

HCIC 2021 Call for Participation

Virtual workshop, June 20-25 (exact dates TBD)

## Building Alliances, Working with Difference: Toward Equity and Accessibility

**\*\*\* Note for all HCIC 2020 submitters: since HCIC 2020 was postponed, you may, but are not required to, resubmit your 2020 submission for 2021. However, a 2021 submission is required. In other words, your 2020 submission will not automatically carry over; a new 2021 submission must be made, even if it is a resubmit of your 2020 submission. \*\*\***

Inclusion and accessibility are growing priorities in almost every sector of society. The interaction of technology, policy, social justice, and human passion shapes what inclusion and accessibility mean, how they can be done, and how they are communicated and understood. In some cases, practical innovations in technology and work-practices promote inclusion and accessibility, and we have seen this occur during the pandemic. For example, remote meetings can enable wider global participation in academic conferences and Program Committee meetings and are also beneficial for people who have care responsibilities and disabilities that make travel difficult. And technology increases economic participation: small businesses can reach larger audiences, and online browsing and delivered goods can make shopping easier when navigating to and through physical stores is difficult.

However, the quick and often closed-box way research and development propels technical solutions can have negative consequences, often exacerbating marginalization for those already systematically disadvantaged. For example, if someone with disabilities cannot use a technology when it is released, that one experience adds to the myriad of exclusionary social and technology-based experiences they have accumulated already, and through this exclusion, the technology is communicating the “norm” of who is expected to be able to use and not use it. In our effort to maximize impact, we may unintentionally homogenize or colonize peoples, nations, and cultures whom we exclude from design activities. For example, removing burdensome travel and using meeting software with sophisticated capabilities may impose expectations of increased and multitask engagement. As another example, increased commerce can cheapen labor and can further distance consumers from those who prepare their orders. These tensions raise important questions about who will benefit most from technology and how to design technology to counteract and prevent harmful impacts.

At HCIC 2021, we will bring together a program of HCI research and design which explores how HCI impacts on inclusion/accessibility. First, we will examine how the field already makes sense of inclusion and accessibility by exploring both contemporary theories and practical contributions. Second, we will discuss how we may promote alliances and appreciate differences toward the design of more accessible, inclusive technologies, and toward raising

participation of people who are under-represented in HCI. Our integration of inclusion and accessibility into a unified theme of *inclusion/accessibility* is intentional and two-fold.

- First, many diversity and inclusion efforts do not consider people with disabilities among those they intend to amplify and benefit.
- Second, much accessibility research in HCI is not intersectional and may best serve disabled people with the most privilege.

This means that often, when we aim to increase representation, we do so for one group at a time, such as women, racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, or the LGBTQIA+ community. In so doing, we ignore everyone's complex identities. Further, those who tend to benefit most are those who experience primarily one form of, rather than multiple forms of oppression. We believe synergy will engage important conversations on HCI's role in promoting inclusion/accessibility in such a way that is intersectional and thoughtful, leveraging the increasing power and capabilities of technology to encourage working across difference while slowing down to proactively consider tradeoffs and scaffold careful deployments.

While our combined theme attempts to nuance the ways inclusion/accessibility are often conceived on their own, we recognize the reductive qualities of this argument, which disappear important aspects of power and privilege. For example, HCIC attendance requires affiliation with a member institution, peer review, and until 2021, travel. Further, while merging disability and access into inclusion programs which often seek to increase the representation of and relevance for people with minoritized genders, races, disabilities, classes, religions, sexual identities, and national origins, we recognize that we are not naming all identities and experiences historically and currently underrepresented in HCI. As such, we welcome submissions that contest the very boundaries we are drawing with this CFP.

## Possible Topics

For each of these topics, we invite both applied work and theoretical work. The program will intentionally bring these distinct orientations into conversation. Further, these topics are not intended to be representative or exhaustive; we invite all submissions on the topic of inclusion/accessibility.

