

CLEF 2014 - Call for Lab proposals

The CLEF 2014 conference is next year's edition of the popular CLEF lab and workshop series which has run since 2000 contributing to the systematic evaluation of information access systems, primarily through experimentation on shared tasks. After ten years of successful evaluation campaigns, in 2010 CLEF was launched in a new format, as a conference with research presentations, panels, poster and demo sessions and laboratory evaluation workshops interleaved during three and a half days of intense and stimulating research activities.

About CLEF

The CLEF Initiative (<http://www.clef-initiative.eu/>) is a self-organized body whose main mission is to promote research, innovation, and development of information access systems with an emphasis on multilingual information in different modalities - including text and multimedia - with various levels of structure. CLEF promotes research and development by providing an infrastructure for:

- independent evaluation of information access systems;
- investigation of the use of unstructured, semi-structured, highly-structured, and semantically enriched data in information access;
- creation of reusable test collections for benchmarking;
- exploration of new evaluation methodologies and innovative ways of using experimental data;
- discussion of results, comparison of approaches, exchange of ideas, and transfer of knowledge.

In 2014 CLEF will be held in September at the University of Sheffield (UK) and researchers and practitioners from all areas of information access and related communities are invited to submit evaluation lab proposals for review. The lab selection committee will select among the proposals and will occasionally suggest modifications to proposed labs to best suit the CLEF lab workflow.

Scope

Proposals are accepted for two different types of "labs":

- Evaluation Labs that are a "**campaign-style**" evaluation for specific information access problems (during the twelve month period preceding the conference), similar in nature to the traditional CLEF campaign "tracks". In 2013 there were 9 labs (<http://www.clef2013.org/index.php?page=Pages/labs.html>): CHiC - Cultural Heritage in CLEF; CLEFeHealth - CLEF eHealth Evaluation Lab; CLEF-IP - Retrieval in the Intellectual Property Domain; ImageCLEF - Cross Language Image Annotation and

Retrieval; INEX - Initiative for the Evaluation of XML retrieval; PAN - Uncovering Plagiarism, Authorship, and Social Software Misuse; QA4MRE - Question Answering for Machine Reading Evaluation; QALD-3 - Question Answering over Linked Data; and, RepLab 2013 on Online Reputation Management. Topics covered by campaign-style labs can be inspired by any information access-related domain or task.

- Labs that follow a more classical “**workshop**” pattern, exploring issues of evaluation methodology, metrics, processes etc. in information access and closely related fields, such as natural language processing, machine translation, and human-computer interaction. In 2013 there was one workshop, CLEF-ER - Entity Recognition @ CLEF.

If the organisers of the proposal are new to CLEF or other shared task evaluation campaigns, we highly recommend that a lab workshop first be organised to discuss the format, the problem space, and the practicalities of the shared task. In both cases, it is expected that lab sessions at the conference will contain ample time for general discussion and engagement by all participants - not just those presenting campaign results and papers. Organisers should plan time for panels, demos, poster sessions etc. where applicable

Location

The CLEF 2014 conference will reserve about half of the conference program for lab sessions. The lab sessions will take place at the site of the conference in Sheffield. The labs will present their overall results “overview presentations” during the plenary scientific paper sessions to allow non-participants to get a sense of where the research frontiers are moving.

Usage Scenarios

The sustainability and impact of the effort put into CLEF benchmarking evaluations hinges on their validity when applied to information seeking and information access activities in practice. We wish to see all labs - whether lab workshops or evaluation labs - address the issue of validation through explicitly stated hypotheses of usage. An evaluation lab should be concrete with respect to situation, context, platform and user preferences for which the suggested evaluation benchmark is valid; a lab workshop should discuss how participants with domain and usage experience and expertise can be recruited to the workshop to provide a grounding of evaluation methodology in application to real-world task.

Proposal Submission

Lab proposals should provide sufficient information for the lab organizing committee to be able to judge the importance, quality, and benefits for the research community.

Each lab should have one or more organizers responsible for the execution of the lab.

Proposals should be 2-4 pages long and should provide the following information:

