February 2022

Dear MMM members,

We hope that 2022 has started well for you and hope that all of us are staying healthy! With this new edition of our MMM newsletter, we would like to give you another brief update about what has been going on around Minds, Media, Machines.

With kind regards,
Hanna Voudouri & Dennis Küster
(MMM Office)

New MMM Member

We extend a warm **welcome to our newest member, Prof. Horst Hahn, director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Digital Medicine (MEVIS)**, who will further reinforce MMM with his expertise, and who has already been engaging with some of members in new joint research initiatives!

Four new MMM Seed Grant Projects

We are pleased to announce positive funding decisions to support **four new MMM Seed-Grant projects**. The following projects were recommended for funding, without dissenting votes, by our Executive Board! Four new seed grants have been awarded to the following projects:

- "***Design Space of Virtual Environments: Creating a Feedback Loop for Users using Physical and Mental Health Data Gathered by Smartwatches***" - an MMM PI-Seed-Grant awarded to Prof. Rainer Malaka, Prof. Tanja Döring, Prof. Yvonne Rogers (Exc.Chair), Nadine Wagener, Bastian Dänekas, Prof. Johannes Schöning (Advisor)

- "***Creating Facial Expressions for Avatars Based on Affective Prosody***" - an MMM PI-Seed-Grant awarded to Prof. Rainer Koschke, Prof. Tanja Schultz, and Dr. Dennis Küster (Co-Lead)

- "***How robots learn to use structure***" - an MMM PI-Seed-Grant awarded to

Prof. Nicole Megow, Prof. Daniel Schmand, and Prof. Sebastian Siebertz

- "***Exploring Smart Contracts Security Validation through the Lens of Living Technologies 2.0***" - an MMM PostDoc-Seed-Grant awarded to Dr. Muhammad Hassan (AG Drechsler; AGRA/DFKI-CPS)

A continuation of the MMM Seed Grant Initiative is planned and we are looking forward to further exciting applications!

Latest MMM Science News

Award for pioneers of quantum computing
More than ten years ago, a student project on quantum computers started at the University of Bremen, led by the AG of MMM member Rolf Drechsler. A scientific paper written during that time has now been awarded the „10-year Retrospective Most Influential Paper Award" issued by the ASP Design Automation Conference.

Soeken, M., Wille, R., Hilken, C., Przigoda, N., & Drechsler, R. (2012). Synthesis of reversible circuits with minimal lines for large functions. 17th Asia and South Pacific Design Automation Conference, 85–92. https://doi.org/10.1109/ASPDAC.2012.6165069

New Website on Pioneer Journalism
The ZeMKI, together with the Leibniz Institute for Media Research, has published a new website on pioneer journalism in Germany. The website offers an interactive mapping of "pioneering" actors, projects and companies in German journalism. Further information about the research project can be found here.

Mare-IT
Autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs), operated and controlled by AI methods, inspect, maintain, and repair offshore installations underwater. A consortium led by the DFKI developed a holistic solution to make this vision a reality: an innovative, two-armed AUV for complex inspection and maintenance tasks, embedded in a powerful IT infrastructure that enables both intuitive control and monitoring of the system and effective information flow with the plant operator. For more information, see the recent DFKI newspost on this **successfully completed BMBF-funded project**.

The University of Bremen is official sponsor of ICASSP
We are very pleased to announce that the University of Bremen and the International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, & Signal Processing (ICASSP), chaired by our MMM Chair Prof. Haizhou Li, are now officially joining forces to advance research in this field! The University of Bremen is acting as the supporting organization for ICASSP 2022 and Prof. Tanja Schultz has been invited to give one of the three plenary talks and will serve as Tutorial Chair.

Prof. Haizhou Li will host this IEEE event in Singapore.

Early Career Researchers

MMMIGS Workshop
The Minds, Media, Machines Integrated Graduate School (MMMIGS) is hosting a workshop about statistics for doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researcher. The workshop takea place online on February 18, February 23, and March 2, 14:00-16:00 each day, and will be held in English.

