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REGIONAL REPORT

“Start-up Scrum” Spain: EU-XCEL European Virtual Accelerator

By Pilar Manzanares-López, Josemaría Malgosa-Sanahuja, and Juan Pedro Muñoz Gea, Spain

The EU-XCEL European Virtual Accelerator is an EU-Horizon 2020 funded project and part of the Startup Europe Initiative. The project is coordinated by University College Cork (UCC), Ireland, with project partners including the Strascheg Center for Entrepreneurship from Munich University of Applied Sciences (MUAS), InQbator from Poznan Science & Technology Park (PSTP), DTU Skylab from Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB), and the Cloud Incubator Hub from Universidad Politecnica de Cartagena (UPCT).

On April 15th the EU-XCEL European Virtual Accelerator launched a European-wide recruitment campaign to seek out talented aspiring entrepreneurs in the field of information and communication technology (ICT). The targets were young tech entrepreneurs, between the ages of 18 and 25, who graduated between 2010 and 2014, primarily from technology backgrounds with an entrepreneurial idea ready for development. The main areas of interest are Internet of Things, Health Informatics, Big Data, ICT for Development, Predictive Analysis, and E-/M-Commerce.

Out of a total of 600 applicants, 300 successful applicants from across Europe have the opportunity of participating in the project alongside some of their most promising and talented competitors in intensive, specially designed entrepreneurship training and mentoring programs over four months.

The EU-XCEL Virtual Accelerator includes a one week free

intensive training program named “Start-up Scrum” in one of the six participating countries between May and July, 2015. When the applicants applied for a place in the project, they did not choose the Start-up Scrum they wanted to join. They only indicated their preferences according to the dates, but without knowing the country. Applicants who were chosen in the selection phase were assigned to a Start-up Scrum by the organization. One of the guidelines that was taken into account to allocate participants to scrums has been the internationalization. As a result, each scrum was attended by entrepreneurs from about nine different nationalities.

In Spain, the EU-XCEL summer scrum took place the first week of July at the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena. During this week different activities, masterclasses, and events were scheduled as part of the intensive training of the entrepreneurs.

The first day was focused on ice-breaker and open-minded activities. Participants attended an interesting talk about the Internet of Things, and participated in a creative activity (creating innovative desserts) to apply cooperative design techniques. Another talk, “How to pitch yourself in a couple of minutes,” was scheduled to help entrepreneurs present themselves and their ideas.

On the second day, after exposing the criteria for team formation, entrepreneurs were ready to establish their teams and start work on their ideas. Market research and prototyping are essential to building a successful start-up. Throughout the day different activities were scheduled for training in these areas.

The third day was focused on the presentation of the business model canvas, a strategic management and entrepreneurial tool. Participants used it to develop business models during the Scrum.

Although each group was created during the Scrum, the groups did not vanish at the end of the week. Each group will continue working remotely during a four-month period. EU-XCEL offers access to online technical and business development support to help teams further develop and refine their start-up idea.

The online platform includes a community forum, training content and resources, virtual technical support and mentoring, and virtual business development support and mentoring.

For that reason, on the fourth day special attention was paid to training on international teams and virtual workspaces. However, the use of an appropriate online platform is not enough. When people from different countries work together, different aspects must be considered, some of them related to communication among participants (different communication styles between cultures, different time zones, etc.), but also other related to legal aspects when an enterprise is going to be created, for example, in which country it is better to register the enterprise. Teams were advised and trained about how to

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The fifth start-up scrum for 2015 took place in Cartagena, Spain July 6–10. Forty young entrepreneurs from all over Europe were hosted at the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena (UPCT).

IM 2015 in Ottawa Focused on Integrated Management in the Age of Big Data

By Wahab Almuhtadi, Chair of the IEEE Ottawa ComSoc/CESoc/BTS Joint Chapter, Canada

The IEEE Communication Society, the IEEE Ottawa Section, and the IEEE Ottawa ComSoc/CESoc/BTS Joint Chapter joined forces to sponsor and organize the IFIP/IEEE International Symposium on Integrated Network Management 2015 (IM 2015) on 11-15 May at the Shaw Centre, located on the scenic banks of the Rideau Canal in the cultural center of Ottawa, Canada's beautiful capital city. As a core national high-technology and R&D center, Ottawa is an ideal setting for this conference. There are more than 1,800 companies in the area working in software, photonics, defense & security, and more. It also offers many historical and cultural sites, including Canadian Parliament buildings, the Canadian Museum of History, and the National Gallery of Canada, among others.

