

11

Netherlands Institute on Research on ICT

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Information and communications technology (ICT) research at the universities of technology concentrates on refreshing and prioritising individual sub-disciplines. The 4TU.Netherlands Institute for Research on ICT (4TU.NIRICT) research centre focuses on integrating, positioning and prioritising all aspects of ICT research, in both multidisciplinary and chain approaches in a rapidly digitising world. Since more than 50% of research conducted at universities of technology in the Netherlands concerns ICT, the research centre can effectively devote itself to strengthening the national ICT research network. In collaboration with the Dutch ICT research platform (IPN), which primarily focuses on computer science, NIRICT aims to intensify **ICT research at the national level** by stimulating and facilitating collaboration with other disciplines.

In 2019, Inald Lagendijk and Maarten van Steen stepped down as MT members and Alan Hanjalic, André Kokkeler and Kofi Makinwa were appointed. Birna van Riemsdijk made the transition from TU Delft to the University of Twente and now represents UT in the NIRICT management team. As a result of these changes and new members, NIRICT has succeeded in creating a stronger and balanced board, in which both electrical engineering and computer science are represented.

Community day

One of NIRICT's main objectives is to bring the Dutch ICT community closer together, which is why NIRICT organises an annual Community day, which this year took place in Utrecht in January. The event was attended by around 40 participants, who had the opportunity to do some networking. Presentations were also given, followed by plenary discussions on themes such as Fostering healthy ICT science and engineering ecosystems, Less ICT more FAIR Data, Developing an ICT Strategy for the Life Sciences domain and Quo vadis? A perspective on future targets of Dutch academic ICT research.

Community funding

Since 2018, the focus of NIRICT has been on the call for proposals for community funding. The aim of this is to strengthen and facilitate collaboration between researchers and the work of the NIRICT community. This call led to the organisation of many **workshops, tutorials, presentations, training courses** and a Master's thesis **competition**. These activities were organised by the community itself, and covered topics such as Expressive Robots, GPGPU Applications, Wirelessly Powered Smart Dust and Cyber Security. These activities led to a number of publications (including a book entitled 'Model Management and Analytics for Large Scale Systems') and a strengthening of ties between researchers from different universities of technology, disciplines and countries. The joint efforts have also contributed to a better understanding of the various topics.

ICT.OPEN

In 2019, NIRICT was a partner of ICT.OPEN, the biggest conference for the ICT research community in the Netherlands. The aim of the collaboration between NIRICT and ICT.OPEN is to **connect the ICT communities** already established. NIRICT focuses on researchers who are at the start of their careers, which is why ICT Next Generation (ICTng) was also represented this year, with financial support from NIRICT. During the break before dinner, a fun networking drinks reception was organised around the theme 'the Good, the Bad and the Ugly'. The community was asked to discuss the 'good', 'bad' and 'ugly'

aspects of the ICT world in three rounds. In addition to the ICTng drinks, NIRICT also provided speakers for the skills session, and it had a table during the speed-dating session.

IEEE International Workshop on Information Forensics and Security

NIRICT was also a partner of the IEEE International Workshop on Information Forensics and Security (WIFS). WIFS is an annual event, and in 2019 it was held in Delft. Thanks to the support of NIRICT, ten Master's students from TU Delft, UT and TU/e, who themselves lacked the financial means to do so, were able to take part in the workshop and social events.

Agenda for 2020

In the past year few ICTng activities have taken place and NIRICT would like to breathe new life into ICTng. A new board will be appointed within ICTng and NIRICT's Community day will also be devoted to the younger generation and how to support them.

At the end of 2019 NIRICT teamed up with the European Innovation Academy and, as a result, four students from the four universities of technology will be able to participate in this programme in Portugal in 2020.

As in previous years, in 2020 NIRICT will once again be a partner of ICT.OPEN and the centre will continue to be involved in the call for community funding. This call will become much broader by focusing more on the national level, so that it helps to stimulate ICT in the whole of the Netherlands. NIRICT will also focus on project acquisition and on connecting electrical engineering and computer science. The management team is currently fine-tuning its vision, mission and strategy, which will be completed in 2020.