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CALL FOR NTCIR-16 TASK PROPOSALS

(Task Proposals Due: **December 4, 2020 \*extended\***)

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NTCIR (NII Testbeds and Community for Information access Research) is a series of evaluation conferences that mainly focus on information access with East Asian languages and English. The first NTCIR conference (NTCIR-1) took place in August/September 1999, and the latest NTCIR-15 conference will take place in December 2020. Research teams from all over the world participate in one or more NTCIR tasks to advance the state of the art and to learn from one another's experiences.

As the tasks being run at NTCIR-15 (<http://research.nii.ac.jp/ntcir/ntcir-15/index.html>) are reaching the final stages, it is time to call for task proposals for the next NTCIR (NTCIR-16) which will start in December 2020 and conclude in June 2022. Task proposals will be reviewed by the NTCIR Program Committee, following the schedule below:

\* IMPORTANT DATES:

December 4, 2020	Task Proposal Submission Due (*extended*)
January 15, 2021	Acceptance Notification of Task Proposals

\* NTCIR-16 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Jul 2021:	Dataset Release*
Jul-Dec 2021:	Dry Run*
Sep 2021-Feb 2022:	Formal Run*
Feb 1, 2022:	Evaluation Result Release
Feb 1, 2022:	Draft Task Overview Paper Release
Mar 1, 2022:	Draft Participant Paper Submission Due
May 1, 2022:	All Camera-ready Paper Submission Due
Jun 2022:	NTCIR-16 Conference & EVIA 2022 in NII, Tokyo, Japan

(\* indicates that the schedule can be different for different tasks)

\* WHO SHOULD SUBMIT NTCIR-16 TASK PROPOSALS?

Organizers of existing NTCIR-15 tasks are required to submit a new proposal if they wish to continue them in NTCIR-16. We also welcome new task proposals within the broad research area of information access.

To organize an evaluation task is to identify important research problems, tackle them strategically by collaborating with other researchers (both co-organizers and participants), build the necessary evaluation framework to advance the state of the art, and make an impact to the research community and to the future.

We encourage applicants to emphasize real-world applications of the proposed task by using real-world data, real tasks, and addressing real-world problems, and address a challenge in information access technology evaluation such as a large amount of assessments required for evaluation, privacy-preserving use of proprietary data, and live test with real users.

**\* PROPOSAL TYPES:**

We will accept two types of task proposals:

- Proposal of a Core task:

This is for fostering researches on a particular information access problem by providing researchers with a common ground for evaluation. New test collections and evaluation methods may be developed through the collaboration between task organizers (proposers) and task participants. At NTCIR-15, the core tasks are: DialEval-1, FinNum-2, QA Lab-PoliInfo-2, SHINRA2020-ML, and WWW-3 (Details can be found at <http://research.nii.ac.jp/ntcir/ntcir-15/tasks.html>).

- Proposal of a Pilot task:

This is recommended for organizers who proposed to focus on a novel information access problem and there are uncertainties either in task designing or organization. It may focus on a sub-problem of an information access problem and may attract a smaller group of participating teams than core tasks. However, it may grow into a core challenging task in the next round of NTCIR. At NTCIR-15, the pilot tasks are: Data Search and MART (Details can be found at <http://research.nii.ac.jp/ntcir/ntcir-15/tasks.html>).

Organizers are expected to run their task mainly with their own funding and to make the task as self-sustaining as possible. A part of the fund can be supported by NTCIR, which is called "seed funding". It is usually used for some limited purposes such as hiring relevance assessors. The amount of the seed funding allocated to each task varies depending on requirements and the total number of accepted tasks. Typical cases would be: around 1M JPY for a core task

and around 0.5M JPY for a pilot task (note that the amount is subject to change).

Please submit your task proposal as a pdf file via EasyChair by December 4, 2020 (\*extended\*) (Anywhere on Earth).

<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=ntcir16taskproposal>

\* TASK PROPOSAL FORMAT:

The proposal should not exceed six pages in A4 single-column format. The first five pages should contain the main part and appendix, and the last page should contain only description about the data to be used in the task. Please describe the data with as much detail as possible so that we can help your data release process after the proposal is accepted. In the past NTCIRs, it took much time to create memorandums for data release, which sometimes slowed down the task organization.

Main part

- Task name and short name
- Task type (core or pilot)
- Abstract
- Motivation
- Methodology
- Expected results

Appendix

- Names and contact information of the organizers
- Prospective participants
- Data to be used and/or constructed
- Budget planning
- Schedule
- Other notes

Data (to be used in your task)

- Details

(Please describe the details of the data, which should include the source of the data, methods to collect the data, range of the data, etc.)

- License

(Please make sure that you have a license to distribute the data, and details of the license

should be provided. If you do not have permission to release the data yet, please describe your plan to get the permission.)

- Distribution

(Please describe how you plan to distribute the data to participants. There are mainly three choices: distributed by the data provider, distributed by organizers, and distributed by NII.)

- Legal / Ethical issues

(If the data can cause legal or ethical problems, please describe how you propose to address them. e.g. some medical data may need approval from an ethical committee. e.g. some Web data may need filtering for excluding discriminative messages.)

\* REVIEW CRITERIA:

- Importance of the task to the information access community and to the society

- Timeliness of the task

- Organizers' commitment in ensuring a successful task

- Financial sustainability (self-sustainable tasks are encouraged)

- Soundness of the evaluation methodology

- Detailed description about the data to be used

- Language scope

\* NTCIR-16 PROGRAM COMMITTEE

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