1. Title of the proposed lab.

2. The planned format of the lab, i.e. campaign-style ("track") or workshop.
3. Planned length of the lab session at the conference: half-day, one day, two days.
4. Names and full addresses, including contact details, of the lab organiser(s), a brief description of the organizers' experience and background in the topic, and links to web pages of the lab organizers.
5. A brief description of the lab topic and goals, its relevance to CLEF and significance for the research field.
6. The proposal should give a brief but clear statement of usage scenarios or domain to which the activity is intended to contribute. In connection with the usage scenario/task-relevant stakeholders should be identified and ideally enlisted in an active role in the lab to validate the scenarios
7. The number of tasks carried out in a lab should be kept to a minimum to avoid dispersion and ensure enough critical mass is reached for each task. The proposal should clearly motivate the need for each of the proposed task and provide evidence of its capability of attracting enough participation.
8. A statement on the intended development/growth path if the proposal is for a continuation of activities previously undertaken at CLEF workshops.
9. A description of the target audience, areas from which the participants are expected to come, an analysis of the potential for participants (number, statements of intent to participate where applicable), potential industry stakeholders, strategy for publicizing the lab.
10. Arrangements for the organization of the lab campaign, if applicable, including a brief outline of the campaign milestones, test data to be used, indications of the size of the data collections, issues of scalability, tasks to be proposed to participants, and format of presentation at the conference.
11. If the lab proposes to set up a steering committee to oversee its activities, include names, addresses, and homepage links of people who have agreed to be part of the steering committee, if the lab proposal is accepted. This list should ideally include people from at least three different countries.

Reviewing Process

Each submitted proposal will be reviewed by the CLEF 2014 lab organizing committee. The decision will be sent by email to the responsible organizer by September 16, 2013. The final length of the lab session will be determined based on the overall organization of the conference and the number of submissions received by a lab. Due to space restrictions, only a limited number of lab sessions can be conducted in parallel at the conference. The reviewers may suggest modifications to the proposed lab programme in order to fit it with the above reviewing criteria and the overall organization of CLEF 2014.

Reviewing criteria for the "campaign-style" labs include:

- Soundness of methodology, feasibility of task.
- Use case (description of the underlying problems), business case/industrial stakeholders (potential for market).
- Number of potential participants, critical mass.
- Clear movement along a growth path, development of field.
- Others factors such as: innovation, minimize overlap with other evaluation initiatives or events, focus (appropriate number of subtasks, avoid “inflation” of labs), interdisciplinary character.

Reviewing criteria for the “workshop-style” labs include:

- The appropriateness of the workshop-style lab to the overall information access agenda pursued by CLEF.
- Number of potential participants and critical mass.
- Likelihood that the outcomes of the workshop will constitute a significant contribution to the field. Is the workshop focused enough that useful conclusions are likely?
- Other factors such as: innovation, minimize overlap with other evaluation initiatives and events, vision for a potential continuation, interdisciplinary character.

Lab Organizer's Tasks:

- Produce a “Call for Participation” for an evaluation lab or a “Call for Papers” for a lab workshop and disseminating it through all appropriate means.
- Provide a web page URL which can be linked into the CLEF 2014 homepage.
- Provide a brief description of the lab for the conference program.
- Organise the signing up of participants, and execute the campaign in the case of evaluation labs.
- Review submitted papers and position papers in the case of lab workshops.
- Schedule lab session activities in collaboration with the local organisers and the CLEF Lab Organising Committee Chairs.
- Send the lab schedule and other lab material, all in PDF format, to the CLEF Lab Organising Committee Chairs (deadline to be defined).
- Organise the post-conference publication of lab results in an appropriate form (special issue, lab proceedings, etc.).

The lab material (papers, presentations etc.) will be distributed by the CLEF 2014 organisers to the conference participants in electronic format (copyright will not be asked for from the authors, but only permission to publish and disseminate).

Publication

The working notes of the labs will be published online in time for the conference. It is foreseen that this online publication will have an ISBN number and be indexed in relevant services. It is

the responsibility of lab organizers to arrange for appropriate post-conference publication of the lab results. Overviews of the labs will be published, if accepted after review, in the Springer LNCS proceedings which are produced annually for the CLEF conference.

Important Dates

- Final lab proposals: 1 September 2013
- Notification of lab acceptance: 16 September 2013
- CLEF 2013 (23-26 sept): Release of first lab flyer and call for participation
- 1 November 2013: Labs registration opens
- 15 November 2013: Labs begin to release data
- 15 November 2013 - 1 May 2014: Evaluation labs run
- 1 May 2014: Submission of results
- 1 June 2014: Release of lab results
- 15 June 2014: Working notes papers submitted
- 30 June 2014: Lab overview papers submitted in Springer format
- 30 June 2014 - 7 July 2014: Lab Chairs review lab overviews
- 15 July 2014: Springer proceedings completed

Submission Details

Lab proposals (or questions) should be submitted via e-mail (either plain text or PDF format, using "CLEF labs proposal" in the subject line) to both Lab Organizing Committee Chairs:

Martin Halvey, martin.halvey[at]gcu.ac.uk

Wessel Kraaij, w.kraaij[at]cs.ru.nl

CLEF Lab Organizing Committee (CLEF-LOC)

- Martin Halvey, Glasgow Caledonian University, UK [CLEF-LOC Co-Chair]
- Wessel Kraaij, TNO (Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research) and Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands [CLEF-LOC Co-Chair]
- Nicola Ferro, University of Padua, Italy
- Donna Harman, National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), USA
- Carol Peters, ISTI, National Council of Research (CNR), Italy
- Maarten de Rijke, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands