

CLEF 2012

Call for Lab proposals

The CLEF 2012 conference is next year's edition of the popular CLEF campaign and workshop series which has run since 2000 contributing to the systematic evaluation of information access systems, primarily through experimentation on shared tasks. In 2010 CLEF was launched in a new format, as a conference with research presentations, panels, poster and demo sessions and laboratory evaluation workshops interleaved during three and a half days of intense and stimulating research activities.

CLEF

The CLEF Initiative is a self-organized body whose main mission is to promote research, innovation, and development of information access systems with an emphasis on multilingual and multimodal information with various levels of structure. CLEF promotes research and development by providing an infrastructure for:

- multilingual and multimodal system testing, tuning and evaluation;
- investigation of the use of unstructured, semi-structured, highly-structured, and semantically enriched data in information access;
- creation of reusable test collections for benchmarking;
- exploration of new evaluation methodologies and innovative ways of using experimental data;
- discussion of results, comparison of approaches, exchange of ideas, and transfer of knowledge.

In 2012 CLEF will be organised in September in Rome, and researchers and practitioners from all segments of the information access and related communities are invited to submit evaluation lab proposals for review. The lab selection committee will select among the proposals and will occasionally suggest modifications to proposed labs to best suit the CLEF lab workflow.

Scope

Proposals are accepted for two different types of labs:

1. *Evaluation labs* that follow a "campaign-style" evaluation practice for specific information access problems (during the year preceding the conference) in the tradition of past CLEF campaign tracks. In 2011 there were 6 evaluation labs (<http://clef2011.org/index.php?page=pages/labs.html>): PAN, ImageCLEF, QA4MRE, LogCLEF, MusiCLEF, and CLEF-IP. Topics covered by evaluation labs can be inspired by any information access-related domain or task.
2. *Lab workshops* organised as speaking and discussion sessions to explore issues of evaluation methodology, metrics, and

processes in information access and closely related fields, such as natural language processing, machine translation, and human-computer interaction. Lab workshops can be a first step towards an evaluation lab: in 2011 one lab workshop was given: CHiC. One of the 2010 lab workshops (LogCLEF) evolved into a 2011 evaluation lab. This progression from a lab workshop to an evaluation lab is a development track we wish to encourage - but lab workshops do not need to be associated with an evaluation lab: theoretical and methodological issues are numerous in our field and can well be addressed in focused workshop sessions without shared tasks.

If the organisers of the proposal are new to CLEF or other shared task evaluation campaigns, we highly recommend that a lab workshop first be organised to discuss the format, the problem space, and the practicalities of the shared task.

In both cases, it is expected that lab sessions at the conference will contain ample time for general discussion and engagement by all participants - not just those presenting campaign results and papers. Organisers should plan time for panels, demos, etc. where applicable.

Location

The CLEF 2012 conference will reserve about half of the conference program for lab sessions. The lab sessions will take place at the site of the conference in Rome. The labs will present their overall results "overview presentations" during the plenary scientific paper sessions to allow non-participants to get a sense of where the research frontiers are moving.

Usage scenarios - the validation of benchmarking

The sustainability and impact of the effort put into CLEF benchmarking evaluations hinges on their validity when applied to information seeking and information access activities in practice. We wish to see all labs - whether lab workshops or evaluation labs - to address the issue of validation through explicitly stated hypotheses of usage. An evaluation lab should be concrete with respect to situation, context, platform and user preferences for which the suggested evaluation benchmark is valid; a lab workshop should discuss how participants with domain and usage experience and expertise can be recruited to the workshop to provide a grounding of evaluation methodology in application to real-world task.

Proposal Submission

Lab proposals should provide sufficient information for the lab organising committee to be able to judge the importance, quality, impact and benefits for the research community.

