

Message from the Steering Committee

We are pleased to introduce the Thirteenth edition of the International Conference on COMMunication Systems and NETworkS (COMSNETS). The conference once again assembled a strong technical program derived from a pool of outstanding submissions. In addition, the conference will once again be offering poster session for emerging research, a graduate forum for students to get exposure and technical feedback for their research, and a Demos & Exhibits session where many start-ups, universities and established companies provide examples of research-in-action with working prototypes or commercialized products. COMSNETS continues to host several workshops that cover diverse topics. The 2021 edition of the conference boasts of five workshops in current areas - Machine Intelligence in Networked Data and Systems (MINDS), "Last-mile" Challenges and Standardization Opportunities in Smart Infrastructure, Cyber Security and Blockchain, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and Networking Humanitarian Technology for Healthcare (NetHealth).

The conference continues a special Mentoring session for the 5th year, where young researchers can meet with established researchers for direct interaction. Moreover, the COMSJOB session will be held once again after a successful first year in 2020. This venue allows sponsoring organizations to connect with potential recruits for open positions.

For the first time, the conference will have a tutorial session, which will allow many interested researchers to gain in-depth subject matter knowledge from experts. In addition, for the second year, the conference would be hosting the Women-in-Engineering (WiE) workshop with the theme "the role of Women in the next era of Technology".

2020 was a challenging year for all participants, and after much deliberation it was decided to have COMSNETS be a virtual event for 2021. We are grateful to all the authors for submissions to COMSNETS inspite of the pandemic and the conference being held in a virtual mode. We believe this is a testimony to the growing stature of COMSNETS. We are thankful to our Video Conferencing partner Airmeet for providing the online facilities required for this event.

The COMSNETS 2021 organizing committee is once again composed of a strong mix of industry and academic researchers from around the world. Through their efforts, a strong technical program has been put together for this year's version of the conference. In particular, we are extremely grateful to the distinguished General Co-Chairs - Dr. Ranjita Bhagwan (Microsoft Research, India), Dr. Ashutosh Dutta (Applied Physics Laboratory, Johns Hopkins University, USA) and Dr. Manish Gupta (Google Research, India). Even given the challenges of organizing the conference during a global pandemic, the General Co-Chairs put together a high-quality program. We are greatly appreciative of the Technical Program Committee Co-Chairs - Prof. Aruna Balasubramanian (Stony Brook University, USA), Prof. Krishna Jagannathan (IIT Madras, India) and Prof. Salil Kanhere (University of New South Wales, Australia). The General Chairs, TPC Chairs, the Technical Program Committee, Workshop Chairs, Panel Chairs, Poster Chairs, Graduate Forum Chairs, Demos & Exhibits Chairs, WiE Chairs, Social Media Chair, Publicity & Publications Chairs, COMSJOB Chairs, Tutorial Chairs, Local Arrangements and the Registration Chairs have worked hard and put together an outstanding program for this year's conference.

Our special thanks to Soumyajit Chatterjee from IIT Kharagpur for his significant contribution to the conference as the Web Chair. Soumyajit has put in tremendous effort throughout 2020

and has ensured high quality web pages for the conference. The virtual conference sub-committee has left no stone unturned in ensuring a great experience with the Airmeet platform. The committee has been working round the clock during the last few months and we are so grateful to each and every member of the committee.

We would like to appreciate the efforts of our colleagues in the organizing committee who have spent a lot of time and energy in ensuring a wonderful, high quality overall program. We would like to sincerely thank Raj Sharma, Local Arrangements & Video Conferencing Subcommittee Chair, Kaustubh Dhondge, Demos & Exhibits Co-Chair, Alok Ranjan, Demos & Exhibits Co-Chair, Madhumita Mallick, Graduate Forum Co-Chair, Ritesh Singh, Graduate Forum Co-Chair, Nadeem Akhtar, Tutorials Co-Chair, Arpan Chattopadhyay, Tutorials Co-Chair, the WiE Team lead by Ms. M. G. Divya and Ms. Pamela Kumar, Abhishek Appaji, NetHealth Workshop Co-Chair, Manjesh Hanawal, MINDS Workshop Co-Chair, K. P. Naveen, LastMiles Workshop Co-Chair, Ananda Krishna, IT and Operations Chair and Mrs. Chandrika Sridhar, Registration and Finance Co-Chair for their contributions to the success of the 13th edition of the conference.

The conference continues to benefit from several industrial sponsors and university partners. We give a special note of gratitude to this year's Platinum Sponsor Qualcomm, Gold Sponsors - Cisco and the Google. We are sincerely grateful to our Silver Sponsors - Arista and The IEEE Future Networks Society. In addition, we appreciate our Bronze Sponsors - Microsoft, Bosch, Singapore Management University (SMU), The University of Queensland - IIT Delhi Academy of Research (UQIDAR, first-time sponsor), Glaukes Labs (a first-time sponsor), the Govt. of India's Defense R&D Organization (DRDO - first-time sponsor) and MindNet Services (another first-time sponsor). We are delighted to be associated with our Humanitarian NGO partner - Aarogya Seva and our eco-friendly partner - 14 Trees. Our sincere thanks to the two partners.

We are delighted to have a large number of academic institutions as university partners to the COMSNETS 2021 conference. We are also delighted to continue our relationship with IEEE who are the technical co-sponsors of COMSNETS again through the IEEE Communications Society. We are grateful to ACM for their continued support, through the SIGCOMM and SIGMOBILE special interest groups. We also welcome the technical partners TSDSI and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). Finally, we are grateful to Videoken, the video services partner for COMSNETS.

We take this opportunity to thank the LRN Foundation for its support for the Student International Travel Awards for COMSNETS Participants. Our special thanks to Mr. Ajay Sawhney Secretary MEITY, Dr. B. M. Baveja (former Senior Director, MeitY, Government of India), Ms. Geeta Kathpalia (Director, MeitY, Government of India) and Ms. Tulika Pandey (Director, MeitY, Government of India) for their unstinting support to the conference. They have played a key role in getting MeitY to partner with COMSNETS 2021 and we are so grateful to them

Finally, we would like to appreciate the stellar efforts of the student volunteers of the conference. They have been working tirelessly since the last few months and will play a major role during the conference.

We welcome you to COMSNETS 2021, and hope that you are able to take full advantage of all this conference has to offer.



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