**Definitions and Epistemologies:** How is HCI defining and communicating inclusion/accessibility? Whose definitions and experiences are brought close and whose are pushed away? How do our practices enfranchise or exclude people, and how can we improve those practices? What critical theories and practices of inclusion from other fields are useful to HCI research? What case studies demonstrate the application of relevant and contemporary theories on inclusion/accessibility into practical contributions to the field and what have lived experiences and technology use taught us about how to think more inclusively?

**Design and Technology:** What are case studies and associated lessons that incorporated the needs of an under-represented group? How does HCI research leverage the power and capability of technology to enable or prevent use by, and representation of, minoritized communities (e.g. digital activism, technology which amplifies employment and social networking capabilities)? How have communities appropriated technology creatively? How can technology and data collection raise awareness of needed accessibility improvements and areas to grow more inclusive? How do we release outputs that give users the power or powers to personalize technology to their needs, repair breakdowns, and hack augmentations? How can we make real-world impact when the conversion from a research prototype to a widely available system may require corporate buy-in, and may disappear or misappropriate the labor and creativity that are already too often extracted from minoritized communities? In what ways can HCI research rework and perpetuate how inclusion/accessibility are (mis)understood and promoted through technology?

**Participation/Methods:** How do HCI work-practices open and/or foreclose the ways people with different identities and experiences can participate? How do we make visible/possible inclusion/accessibility at each step of our process? For example, many methods and activities require certain abilities or literacies that may result in inclusion/accessibility being perceived as possible only through the *outputs* of our work, neglecting the opportunities for inclusion/accessibility in the process of *creation*. What are examples of inclusive/accessible design processes, methods, and technologies and what lessons can we learn from them? How can we build in accountability around inclusion/accessibility during our design and research processes, especially when we do not have sufficient representation of the people we are trying to impact positively? How do we entangle inclusion/accessibility research with efforts to increase the number of underrepresented people in HCI, and what can we do to redistribute power with those most negatively impacted when they are not represented among our ranks?

**Labor of Inclusive/Accessible HCI Research and Diversity Work:** How do HCI work-practices both ease and amplify effort around inclusion/accessibility? What are tensions between the power of technology to enable access by people with disabilities and other minorities while AI, the gig economy, and decreased worker protections for many of the people who make such information access possible come with downsides? For example, AI judgments and surveillance disproportionately negatively impact trans, feminine, and/or people of color (who may also have disabilities). Also, jobs related to these surveillance technologies are often precarious and may be harmful to the workers. Who does the labor of raising awareness about the importance of inclusion/accessibility? What are reports of experiences doing diversity work from points of view of both people who have the identity they are educating about and those who do not? How has technology been appropriated towards more fair and equitable labor?

**Alliances and Intersections:** How does HCI research make (im)possible building relationships across difference? For example, since needs across groups may cause tensions, how can those tensions be explored for solidarity, compromises, and new understandings, rather than ignored, given that ignoring often increases the risk that different needs will be pitted against each other? Earlier in this Call, we noted that membership and travel to HCIC involve privilege:

How can HCIC institutions and their membership broaden our own inclusiveness to enfranchise our local and distant communities, directly or indirectly, in HCIC contributions? What technologies and practices have promoted respectful communication and learning across difference?

**Progress and Obstacles:** What are the projects that you are doing that advance inclusion/access? What key questions and roadblocks will you bring for discussion at HCIC that will help to advance your future work?

**Guidelines:** What research/design/practice methodologies and guidelines can the HCI community use to advance the inclusivity and accessibility of the systems that we create? What are examples of technologies which exceed or do not meet such guidelines and what can we learn from them?

## Submission Formats

We encourage provocative points of view that will foster lively deliberation. We invite proposals for the following traditional HCIC formats for exploration of these topics: presentations, demos, and “booster-posters”, but keep in mind that we are open to other formats such as debates, sketches, stories, or role-play (see demos below). All submissions should be sent to [hcic-pc@googlegroups.com](mailto:hcic-pc@googlegroups.com) by the specified deadlines. For all categories of submission, please contact us if you would like to consult about your ideas in advance of submission.

For all formats, authors are strongly encouraged to submit files that comply with SIGACCESS’s guide for preparing an accessible submission which can be found by visiting the link at the end of this paragraph. This request will help curate a program which is reviewable and engageable by a wider variety of HCI researchers and practitioners.

