

Globally Yours

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Neha Kumar, Eunice Sari, Adriana Vivacqua, Naveena Karusala, Vikram Kamath, Luigi De Russis, and Loren Terveen, on behalf of the SIGCHI Executive Committee

Globally Yours

The SIGCHI community is unlikely to have experienced as powerful, if catastrophic, a unifier as Covid-19. Even as we struggle to respond to the pandemic in our roles as researchers, educators, practitioners, and designers—with stops and breaks along the way—we have continued to forge meaningful ties and found ways to move forward together. The Voices of SIGCHI section of our Medium publication has begun to reflect some of these activities; for example, an interview with Peter Dalsgaard highlights a collaborative effort within our community to engage HCI skills toward Covid response [1]. We invite more contributions to this forum so that it might afford a glimpse into the diverse lives of HCI researchers and practitioners and their activities at this time, as well as in the post-Covid futures that await us.

The pause on travel may have impacted physical movement, but virtual conferencing opportunities have more than made up for this loss, creating room for numerous new connections. The SIGCHI Executive Committee (EC) has held eight Ask Me Anything (AMA) sessions since August [2], in an effort to foster greater transparency in communications between the SIGCHI leadership and membership. There has also been a surge in virtual events within and across chapters, through meetups, symposia, workshops, design challenges, and more. Global HCI/UX experts have taken on opportunities for collaboration and learning, such as mentorship, reviewing, and judging competitions, in the absence of



physical travel and the need for additional financial investments. Such activities have been of benefit to us all, offering avenues for expanding our commitments to—and strengthening ties across—our global SIGCHI community. All these events, or at least those that we know about (tell us more!), can be tracked through our brand new virtual community events calendar [3].

Other than one skipped funding cycle in April, for temporary austerity measures prompted by Covid's beginnings, the SIGCHI Development Fund continued to operate on quarterly calls. Our July and October calls were dedicated to supporting virtual events and initiatives, aligned with the cause of supporting innovative virtual formats, and creating spaces to address racism and other systemic injustices in the SIGCHI community. We are grateful that our budget allowed us to

support these interactive virtual engagements for audience participation around the world, and particularly from and in the Global South, through online workshops, tools, and support for building educational content [1]. Moving forward, we intend to do away with quarterly submissions and approve proposals year-round. Please apply!

There are also plans in the offing for further strengthening connections between chapters and across regions. We are in the process of forming a SIGCHI Latin America Committee. We are also in conversation with chapters in Africa and the Arab region to build partnerships with and across SIGCHI there as well. Our hope is for the SIGCHI EC to forge partnerships that can facilitate learning across the local and the global, embracing a pluriverse of HCI knowledges across the world.

We began this work through the creation of the Asia Development Committee in 2015, which has played an important role in promoting HCI activity and building a community of HCI researchers and practitioners across the continent. How might we see even greater representation of voices from your chapter(s) or region(s) in the events and initiatives that SIGCHI organizes and supports? If you have answers for us, please email sigchi-4all@acm.org.

And finally, for when travel plans are back in business, we have redesigned our travel awards based on the significant input and feedback received (thank you!) in a survey we ran last year (was it March?). We will be combining the various forms of travel support we previously offered into the revised Gary Marsden Travel Awards. These will make travel support accessible to students as well as early-career professionals, for those who need it in the Global South *and* North, on terms that are hopefully more flexible than before [4]. And come January, we will begin providing “virtual travel” awards, as we wait for physical travel to become a thing again.

Au revoir!

ENDNOTES

1. SIGCHI Medium: <https://medium.com/sigchi>
2. SIGCHI YouTube: <https://youtube.com/user/acmsigchi>
3. SIGCHI Community Events Calendar: <https://sigchi.org/community-events/>
4. SIGCHI Gary Marsden Travel Awards: <https://sigchi.org/gary-marsden-travel-awards/>

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