IM 2015 attracted and brought together many of the world's industry leaders, scientists, academics, engineering professionals, and students from around the world. The theme of the IM 2015 conference, "Integrated Management in the Age of Big Data," aimed at capturing the new management challenges and opportunities offered by Big Data, and examined the potential of Big Data to improve the quality of management in a number of areas, including network management, service management, and business management, as well as in management approaches and methodologies. The emergence of network virtualized function also creates a great opportunity for traditional network management, and the instrumentation when the hardware is generic. In this perspective, the conference program featured:

- Six keynote presentations presented by top industry and academic leaders who shared their visions and experiences, and challenged us in exciting new ways. The engaging keynote talks were: "Practical meets Transformational Aspirations" by Ibrahim Gedeon (TELUS, Canada); "Big Data in Science: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly" by Joseph L. Hellerstein (University of Washington, USA); "Data Science: The Analytics of Big Data" by José M. F. Moura (Carnegie Mellon University, USA); "Harnessing a Petabyte: Opportunities and Challenges for Next Generation Ultra-Scale Data Platforms" by Richard J. Friedrich (Hewlett-Packard Laboratories, USA); "From Software-Defined Infrastructures to Smart City Platforms" by Alberto Leon-Garcia (University of Toronto, Canada); and "Micro Cloud: Moving Computing to Data to Deal with Data Management and Security Issues for Enterprise Clouds" by Dinesh C. Verman (IBM T.J. Watson, USA).

- Four panel sessions, featuring recognized experts sharing exciting and often controversial viewpoints on hot new topics of importance to our community. The topics covered included: big data analytics, cloud infrastructures, data centers, software-defined networking, virtualization, Internet-of-Things, smart cities, future Internet, content delivery, self-management, and security.

- Fourteen technical paper sessions and eight mini-conference sessions. The selected papers presented the latest research advances in the field. The conference had 206 technical paper submissions from all over the world, including Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. All submitted papers underwent a rigorous review process with at least three reviews for every paper and a rebuttal phase. The review process concluded with 56 papers accepted for the main technical track, with a competitive acceptance rate of 27 percent. Due to the high quality of the submitted papers, many good papers could not be selected for this track. The 36 best papers were selected for the eight mini-conference tracks.

- The program of IM 2015 also offered four experience paper sessions, 20 selected papers presenting lessons learned from developing and deploying management solutions.

- Four poster sessions (52 posters) that enabled one-on-one interactions between authors and attendees.

- Three demonstration sessions with 18 demos showcased research prototypes and research demonstration systems.

- Two dissertation sessions (eight papers), recognizing the best doctoral theses from among the best and brightest of our next generation.

- Workshops, with a specialized focus on the latest breakthroughs in information and communications technology management in an environment that encourages discussion and debate. There were 67 workshop paper submissions.

- Tutorials, offering educational material to keep up with new and emerging topics essential to today's engineering and technology environment.

- Industry exhibits, where major vendors and service providers displayed their latest products and services, including conference patrons.

- A young professional session, providing a forum for the IEEE Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) program to address career and other professional development needs for recent graduates.

In addition to the technical program, several Committee and Board meetings were held during the IM 2015, including the TNSM Editorial Board meeting; the CNOM/IFIP WG6.6 committee meeting; the IJNM Editorial Board meeting; the NOMS/IM Steering Committee meeting; the NOMS 2016 TPC/OC committee meeting; and the IRTF NMRG committee meeting.

The IM'15 Organizing Committee of dedicated and outstanding volunteers achieved their goal to make IM 2015 a successful event, and made the attendees' participation in IM 2015 one of their most valuable and memorable experiences from both professional and personal perspectives.

Our valued patrons also made the conference a success due to their contributions: TELUS (Diamond Patron), Algonquin College, Juniper Networks, and Huawei (Gold Patrons); the University of Ottawa, Carleton University, Ciena, Nakina Systems, IEEE SDN, and IEEE Big Data (Silver Patrons); openNMS (Bronze Patron); and Ottawa Tourism and CENGN (Supporters).

For more details on IM 2015, visit: <http://im2015.ieee-im.org/>.



Highlights of the International Conference on Advanced Technologies for Communication (ATC 2015)

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, October 2015

By Ha Hoang Kha, HCMUT, Viet Nam

The 2015 International Conference on Advanced Technologies for Communications (ATC2015) was held in Ho Chi Minh City October 14-16, 2015. The conference was jointly organized by the IEEE Communications Society, the Radio-Electronics Association of Vietnam (REV), and Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology. The main theme of the conference was Technology Integrating Antennas and Radio Frequency Integrated Circuits. The Technical Program Committee (TPC) of the Conference accepted 129 papers, including 100 oral presentations and 29 poster presentation. All papers will be indexed by IEEEExplore.

