for Social Impact Track Co-chairs

Dinesh Raghu, Guangneng Hu and Hedayat Zarkoob
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