Each lab should have one or more organisers responsible for the execution of the lab. Proposals should be 2-4 pages long and should

provide the following information:

1. Title of the proposed lab.
2. The planned format of the lab, i.e. evaluation lab or lab workshop.
3. Planned length of the lab session at the conference: half-day, one day, two days.
4. Names and full addresses, including contact details, of the lab organiser(s), a brief description of the organisers' experience and background in the topic and in previous evaluation campaigns, and links to web pages of the lab organisers. The lab selection committee will expect the lab organisers
5. A brief description of the lab topic and goals, its relevance to CLEF and significance for the research field.
6. The proposal should give a brief but clear statement of usage scenarios or domain to which the activity is intended to contribute. In connection with the usage scenarios task-relevant stakeholders should be identified and ideally enlisted in an active role in the lab to validate the scenarios.
7. A statement on the intended development/growth path if the proposal is for a continuation of activities previously undertaken at CLEF workshops.
8. A description of the target audience, areas from which the participants are expected to come, an analysis of the potential for participants (number, statements of intent to participate where applicable), potential industry stakeholders, strategy for publicising the lab.
9. Arrangements for the organisation of the lab campaign, if applicable, including a brief outline of the campaign milestones, test data to be used, indications of the size of the data collections, issues of scalability, tasks to be proposed to participants, and format of presentation at the conference.
10. If the lab proposes to set up a steering committee to oversee its activities, include names, addresses, and home page links of people who have agreed to be part of the steering committee if the lab proposal is accepted. This list should ideally include people from several different academic sites and industrial stakeholders.

Reviewing Process

Each submitted proposal will be reviewed by the CLEF 2012 lab organising committee. The decision will be sent by email to the responsible organiser by November 30, 2011. The final length of the lab session will be determined based on the overall organisation of the conference and the number of submissions received by a lab. Due to space restrictions, only a limited number of lab sessions can be

conducted in parallel at the conference. The reviewers may suggest modifications to the proposed lab in order to better fit it to the overall organisation of CLEF 2012.

Reviewing criteria for labs include:

1. The appropriateness of the lab to the overall information access agenda pursued by CLEF and its fit to other labs considered for inclusion.
2. Potential impact of the lab to current and future real-world information access challenges, current commercial applications, and future promising application arenas.
3. Number of potential participants, critical mass.
4. Innovation, uniqueness and amount of contribution to new knowledge in the field.
5. Focus of lab program, and specifically for evaluation labs: Practicability and feasibility of task, soundness of methodology.
6. For returning proposals: Movement beyond previous year's labs.
7. Coverage of theory and practice, breadth of organising group, contact surfaces to stakeholders and research efforts.

Lab Organiser's Tasks:

1. Produce a "Call for Participation" for an evaluation lab or a "Call for Papers" for a lab workshop and disseminating it through all appropriate means.
2. Provide a web page URL which can be linked into the CLEF 2012 home page.
3. Provide a brief description of the lab for the conference program.
4. Sign up campaign participants, and execute the campaign in the case of evaluation labs.
5. Review submitted papers and position papers in case of lab workshops.
6. Schedule lab session activities in collaboration with the local organisers and the CLEF Lab Organising Committee Chairs.
7. Send the lab schedule and other lab material, all in PDF format, to the CLEF Lab Organising Committee Chairs (deadline to be defined).
8. Organise of post-conference publication of lab results in appropriate form (special issue, lab proceedings, etc.).

The lab material (papers, presentations etc.) will be distributed by the CLEF 2012 organisation to the conference participants in electronic format (copyright will not be asked for from the authors, but only permission to publish and disseminate).

Publication

The working notes of the labs will be published online in time for the conference. It is foreseen that this online publication will have an ISBN number and be indexed in relevant services. It is the responsibility of

lab organisers to arrange for appropriate post-conference publication of the lab results.

Important Dates

Final lab proposals: 20 November 2011

Notification of lab acceptance: 30 November 2011

CLEF 2012 Conference: September 2012

Submission Details

Lab proposals (or questions) should be submitted via e-mail (either plain text or PDF format) to both CLEF Lab Organising Committee Chairs:

Jussi Karlgren, Gavagai and SICS, jussi@sics.se

Christa Womser-Hacker, Universität Hildesheim, womser@uni-hildesheim.de

CLEF Lab Organising Committee (CLEF-LOC)

Jussi Karlgren, Gavagai and SICS (CLEF LOC 2012 co-chair)

Christa Womser-Hacker, Universität Hildesheim (CLEF LOC 2012 co-chair)

Paul Clough, The University of Sheffield (CLEF LOC 2011 co-chair)

Hideo Joho, University of Tsukuba, (NTCIR-10 programme committee chair)

Jaana Kekäläinen, University of Tampere

Vanessa Murdock, Yahoo! Research

Doug Oard, University of Maryland