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General Chair's Welcome

It is my pleasure and honor to welcome you to the Genetic and Evolutionary Computation Conference (GECCO) 2017 in Berlin, Germany, July 15-19, on behalf of the entire organization committee. GECCO is the main conference of the Special Interest Group on Genetic and Evolutionary Computation (SIGEVO) of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). GECCO prides itself in being the top quality conference in the area of genetic and evolutionary computation. This quality is ensured by having a selective and thorough reviewing process. Decisions on the acceptance of papers are made by expert track chairs with strong reputations, covering all the key areas in our field.

This year 464 papers were submitted to 13 different tracks, and 1780 reviews were assigned. Approximately 39% of papers have been accepted as full papers, with a further 36% accepted for poster presentation.

I am thrilled that this year we are able to offer an enticing mix of academic and corporate invited keynote presentations by Francesca Ciccarelli of King's College London and The Francis Crick Institute, Drew Purves and Chrisantha Fernando of Google DeepMind, and, for the SIGEVO Chair plenary lecture, Hod Lipson of Columbia University.

Attending GECCO provides an unparalleled opportunity to listen to and interact with the leading experts in our field, to establish new collaborations, and to reunite with well-known friends. On top of that, GECCO this year offers an amazing plethora of 21 workshops and 33 tutorials at no extra charge. Furthermore, with 7 competitions and the annual Humies event sponsored by John Koza, GECCO is sure to present the edge of modern computational possibilities and the latest human competitive results in our field. Finally, GECCO 2017 also brings a few new items to the table such as a job market, a summer school, and a completely new look and feel for the website.

I would like to thank all authors for submitting their excellent work to GECCO 2017 and all people who contributed to the organization of the conference. I am very much in debt to the organization committee, the track chairs, and the reviewers for their tremendous work. GECCO could not happen without the joint and tireless effort of the amazing people that make up the GECCO community.

I would like to specifically mention and thank the editor-in-chief Gabriela Ochoa for the excellent teamwork and Francisco Chicano for the huge job of getting the proceedings together in time. I would also like to mention and thank the core event organization team Cara Candler and Roxane Rose as well as this year's addition Taylor Vick from Executive Events for handling registrations and logistics, and Franz Rothlauf and Marc Schoenauer from SIGEVO for their in-depth knowledge, experience and advice on how to organize a successful GECCO.

On behalf of GECCO I further want to thank our industry sponsors Sentient, Uber AI Labs as well as Springer, Beacon and ACM SIGEVO for their contribution and support.

Finally, but perhaps most of all, I sincerely wish all of you attending GECCO an excellent conference experience that brings you a lot of new insights, collaborations, ideas and inspiration for future research, and of course, some fun to go with it all.

Peter A.N. Bosman
GECCO 2017 General Chair
Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica (CWI)
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

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