<https://www.sigaccess.org/welcome-to-sigaccess/resources/accessible-pdf-author-guide/>

Final versions of all submissions that will be posted on the HCIC website should similarly follow the accessibility guidelines.

## Presentations

To propose a presentation, submit a pdf of a 2-3 page extended abstract discussing your idea. We invite challenging and provocative ideas. Controversial topics, fierce (but well-argued) challenges, and thoughts on inclusion/accessibility in HCI are strongly encouraged. Submissions may emphasize empirical results, theory, design fictions, solution approaches, integrative reviews, or other more challenging formats (please contact us before the deadline if you have questions).

The standard presentation format will consist of two parts. The author(s) will first present their work, followed by an organizer-committee-invited discussant who will reflect on and expand the author’s perspective. A presentation at HCIC has typically been 40 minutes, the discussant having 20 minutes, and open discussion having 30 minutes; this typical format may be tweaked

for the virtual HCIC experience. Time limits for each portion of the session will be determined as the program is developed, and presenters will be given notice of how much time they have several weeks in advance of HCIC 2021.

Please submit an extended abstract in PDF form that includes:

1. A cover page with:
  - a. Title
  - b. Author(s) (please indicate those who will attend)
  - c. At least three keywords
  - d. A 150-word abstract
2. A 2-3 page extended abstract that describes your work and what you would like to present and discuss at HCIC 2021.

**Submission Deadline: March 13, 2021**

## Demonstrations

To propose a demo, please submit a 2-3 page extended abstract with images/sketches detailing what the demo is, what it is intended to illustrate, and how people will interact with your demo (in a virtual environment). Your demo can take a wide variety of forms. For example, it could be a technology, it could be a participatory game, it could be a participatory active improvisation, or it could be in the form of a scripted role-play. It should, however, clearly illustrate current or future roles HCI can play in promoting Accessibility and Inclusion.

Please submit an extended abstract in PDF form that includes:

1. A cover page with:
  - a. Title
  - b. Author(s) (please indicate those who will attend)
  - c. At least three keywords
  - d. A 150-word abstract
2. A 2-3 page description of your proposed demo including what the demo is intended to illustrate and how you intend people to interact with your demo. Please also specify technical requirements for your demo.

**Submission Deadline: March 13, 2021**

## Boaster-Posters

A "boaster-poster" is a poster that describes your most current research endeavor and/or interest; it does not need to be related to the theme of the workshop. The idea is to foster dialogue about your topic of interest/research so you can meet like-minded HCIC 2021 attendees. The submission format for a "boaster-poster" is as follows: a short description of your perspective and interest in this area, plus a description of your work in the form of a poster as a single page pdf for the submission process. You can use images and text to frame and illustrate

your ideas. After the workshop, your pdf poster will be published on the HCIC website; the final version may be updated from the original submission.

Boaster-posters offer an opportunity to showcase the work of new and experienced authors alike. A list with boaster-poster titles, authors, and abstracts will be distributed at the workshop, the posters will be available for view during the HCIC workshop, and it is anticipated that there will be zoom breakouts in which the poster authors can discuss their work with attendees. We strongly encourage all student attendees to submit a boaster to HCIC. All boaster-posters are automatically accepted.

Please send your submission in PDF form and include the following:

1. Cover page with:
  - a. Title
  - b. Author(s) (indicate those available to chat at the meeting)
  - c. At least three keywords
  - d. A 150-word abstract
2. A draft of your poster. Remember to consult the above-linked guide to prepare an accessible submission. For example, adding alt text descriptions of images on the poster will increase the variety of people who can engage with your content.

**Submission deadline: June 7, 2021**

## HCIC Rules

- Only employees of member organizations may submit abstracts for this call. Abstracts may have non-member co-authors, but the board must approve attendance or co-presentation.
- Students are not eligible to submit proposals for presentations or demos. However, they are strongly encouraged to submit “boaster-posters,” short descriptions of their interests and current work in the form of single-page posters. Students may also serve as co-authors along with a post-PhD author.

## Program Committee

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