ATC2015 attracted more than 250 scientists and researchers from 30 different countries around the world to discuss the latest advanced technologies in electronics and communications. The technical sessions of the conference were focused on various topics, including antennas and propagation, microwave engineering, communications, signal processing, biomedical engineering, networks, IC and electronics design.

One of the important successful events at ATC2015 was the presence of the world leading keynote speakers. Three keynote speakers presented innovative technologies in wireless communications.

First, at the opening day ceremony, Prof. Constantine A. Balanis, Regent's Professor at Arizona State University, USA, delivered the speech, entitled "Smart Antenna: Technology Integrating Antennas, DSP, Communications and Networks." Prof. Balanis's speech garnered special attention from more than 250 delegates.



Conferring the best paper awards.



Opening ceremony.



Prof. Constantine A. Balanis and Prof. Cam Nguyen talking during a keynote speech.



A technical session.

During the beginning sessions of the second day, Prof. Cam Nguyen, Texas Instruments Endowed Professor at Texas A&M University, USA, presented the hot topics related to "Radio Frequency Integrated Circuits: the Backbone of Modern Wireless Communications, Radar and Sensing."

It was followed by the keynote speech, "Wireless Powered Communication Systems: Overview, Recent Results and Challenges," by Prof. Robert Schober, Chair of Digital Communications, Alexander von Humboldt Professor at Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany.

In addition, sessions on various topics were presented during the three days of the conference. A total of 129 papers were accepted to be presented at the conference out of 220 submitted papers, yielding an acceptance rate of 58 percent. More importantly, the Technical Committee chose two excellent papers to receive the best paper awards.

In addition to regular sessions, ATC2015 also featured a special session on "Computational Science and Computational Intelligence," and two tutorial sessions: "Small Cells for 5G: Fundamentals and Recent Theory" by Prof. Tony Q. S. Quek, Singapore University of Technology and Design, Singapore; and "Radar System Engineering" by Dr. Lee Kar Heng, Chief, TBSS Group, Singapore. During the conference, the conference organizer cooperated with the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT), Japan, to hold a workshop on Revolution and Evolution of Photonic Technologies.

ATC2015 presented great opportunities for long-term and sustainability collaborations between scientists in Vietnam and other countries. The next conference is scheduled for 2016 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam.

2015 IEEE Harbin Communications Society Chapter Annual Meeting

By Weixiao Meng, Chair of Harbin ComSoc Chapter, China

The Harbin ComSoc Chapter held their annual meeting at the Communication Research Center at the Harbin Institute of Technology on Sept. 28, 2015. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Weixiao Meng, the Chair of the Harbin ComSoc Chapter, with the main purpose to promote the IEEE Communications Society to the faculty members and students.

Prof. Meng gave an opening speech with a brief introduction of the Harbin ComSoc Chapter and an overview of the organization of IEEE. Prof. Meng also highlighted the technical

lectures of visiting scholars and several interesting self-designed logos and souvenirs. He also introduced the membership of IEEE and the flagship conferences sponsored by the IEEE Communications Society to raise awareness among the young students, who are keen on doing research and development.

Following the opening speech, Dr. Shuai Han, the Secretary of the Harbin ComSoc Chapter, gave a presentation on "Conference Paper versus Journal Paper." This topic described the newly published statement of IEEE, which helped the students to have a better understanding of how to use the reference materials that were already published via other conference(s) as a reference for their journal paper submission. This topic has captured the interests of the students when preparing their research papers.

After the presentation, the participants celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival, which is a traditional festival celebrated by the Chinese. Romantically speaking, the festival is to commemorate Chang E, who in order to protect her beloved husband's elixir, ate it herself and flew to the moon. There are many other legends and stories related to this grand festival.

The Chapter organized several interesting activities during the celebration, such as guessing lantern riddles. Participants enjoyed sharing and eating the mooncakes, and the meeting was ended with the sound of joy.



Participants at the 2015 IEEE Harbin Communications Society Chapter annual meeting.

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identify and solve all these details. Finally, each group had to develop an organization plan and action plan that covers the following 12 weeks.

The last day was "Pitching Day." Forty-five entrepreneurs presented their start-ups, covering not only the "idea" but also all the sides trained during the Scrum: the team, the market, and of course, the competition.

The selection of the best participating teams will have the opportunity to compete in the EU-XCEL Ultimate Challenge Final on 2–3 November 2015 in Cork, Ireland, where they will pitch to and connect with some of Europe's leading venture capitalists, angel investors, and successful tech entrepreneurs.

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GLOBAL
COMMUNICATIONS
NEWSLETTER



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