“Our officers and volunteers have been working on international information issues in line with ASIS&T’s Access, Belonging, Community focus.”

- Message from the Chair, page 2

International Cafe Meet, page 11

2024 ASIS&T Webinar Series
March 20, 2024

“AI for Information Access: How Do We Do It Responsibly?”

Presenter: Dr. Chirag Shah
Greetings, Happy Nowruz & Spring from Iran!

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Spring issue of our newsletter. In this issue, you will find information about our long-standing initiatives such as the International Paper Contest (IPC), InfoShare Awards, internal collaborations, International Café Meeting (ICM), and Research Wing as well as a glimpse of some of our new initiatives.

Our officers and volunteers have been working on international information issues in line with ASIS&T’s Access, Belonging, Community focus. We updated our website to improve accessibility for members. To enhance bonding and collaboration among members, the ICM team organized two cafés in January and March. The Research Wing team launched the mentorship program that pairs senior LIS researchers as mentors with junior LIS researchers from developing countries as mentees. Additionally, the InfoShare team broadcasted the InfoShare Award, which provides a free ASIS&T membership for LIS researchers and professionals in developing countries. We ask that you please spread the call through your circles and networks. Our IPC team is spreading the call for submissions; please submit your paper before April 15. On March 20, Dr. Chirag Shah presented the webinar "AI for Information Access: How Do We Do It Responsibly?" in collaboration with SIG-AI and the South Asia Chapter. Our second collaboration will focus on "Developing a Responsible AI Strategy for Your Library" and will be presented by Dr. Andrew Cox on April 29.

Among new initiatives, the Special Project team successfully conducted the Winter School, which was a series of workshops and webinars offered by experts on cutting-edge topics in the field. Our first Humans of the Library event, an innovative way of sharing personal and professional challenges and solutions to build a community, was successfully held in February. The second Humans of the Library, with ASIS&T Past Presidents, will be held on June 7. Our volunteers translated the SIG-III ‘About’ page into 17 languages to ensure accessibility.

Additionally, after our successful international collaboration with the Iran Public Libraries Association, we have planned our second international collaboration with IFLA New Professionals SIG and UNT ASIS&T Student Chapter on “Opportunities and Challenges in the Job Market” on March 28. Finally, to make it easier to submit and share information about various initiatives with the ASIS&T community, our Newsletter Officer structured new guidelines and a submission form. Please feel free to share your achievements and memories with SIG-III through the submission form.

We are excited to announce that we are offering scientific sponsorship for submissions to the 2024 ASIS&T Annual Meeting. Please reach out to us before submitting your proposals to the annual meeting if you are interested. Furthermore, in preparation for the 2024 ASIS&T Annual Meeting, SIG-III has been actively planning for the International Reception. We are seeking volunteers who will attend the Annual Meeting in Calgary, Canada. Volunteers will play an integral role in supporting the Silent Auction and Raffle that will be organized during the International Reception. Please let me know if you are interested no later than April 30 at leili.seifi@gmail.com.

Finally, we are seeking your input to help us determine how SIG-III can contribute uniquely to the association. Your feedback will be highly appreciated.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to all the SIG-III Officers and Volunteers for their remarkable dedication and enthusiasm in delivering exceptional work and innovative ideas to ensure that SIG-III remains as strong as it is today. A word of appreciation also goes to all members who participated in various events and initiatives. Your participation contributed to its success, and we couldn’t have done it without you. Please feel free to share your suggestions, thoughts, and comments with us anytime at sigiiiasist@gmail.com, as we highly value your feedback.

Leili Seifi, Chair, SIG-III
Upcoming Events

Opportunities and Challenges in the Job Market

Join our panel of experts to learn tips and tricks of writing cover letters and resumes/CVs. Our speakers will provide insights into what hiring managers seek in job applications.

Anna Motes  
Career Coach  
College of Information  
University of North Texas  
USA

Dr. Devendra Potnis  
Professor and Director  
School of Information Science  
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville  
USA

Dr. Tai-Yi Huang  
Lecturer  
College of Information  
University of North Texas  
USA

📅 5:00 PM Central European Time (CET)  
📅 March 28, 2024

register: https://tinyurl.com/CareerPanelWorkshop
Developing a Responsible AI Strategy for your Library

AI has potential uses in many aspects of library work and supporting users in its effective use is also part of their remit. Given the complexity of AI itself and its many impacts there is a need for clear strategic thinking about how to respond. The presentation considers the potential impact of AI on library work; analyses the benefits and ethical challenges; and identifies some strategy forming tools that can help give library response a direction.

Attendees will gain the ability to:

- Analyze the possible relevance of AI to libraries in general and their context in particular
- Weigh up the benefits and ethical challenges of AI in this context
- Pick strategy forming tools and approaches

Andrew Cox is a senior lecturer at the Information School, University of Sheffield. Much of his research relates to the impact of detarification and AI on the information profession. As well as the current chair of the ASIS&T SIG-AI, he is the convenor of the IFLA SIG on AI and a co-chair of the CODATA task group on data ethics.

**A PR E 2 9 A T 1 1 : 0 0 A M E D T.**

**MEETING LINK:**

https://www.asist.org/meetings-events/webinars/developing-a-responsible-ai-strategy-for-your-library/

Upcoming Events

Save the Dates!

The 11th **International Cafe Meet** (ICM) will be held on Wednesday 15 May at 9:00 AM EDT. The meeting link will be circulated via iConnect.

SIG-III will host a **Humans of the Library** event on Friday 7 June at 10:00 AM EDT. Click here to register.
Call for Applications: International Paper Contest 2024

The Special Interest Group on International Information Issues (SIG-III) of the Association for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T) invites research papers from library and information science (LIS) professionals of developing countries for the 24th International Paper Contest (IPC). The winners of the IPC 2024 will be awarded in the 87th Annual Meeting of ASIS&T, which will take place in Calgary, Alberta, Canada from 25-29 October 2024. The theme of the Annual Meeting is “Putting People First: Responsibility, Reciprocity and Care in Information Research and Practice”.

The purpose of this contest is to encourage researchers from developing countries and to share their work globally. It also focuses on pushing advancements in information, people, and technology in contemporary societies in the context of developing countries.

Eligibility & Information for Authors:
All authors should be citizens of and reside in a developing nation. Winners of the 2016-2023 contests are not eligible. The papers should be original, unpublished, and submitted in English. We encourage submissions from librarians, information and network specialists, and educators.

Authors are invited to submit manuscripts, not to exceed 5,000 words, by 15 April 2024 via the submission form as a Microsoft Word Document.

For more information, visit: https://www.asist.org/sig/sigiii/international-paper-contest/

Namali Suraweera, IPC Chair

Call for Nominations: InfoShare Membership Award 2024

ASIS&T’s Special Interest Group on International Information Issues (SIG-III) is sponsoring another group of deserving Information Professionals from developing countries for complimentary ASIS&T memberships (the financial burden of which would otherwise be prohibitive) for the year 2024.

Eligibility:
- Preference for the InfoShare Award will be given to candidates belonging to Tier 1 countries as candidates from Tier 2 countries can get free membership (for two years).
- Current ASIS&T members cannot be nominated for the award.
- The individual should not be the InfoShare award winner in the last five years.
- Only ASIS&T members can nominate any suitable candidate by 15 May 2024.

Responsibilities of the Winner:
- Join SIG-III.
- Attend at least 3 ASIS&T webinars of their interest in a business year (July 1st to June 30th).
- Attend at least two quarterly SIG-III business meetings.
- Help the InfoShare Committee to organize at least one InfoShare event.
- Invite at least five Library and Information Science professionals to join SIG-III.
- Submit a detailed report to the InfoShare Chair about the above-mentioned activities at the end of the business year (30th June).

Nominators can mentor the award recipients for the above activities.

For more information, visit: https://www.asist.org/sig/sigiii/sig-iii-awards/infoshare/infoshare-news/

Faiza Bashir, InfoShare Chair
Dharmveer Modi, InfoShare Member
Elçin Ziya, InfoShare Member
Massoomeh Niknia, InfoShare Member
SIG-III was awarded a Special Project Fund in 2023. As a result, the special project team, including eight professionals from five countries, organized the Winter School for Enhancing Research Skills. The Winter School presented a combination of workshops and webinars to train information science professionals in developing their research skills. Topics included Python for Data Analysis and Machine Learning; Plotting Social Networks with R; Word Vectors & Embeddings; Metacognitive Awareness & Metaliteracy Skills; Information Ethics & Digital Wellness; and Ethical Considerations of Generative AI.

The Special Project Timeline
Project Start: 10th March 2023
Project Launch: 17th November 2023
Project End: 8th February 2024

Outcomes:
- We increased ASIS&T membership by offering a unique and valuable opportunity for professional development. 8 new ASIS&T members were added as a result of 10 scholarships offered by special project funds.
- 315 registered ASIS&T members and non-members from 77 countries participated in the Winter School.
- A total of 8 resource persons from the USA, South Africa, and Scotland presented at our Winter School.
- Three SIG-III members from Pakistan, Kenya, and South Africa volunteered to assist our workshop moderators.

https://www.asist.org/2023/10/10/winter-school/
https://www.asist.org/sig/sigiii/special-projects/

Special Project Planning Team

Leili Seifi
University of Birjand
Iran

Bhakti Gala
Central University of Gujarat
India

Manika Lamba
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
USA

Naailah Parbhoo
University of Pretoria
South Africa

Sourav Debnath
Indian Institute of Technology
(Indian School of Mines)
Dhanbad, India

Ruwan Gamage
Maldives National University & University of Colombo
Maldives/Sri Lanka

Fatih Oguz
University of North Carolina
at Greensboro, USA

Leili Seifi
University of Birjand
Iran

Bhakti Gala
Central University of Gujarat
India

Manika Lamba
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
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Dhanbad, India

Ruwan Gamage
Maldives National University & University of Colombo
Maldives/Sri Lanka

Fatih Oguz
University of North Carolina
at Greensboro, USA

Shalini Urs
University of Mysore
India
Enhancing Metacognitive Awareness & Metaliteracy Skills Towards Becoming a Self-Determined Researcher
25 January

Metacognition is essentially critical self-reflection or thinking about one’s own thinking. Metacognition is one of the domains of metaliteracy, which is a requirement for successful research. It promotes critical thinking and collaboration in a connected world, providing a comprehensive framework to effectively participate in social media and online communities. It is a unified construct that supports the acquisition, production, and sharing of knowledge in collaborative online communities. Metaliteracy challenges traditional skills-based approaches and expands on traditional information literacy. This allows us to consider the related literacy types and incorporating emerging technologies. Standard definitions of information literacy are insufficient for revolutionary social technologies as well as research trends in our changing world. Therefore, Dr. Brenda presented deep understanding of the concepts of cognition and metacognition, metaliteracy, self-directedness as a metatheory, and metacognitive strategies with lived experiences and examples.

Leili Seifi moderated the webinar with technical support from Kimberly Granados, ASIS&T Deputy Executive Director. There were 86 registered participants from 19 countries (South Africa, USA, Iran, Pakistan, India, UK, Italy, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Malaysia, Croatia, Taiwan, Israel, Pakistan, Sweden, New Zealand).

Presenter: Dr. Brenda van Wyk is a senior academic in the EBIT Faculty at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

“I enjoyed Dr. van Wyk’s desire to impress on us the importance of self-determination and self-regulation to help us be successful in the completion of our research.”
- Participant
Winter School for Enhancing Research Skills

Information Ethics & Digital Wellness Toolkit
1 February

A pyramid based on the foundation of ethics, covering deontological, utilitarian, virtue ethics, ethics of care, surveillance ethics and Ubuntu ethics (a South African concept of ethics), was discussed. Thereafter privacy, accuracy, intellectual property, access and security (PAPAS) was covered. The next topic was social justice and value of knowledge, intercultural ethics, and finally, social responsibility and digital citizenship.

The presentation included the implementation of information communication technologies (ICTs), how they affect users, and how they are engrained into our daily lives. The idea of ethics being about balancing what is good for me with what is good for others was included. The concept of MOVE (Motivation, Opportunity and risks, Vortex, and Effect and cause of using information in an ethical and legal manner) was also discussed as this links well with digital wellness. Finally, the presentation introduced digital wellness and the Digital Wellness Toolkit developed by the African Centre of Excellence for Information Ethics (ACEIE) alongside the Department of Information Science at the University of Pretoria and other national and international entities.

Leili Seifi moderated the webinar with technical support from Kimberly Granados, ASIS&T Deputy Executive Director. There were 56 registered participants from 17 countries (South Africa, Turkey, USA, Iran, Norway, Canada, Pakistan, Japan, India, UK, Italy, Nigeria, Philippines, Germany, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Australia).

Presenter: Naailah Parbhoo is a Senior Researcher at OUTA (Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse), South Africa.

Information Ethical Considerations of Generative AI: Research, Teaching & Learning
8 February

Presenters described the types of AI, the future of technology, and disruptive technologies. They also presented a high-level explanation of ChatGPT as an NLP, prompt engineering, and application examples. Information ethical issues of the information age and information ethical concerns related to the use of AI were discussed at this webinar.

Leili Seifi moderated the webinar with technical support from Kimberly Grandos, ASIS&T Deputy Executive Director. 121 participants registered from 27 countries (United Arab Emirates, USA, Iran, Nigeria, South Africa, China, Turkey, Norway, UK, Italy, France, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Germany, Croatia, Zimbabwe, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Australia, Canada, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Philippines, India, Slovenia).

Presenters: Dr. Marlene Holmner an Associate Professor in the Department of Information Science at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Dr. Sean Kruger is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Pretoria’s Centre for the Future of Work, South Africa.

Information Ethical Considerations of Generative AI with Dr. Marlene Holmner and Dr. Sean Kruger, 8 February

Agenda:
- Introduction
- Types of AI
- Technology & the future
- Disruptive technologies: Are they real?
- A high-level explanation of ChatGPT as an NLP
- Prompt engineering
- Application examples
- Information Ethical issues of the Information Age
- Information Ethical Concerns Related to the Use of AI
- Conclusion

Information Ethical Considerations of Generative AI with Dr. Marlene Holmner and Dr. Sean Kruger, 8 February
ASIS&T, with its global membership, has long been a hub of diverse experiences and wisdom. Information professionals possess a wealth of stories encompassing their triumphs, struggles, leadership journeys, innovative initiatives, and invaluable insights contributing to personal and professional success. Despite members’ familiarity through profiles, which offer only glimpses of their backgrounds and expertise, much of their human side remains unexplored.

Inspired by the Human Library organization, known for fostering spaces where individuals share tales of resilience, bravery, and healing, the concept of “Humans of the Library” aimed to unveil the personal narratives of information professionals. This initiative facilitated deeper connections, fostered understanding, and celebrated diversity within the profession.

Facilitated by InfoShare of SIG-III, the event was spearheaded by Mr. Nooruddin Merchant, recipient of the 2023 InfoShare Award. He is the Assistant Director of Library and Information Programs at Habib University in Karachi, Pakistan. His vision guided the event’s organization and moderation, fostering an enriching environment for storytelling and mutual learning.

The second Humans of the Library event, sponsored by SIG-III, will be held on Friday 7 June at 10:00 AM EDT. Registration is available at https://www2.asist.org/ap/Events/Register/n4Hmgk5IXHNCZ.
In this webinar hosted on 20 March, Dr. Shah discussed the need for advancements with AI not just at technical levels, but also at policy, societal, and even philosophical levels. The speaker highlighted recent opportunities with practical examples, including modalities of interactions, focus on tasks, addressing information literacy and accessibility, and overcoming low resource or hard sample problems with AI.

