Conference Report

Conference attended
ACM CompEd 2019
This question is read only.

Location of the Conference
Chengdu, China

Start Date	**Finish Date**
13/05/2019	19/05/2019
Must be a date.	Must be a date.

What were the highlights and main takeaways of this conference?
Many of the papers, panels, and other presentations were fascinating, but my highlight was the work I really traveled to China to do, collaborating on the "Teaching of computing ethics: an international review" working group report. The idea for this report emerged in response to two major events: First, ACM has just completed a major rewrite of its code of ethics, which has the potential to affect both academic and industry standards around the world. Second, the first-ever ACM CompEd (Association for Computing Machinery Global Computing Education Conference) was held in China. While the annual ACM SIG-CSE conference has long been a major venue for scholarship on education in computing, CompEd makes a deliberate international pivot toward regions of the world that have not always been well represented in the scholarly literature about computing education. While a truly comprehensive report on global education initiatives related to ethics in computing would be impossible, this working group is an important opportunity to expand the discussion and challenge the basic premises of and terms in which that discussion has been had. I was honored to contribute some perspectives from Aotearoa New Zealand alongside group members from China, India, Europe and the United States. The working group process began months prior to the conference and will continue for a few months after the conference has concluded before going through a peer review process, but from our intense week of working together in Chengdu, I can offer a few very preliminary conclusions now. From the Aotearoa NZ perspective, the preliminary research I conducted prior to the conference suggests there is a lot of important work to do (1) generally developing tech ethics education in the region and (2) especially in collaborations between computer science and indigenous groups such as Te Mana Raraunga the Māori Data Sovereignty Network to develop a distinctive curriculum and pedagogy for the benefit not only of New Zealanders but people around the world. In terms of the more global perspective considered by the group in Chengdu, that discussion happens against the backdrop of a very clearly problematic state of ethics education for computing professionals around the world, with recent events bringing increased attention and to some extent pressure on universities to do better. Some of these issues are fairly well understood, such as the intense pressures on students to master technical material and relative lack of expertise among computer science faculty to be able to incorporate ethics into existing curriculum or develop new courses in this area. These issues recur across international boundaries. What ethics education we do find has some variation due to accreditation bodies and other public-private institutional structures that impose more and less specific requirements on degree granting programs. However these institutional requirements sometimes lead to

ethics being treated as a 'box-ticking' exercise. That said, in places where the teaching of ethics is treated as a substantial area of inquiry, there is a great deal of innovation in teaching. Recent courses at top institutions (e.g., Stanford University and MIT) have made substantial portions of their courses open source, which suggests some spirit of cooperation and recognition of the urgency of this as a public service. While there is significant variation in terms of how content is delivered, what types of ethical cases are considered, etc., we found that the underlying ethical principles being considered were usually cast in the same Western philosophical tradition. Even for example in China, the limited sample of syllabi we examined did not reflect any Confucian or otherwise distinctively local perspectives. Critiques coming from the social sciences (especially Science and Technology Studies and associated fields such as Communication) are however enriching these discussions by pushing beyond the classic model of applying ethical principles to case studies. These fields have substantial and distinct ways of addressing questions about the relationship between technology and social good. Computer science will benefit from education that takes into account the wider context of social and economic forces that shape the development of technologies as well as ways that technologies change our world, presenting new dangers and great opportunities alike.

What were the favorite sessions, any contacts you made, etc.

What were the lowlights of the conference?
While we made MAJOR progress as a working group during our time together in China -- progress that was only possible by bringing people from around the world together in a room -- we did not *quite* achieve our ambitions for the level of polish on our draft before time ran out. (Among other issues, the lack of access to scholarly resources due to severe online censorship in China made some things very difficult to complete!) It is however typical of these working group reports that a significant amount of revision must happen remotely after the conference has concluded. So although I have much I would like to say and a *bit* I can already share at this stage, the more substantial fruits of this endeavour will take some time before availability in published form.

What would you do differently?

How will you plan to share your learnings with the New Zealand Internet Community?
The main way this conference will feed back into New Zealand's community of Internet professionals and users will be how it informs the new digital ethics curriculum at University of Auckland. A trial run of our new course will begin in semester 2 of 2019 and will be unique in a number of different ways, including its structure and decentering of the Western philosophical tradition of ethics, especially emphasizing Maori perspectives in collaboration with a representative of the Maori Data Sovereignty Network. I hope to be able to share the published version of the ACM report in due time when it is available, but I am also happy to engage the InternetNZ community in less formal and more publicly accessible ways, whether in writing or perhaps coming to speak about these issues. My hope is that this grant marks the beginning of an ongoing relationship that will continue simultaneously to have your perspectives help inform the shape of my research and curriculum development at the university and to share with you my ongoing research (I have other projects, especially on digital disconnection, that I hope will be of future interest to y'all!)

We'd love to see some visual and audio representations of your work. Please share below.

Upload files: *No files have been uploaded*

and/or

Provide web link:

Must be a URL

and/or

Provide additional details:

Unfortunately I do not at this moment have any great ideas for media representations of this work to share but I would be happy to discuss with you if there's something I can provide now, and of course the report itself will be available when it is published!

Please include captions, if relevant

Can we use your media content in our own communications?

○ Yes   ○ No   ◉ Please contact us first

e.g. in our annual report, social media

Financial Report

* indicates a required field

Project Income & Expenditure

Please provide details of any project income (funds received) and project expenditure (funds spent) to date.

Use the 'Notes' column to provide any additional information you think we should be aware of.

Income Description	Income Amount ($)	Notes
InternetNZ Grant	$3,500.00	THANK YOU
Can be grants, donations, personal funds etc.		

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Type	Expenditure Amount ($)	Notes
Travel and Accommodation Combined Bill from Orbit	Other expenditure (add note please) *	$3,500.00	(please see below)

Income and Expenditure Totals

Total Income Amount	**Total Expenditure Amount**	**Income - Expenditure**
$3,500.00	$3,500.00	$0.00
This number/amount is calculated.	This number/amount is calculated.	This number/amount is calculated.

Have you experienced any issues with your intended project budget to date? If so, please explain reasons for any major variances or for providing incomplete information:

If you require more granular information, receipts, or other documentation I will be happy to provide it. (The most obvious and easy thing would be the travel agency bill for travel and accommodations). Unfortunately due to the complexity of university accounting and travel expense practices (as well as the additional complicating factor that this trip was combined with a trip to France the following week for an unrelated conference) I cannot easily represent here using your online interface the timeline and exact details of how this was done, but the travel / accommodation / registration fees for the China trip were all quite high, as reflected in my application, and I was most grateful to have the InternetNZ grant cover a large portion of the travel and accommodation cost to make this trip to China possible!

Feedback

Feedback

You are almost at the end of our application process. Before **submitting** your application, please take a few moments to provide some feedback.

Please indicate how you found the acquittal process:
◉ Very easy   ○ Easy   ○ Neutral   ○ Difficult   ○ Very Difficult

How many minutes in total did it take you to complete this form?
120
Estimate in minutes (i.e. 1 hour = 60 minutes)

Please provide us with your suggestions about any improvements and/or additions to this form that you think we need to consider:
This was great! Thank you so much!