Funding Opportunities
We would like to encourage our ECRs to consider submitting their own MMM-themed research proposals with the DFG. Please do not hesitate to inform us (mmm@uni-bremen.de) about such efforts - we will be happy to provide you with feedback! As a further incentive, the University's Central Research Development Fund (CRDF) awards 2.500 EUR for granted DFG first-time proposals!

Horizon Europe Training Resources
The European Commission provides many valuable training resources on their new research and innovation programme **Horizon Europe**. This selection of webinars could be helpful for advanced MMM-ECRs who are involved in propsals for this funding programme.

- The Funding & tenders Portal for beginners: helps you discover the most relevant Horizon Europe calls.
- How to prepare a successful proposal in Horizon Europe: covers the standard forms, basic principles, and what you need to consider concerning gender and equality concerns in your research proposal.
- Dissemination & Exploitation in Horizon Europe: designed to help you understand the logic of and emphasis placed on convincing communication, dissemination, and exploitation measures in Horizon Europe.

Bremer Studienpreis
We would like to draw your attention to the announcement of the Bremen Study Award ("Bremer Studienpreis") for 2022. The prize is is endowed with 500 EUR (MA-thesis) and 1,000 EUR (dissertation). Theses must be submitted by June 1, 2022. For further information please refer to the website of the Bremer Studienpreis.

Funding Opportunities (Selected Calls)

DFG

- The **DFG** and **DST** have announced a new funding opportunity for Indo-German International Research Training Groups. The Indo-German consortium will firstly need to submit a joint IRTG draft proposal simultaneously to DFG and DST. The first deadline for draft proposal submission is 1 August 2022. Thereafter, there will be two deadlines each year: 1 February and 1 August.
- In a supplement to the 3rd call for national data infrastructures (NFDIs), the **DFG** now invites applications for Basic Service Initiatives ("Basisdienst-Initiativen"). The needs of the technical and methodological consortia for basic services can be very diverse and concern services that can potentially be used in all consortia. Binding pre-registrations should be submitted by March 21, 2022 at the latest.

BMBF

- The **BMBF** has announced guidelines for funding projects on the topic of the demonstration and transfer network AI in production (ProKI-Netz) in the funding program: "Zukunft der Wertschöpfung − Forschung zu Produktion, Dienstleistung und Arbeit". Universities are to be supported in the establishment and operation of an AI demonstration center and encouraged to participate in a transfer network AI in production (ProKI network). Deadline for stage-I proposals: February 28, 2022.
- A new call for for the promotion of the medical informatics initiative has been announced. The funding initiative aims to create the conditions for a long-term and overarching basic structure for data exchange between all university hospitals. Deadline for stage-I proposals: March 31, 2022.

Horizon Europe

- Open Call on eXtended Reality Technologies (RIA). Expected Outcome: Innovative eXtended Reality industrial and societal applications, integrating technologies such as advanced visualisation, 3D, Augmented and Virtual Reality experiences, human-machine interaction and cooperation, with a focus on well designed and fully tested scenarios in real-world environment. Deadline: April 05, 2022.
- Forthcoming call on AI for human empowerment (AI, Data and Robotics Partnership) (RIA). Proposal results are expected to contribute to at least one of the following expected outcomes: Truly mixed human-AI initiatives for human empowerment // Trustworthy hybrid decision-support systems. Deadline: November 16, 2022.

Science Policy and News

In the Excellence Strategy of the German federal and state governments, the expert panel responsible for shaping the program and defining the funding conditions has agreed on a timetable for the second competitive round of the funding program. In addition, the panel, consisting of 39 German and foreign members from the entire spectrum of scientific disciplines, defined initial modalities for the review of outlines and applications for clusters of excellence in the second round of competition.

How should researchers and their work be assessed? This question is often part of funding decisions and appointment procedures – and has made it to the European Commission's checklist of 20 priorities set out in the new policy agenda of the European Research Area. France – currently holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU – together with the European Commission and several science and university associations are implementing a "disruptive" plan for research assessment: the Paris Call on Research Assessment. While large German Research Associations are still hesitant to sign the agreement and test the new strategy on ground, the European Commission is preparing a change in the evaluation of Horizon Europe proposals. ERC evaluation panels are asked to not consider applicants' impact factors, institutions, or citation indexes, Science Business reports.