Challenges of AI included hallucination, misinformation, toxicity, mismatch in capabilities and usage, lack of transparency and control, issues of intellectual property, attributions, privacy, and value challenges with practical examples. The third aspect of the presentation was ‘how do we do this right/better?’ Dr. Shah elaborated on this aspect by insisting on good, rigorous science, being responsible (fair, equitable, transparent, and accountable), focusing on users and their needs, and integrating human values.

The webinar had 180 registrants and over 70 participants from 37 countries. Leili Seifi, SIG-III Chair, moderated the webinar with assistance from Kimberly Granados, ASIS&T Deputy Executive Director, and ASIS&T staff.

Presenter: Dr. Chirag Shah is a Professor of Information and Computer Science at University of Washington (UW) in Seattle, USA.
In a bid to foster relaxing and informal discussions among ASIS&T members, SIG-III hosted two engaging International Café Meets (ICM) in the first quarter of 2024.

The 9th ICM to date was held on 24 January and centered on the theme of New Year’s resolutions. Attended by enthusiastic members, the event proved to be a resounding success, with participants engaging in lively and insightful conversations. Starting with the ice breaker, the café setting provided a fun atmosphere for members to mingle and share their experiences of the last year and aspirations for the coming year. From personal goals to professional aspirations, attendees openly exchanged ideas, experiences, and advice, enriching the collective knowledge within the group.

Following the fun session from January, we conducted the 10th ICM on 13 March with the theme “The Future is AI!”. We started by sharing fun facts or stories about AI, which made a very engaging - and often funny - café environment. We continued to share experiences on how AI is used in research and teaching and how AI is becoming a part of our everyday lives.

The events not only facilitated networking opportunities but also strengthened the sense of community within the association. SIG-III looks forward to organizing more ICMs as engaging events that foster collaboration and meaningful connections among its members in the future. The next ICM will be conducted on 15 May 2024 at 9am EDT. Stay tuned on iConnect for updates on upcoming gatherings and initiatives!

Safirotu Khoir, ICM Organizer
Vanessa Reyes, ICM Co-Organizer

Research Wing

SIG-III’s Research Wing was established to facilitates informal but lasting and fruitful research collaborations and for capacity building of researchers in library and information-related disciplines. The Research Wing’s Mentorship Program matches SIG-III members who will work collaboratively for one year to design and implement a new research project or work on existing projects.

Applications for 2024-2025 were open from February 15 to March 21. Mentors and mentees are matched by SIG-III Research Wing based on the following criteria:
- Research interests of mentees and expertise of mentors
- Availability of mentors
- Type and level of guidance needed
- Expertise and track record of mentors and mentees
- Regional representation and equality.

Mentor/mentee matches will be announced in the first week of April, and mentorship terms will begin in June 2024.

Vandana Singh, Research Wing Chair
Emmanuel Udoh, Research Wing Officer
Alia Arshad, Research Wing Officer
SIG-III’s vision is to create a diverse and well-trained SIG-III community that provides professional support services to global information through cooperation, communication, and respect. To enhance inclusivity with our diverse global membership and to reach a wider audience, our homepage is now available in 18 languages. We are grateful to the following ASIS&T members who volunteered to translate the SIG-III Mission, Vision, Values, and ‘About SIG-III’ information.

If your language is not yet represented and you would like to add a translation, please contact sigiiiasist@gmail.com.

Website Updates

https://www.asist.org/sig/sigiii/

Since December 2023, many improvements have been made to the SIG-III website. To enhance user experience and provide better information, the ‘About SIG-III’ section was updated, including the addition of our Vision and Mission on the homepage. The top icons were improved across all webpages so that essential information is more accessible and visually appealing. Links between the icons were redirected for better navigation and organization. A new Bylaws icon was added, and a Home icon was added to all interior pages. Valuable information was added to several interior pages, including InfoShare, IPC, and Awards and Honors, enhancing transparency and recognition within the community.

Work is continuing on these key objectives:
- Optimize the website’s interface for mobile devices to ensure a seamless browsing experience across different platforms
- Implement strategies for search engine optimization (SEO) to improve the website’s visibility.

