



ACM SIGAI Activities Fund 2020: Call for Proposals

SIGAI Executive Committee (ACM SIGAI; chair_sigai@acm.org)

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Overview

ACM SIGAI invites funding proposals for artificial intelligence (AI) activities that can take place entirely virtually and that have a strong outreach component to students, researchers, practitioners not working on AI technologies, or to the public in general.

We funded several proposals with a similar outreach thrust last year, but those were largely based around physical interactions. With the necessity of responding to the current situation and the Covid-19 pandemic, we are instead focusing this year on activities that can both take place virtually and provide resources, material, or engagement to the broader community through virtual means. Nevertheless, a focus of, and knowledge of, local populations that this could reach, and evidence of the ability to reach such populations, will be positively viewed.

The purpose of this call is to promote a better understanding of current AI technologies, including their strengths and limitations, as well as their promise for the future. Examples of fundable activities include (but are not limited to), virtual panels on AI technology (including on AI ethics) with expert speakers, creating podcasts or short films on AI technologies that are accessible to the public, and holding AI programming competitions virtually. ACM SIGAI will look for evidence that the information presented by the activity will be of high quality, accurate, unbiased (for example, not influenced by company interests), and at the right level for the intended audience.

ACM SIGAI will fund up to five proposals. The funding will be provided either as reimbursement (up to \$2000), or as an honorarium (up to \$1000), keeping in mind that the honorarium option has tax consequences for the recipient. In the case of honorarium payments, we plan to ensure that the final “deliverable” is in keeping with what was promised in the proposal before sending funding, and that you

produce a writeup of the project for submission to AI Matters, the SIGAI newsletter.

We will prioritize the following types of proposals:

- a Proposals from ACM affiliated organizations other than conferences (such as ACM SIGAI chapters or ACM chapters).
- b Out-of-the-box ideas that can be delivered rapidly,
- c New activities (rather than existing and recurring activities),
- d Activities with long-term impact, and
- e Activities that reach many people. We prefer not to fund activities for which sufficient funding is already available from elsewhere or that result in profit for the organizers.

Note that expert talks on AI technology can typically be arranged with financial support of the ACM Distinguished Speaker program (<https://speakers.acm.org/>) and are not appropriate for funding via this call. Likewise, webinars can be hosted in partnership with ACM SIGAI (e.g., <https://learning.acm.org/techtalks/ethicsai>). If you want to participate in programs such as these please reach out to us separately.

Submission Guidelines

A proposal should contain the following information on at most 3 pages:

- A description of the activity (including when and where it will be held);
- A budget for the activity and the amount of funding requested, and whether other organizations have been or will be approached for funding (and, if so, for how much). This could also be a request for an honorarium payment instead;
- An explanation of how the activity fits this call (including whether it is new or recurring, which audience it will benefit, and how large the audience is);

- A description of the organizers and other participants (such as speakers) involved in the activity (including their expertise and their affiliation with ACM SIGAI or ACM);
- A description of what will happen to the surplus in case there is, unexpectedly, one; and the name, affiliation, and contact details (including postal and email address, phone number, and URL) of the corresponding organizer.

Grantees are required to submit reports to ACM SIGAI following completion of their activities with details on how they utilized the funds and other information which might also be published in the ACM SIGAI newsletter “AI Matters.”

The deadline for submissions is 11:59pm on June 15, 2020 (UTC-12). Proposals should be submitted as pdf documents in any style at <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=sigaiiaaf2020>

Committees

The program is organized by the SIGAI Executive Committee, and will be evaluated by them with the help of other SIGAI officers and external reviewers.

The funding decisions of ACM SIGAI are final and cannot be appealed. Some funding earmarked for this call might not be awarded at the discretion of ACM SIGAI, for example, in case the number of high-quality proposals is not sufficiently large.

Contact

In case of questions, please first check the ACM SIGAI blog for announcements and clarifications: <https://sigai.acm.org/aimatters/blog/>. Questions should be directed to Sanmay Das (sanmayd@acm.org) and Nicholas Mattei (nsmattei@gmail.com), the SIGAI Chair and Vice-Chair.



The SIGAI EC consists of the chair, vice-chair, secretary/treasurer, and past chair of SIGAI.