Dharmveer Modi, Webmaster/Communication Officer

Newsletter Updates

To support the sustainability of regular newsletter publications, the process for gathering newsletter content has been streamlined. A centralized content submission form and photo repository were developed, along with guidelines for the content and length of newsletter items. We invite you to visit the SIG-III newsletter archive on our website; the submission guidelines and a link to the submission form are available at the bottom of this page. Your news and contributions are always welcome!

Any comments or inquiries regarding the newsletter may be sent to bethany.morton- jerome@sjsu.edu or sigiiiasist@gmail.com.

Bethany Morton-Jerome, Newsletter Officer

Community in Language

SIG-III’s vision is to create a diverse and well-trained SIG-III community that provides professional support services to global information through cooperation, communication, and respect. To enhance inclusivity with our diverse global membership and to reach a wider audience, our homepage is now available in 18 languages. We are grateful to the following ASIS&T members who volunteered to translate the SIG-III Mission, Vision, Values, and ‘About SIG-III’ information.

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<td>Vanessa Reyes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abdul Jabbar Awan</td>
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Social Media Updates

In December 2023, we launched a new Facebook page dedicated to SIG-III. This initiative aimed to create a more interactive and engaging platform for members and followers. Efforts were made to transfer members from the existing SIG-III Facebook group to the new page, although this process is ongoing. Strategies are being devised to expedite the transfer process and further increase engagement on the new page. Also in December, SIG-III launched a dedicated LinkedIn page for the first time, which has seen a positive response from the community.

On an ongoing basis, we are undertaking initiatives to boost engagement on social media platforms, including interactive content, regular updates, and community engagement campaigns. SIG-III is committed to leveraging digital platforms effectively to connect with stakeholders, disseminate information, and promote collaboration within the international information community.

Dharmveer Modi, Webmaster/Communication Officer

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<tr>
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<td>X (Twitter)</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>416</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Follow Us!

Want to get involved with SIG-III? You can stay connected through these platforms:

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- X (formerly Twitter)
- SIG-III Website

Social Media posts

- Twitter: 34
- LinkedIn: 36
- SIG-III iConect: 58
- Open forum: 42
- Facebook: 34
SIG-III Officers

Chair:
Leili Seifi
University of Birjand, Iran

Co-Chair & Chair-Elect:
Nosheen Warraich
University of the Punjab, Pakistan

Treasurer:
Sourav Debnath
Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) Dhanbad, India

SIG Cabinet Representative:
Iman Tahamtan
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville, USA

Co-Chair-Elect:
Humphrey Keah
Rightpoint Information Services Ltd, Kenya

Research Wing Chair:
Vandana Singh
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville, USA

Research Wing Officers:
Emmanuel Udoh
University at Albany, USA
Alia Arshad
University of the Punjab, Pakistan

InfoShare Chair:
Faiza Bashir
Higher Education Department of the Government of Punjab, Pakistan

InfoShare Committee Members:
Massoomeh Niknia
Iranian Grid Management Company, Iran
Elçin Ziya
Hacettepe University, Turkey
Dharmveer Modi
Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, India

International Cafe Meet Organizer:
Safirotu Khoir
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

International Cafe Meet Co-Organizer:
Vanessa Reyes
East Carolina University, USA

International Paper Contest Chair:
Namali Suraweera
Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

International Paper Contest Jury:
Priya Vaidya
Aligarh Muslim University, India
Naiilah Parbhoo
University of Pretoria, South Africa
Manika Lamba
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, USA

Newsletter Officer:
Bethany Morton-Jerome
San Jose State University, Jordan

Webmaster/Communication Officer:
Dharmveer Modi
Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, India

Nominating Committee Chair:
Devendra Potnis
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville, USA

Nominating Committee Member:
Shaharima Parvin
East West University, Bangladesh

Past Chair:
Bhakti Gala
Central University of Gujarat, India

Advisors:
Devendra Potnis
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville, USA
Laurie Bonnici
University of Alabama, USA
Shalini Urs
University of Mysore, India