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## **CLEF 2021**

**Conference and Labs of the Evaluation Forum**

**Bucharest, Romania, September 21-24, 2021**

<http://clef2021.clef-initiative.eu/>

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### **Call for Lab Proposals**

CLEF is a leading annual international conference exploring topics in information access technologies. CLEF uniquely combines evaluation laboratories and workshops with research presentations, panels, poster and demo sessions. CLEF 2021 (<http://clef2021.clef-initiative.eu/>) will be held on 21-24 September 2021 with University "Politehnica" of Bucharest, in Bucharest, Romania.

Researchers and practitioners from all areas of information access and related communities are invited to submit proposals for Evaluation Labs for consideration for inclusion in CLEF 2021 lab programme. Lab proposals will be reviewed by the lab selection committee.

### **Background**

The CLEF Initiative (<http://www.clef-initiative.eu/>) is a self-organized body whose main mission is to promote research, innovation, and development of information access systems with an emphasis on multilingual information in different modalities - including text and multimedia - with various levels of structure. CLEF promotes research and development by providing an infrastructure for:

- independent evaluation of information access systems,
- investigation of the use of unstructured, semi-structured, highly-structured, and semantically enriched data in information access,
- creation of reusable test collections for benchmarking,
- exploration of new evaluation methodologies and innovative ways of using experimental data,
- discussion of results, comparison of approaches, exchange of ideas, and transfer of knowledge.

CLEF 2021 will be the twenty second edition of the current CLEF conference launched as a continuation of the annual CLEF evaluation campaign series which ran with great success from 2000 to 2009 contributing to the systematic evaluation of information access systems, primarily through experimentation on shared tasks.

## Scope of CLEF Labs

Proposals are accepted for two different types of labs (see also the 2020 Labs at <https://clef2020.clef-initiative.eu/index.php?page=Pages/labs.html>):

- Evaluation Labs that are a "campaign-style" evaluation for specific information access problems (during the twelve month period preceding the conference), similar in nature to the traditional CLEF campaign "tracks". Topics covered by campaign-style labs can be inspired by any information access-related domain or task.
- Labs that follow a more classical "workshop" pattern, exploring issues of evaluation methodology, metrics, processes, etc. in information access and closely related fields, such as natural language processing, machine translation, and human-computer interaction.

If the lab organisers of the proposal are new to CLEF or other shared task evaluation campaigns, we highly recommend that a lab workshop first be organised to discuss the format, the problem space, and the practicalities of the shared task. The CLEF 2021 programme will reserve about half of the conference schedule for lab sessions. The labs will present their overall results "overview presentations" during the plenary scientific paper sessions to allow non-participants to get a sense of where the research frontiers are moving. Organisers of each lab are expected to organise the separate sessions for their lab at the conference so that they contain ample time for general discussion and engagement by all participants - not just those presenting campaign results and papers. Lab organisers should plan time in their sessions for activities such as panels, demos, poster sessions etc. as appropriate.

CLEF is always interested in receiving and facilitating innovative lab proposals. Potential task proposers who are unsure of the suitability of their task proposal or its format for inclusion at CLEF are encouraged to contact the CLEF 2021 Lab Organizing Committee Chairs to discuss its suitability or design at an early stage.

## Proposal Submission

Lab proposals must provide sufficient information to judge the relevance, timeliness, scientific quality, benefits for the research community, and the competence of the proposers to coordinate the lab. Each lab proposal should identify one or more organizers as responsible for ensuring the timely execution of the lab. Proposals should be 3 to 4 pages long and should provide the following information:

1. Title of the proposed lab.
2. A brief description of the lab topic and goals, its relevance to CLEF and the significance for the field.

3. A brief but clear statement of usage scenarios or domain to which the activity is intended to contribute, including the evaluation setup and metrics.
4. Details on the lab organizer(s), including identifying the task chair(s) responsible for ensuring the running of the task. This should include details of any previous involvement in organising or participating in evaluation tasks at CLEF or similar campaigns.
5. The planned format of the lab, i.e., campaign-style ("track") or workshop.
6. Is the lab a continuation of an activity from previous year(s) or a new activity?
  - a. For activities continued from previous year(s): Statistics from previous years (number of participants/runs for each task), a clear statement on why another edition is needed, an explicit listing of the changes proposed, and a discussion of lessons to be learned or insights to be made.
  - b. For new activities: A statement on why a new evaluation campaign is needed and how the community would benefit from the activity.
7. Details of the expected target audience, i.e., who do you expect to participate in the task(s), and how do you propose to reach them.
8. Brief details of tasks to be carried out in the lab. The proposal should clearly motivate the need for each of the proposed tasks and provide evidence of its capability of attracting enough participation. The dataset which will be adopted by the Lab needs to be described and motivated in the perspective of the goals of the Labs; also indications on how the dataset will be shared are useful. It is fine for a lab to have a single task, but labs often contain multiple closely related tasks, needing a strong motivation for more than 3 tasks, to avoid useless fragmentation.
9. Expected length of the lab session at the conference: half-day, one day, two days. This should include very high level details of the planned structure of the session, e.g., participant presentations, invited speaker(s), panels, etc., to justify the requested session length.
10. Arrangements for the organization of the lab campaign: who will be responsible for activities within the task; how will data be acquired or created, what tools or methods will be used, e.g., how will necessary queries be created or relevance assessment carried out; any other information which is relevant to the conduct of your lab.
11. If the lab proposes to set up a steering committee to oversee and advise its activities, include names, addresses, and homepage links of people you propose to be involved.

Lab proposals have to be submitted at the following address:

<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=clef2021>

choosing the "**CLEF 2021 Lab Proposals**" track.

## Reviewing Process

Each submitted proposal will be reviewed by the CLEF 2021 Lab Organizing Committee. The decision will be sent by email to the responsible organizer by September 15, 2020. The final length of the lab session will be determined based on the overall organization of the conference and the number of participant submissions received by a lab.

## Advertising Labs at CLEF 2020 and ECIR 2021

Organizers of accepted labs are expected to advertise their labs at both CLEF 2020 (22-25 September 2020, online event, Thessaloniki, Greece) and ECIR 2021 (March 28 - April 1st 2021, Lucca, Italy). At least one lab representative should participate in these events.

Advertising at CLEF 2020 will consist of running a break-out session to discuss the lab with prospective participants, and advertising/announcing it during the closing session.

Advertising at ECIR 2021 will consist of submitting a short lab description to be included in the ECIR 2021 proceedings (submission by 15 October 2020), advertising the lab in a booster session during ECIR 2021, and presenting a poster about the lab.

## Mentorship Program for Lab Proposals from newcomers

As in the last year, CLEF 2021 will run a mentorship program to support the preparation of lab proposals for newcomers to CLEF. However due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the schedule shift, this year will be a lighter and more accelerated process than in the previous year. We encourage newcomers to refer to Friedberg et al. (2015) for initial guidance on preparing their proposal: *Friedberg I, Wass MN, Mooney SD, Radivojac P. Ten simple rules for a community computational challenge. PLoS Comput Biol. 2015 Apr 23;11(4):e1004150.*

The CLEF newcomers mentoring program offers help, guidance, and feedback on the writing of your draft lab proposal by assigning a mentor to you, who help you in preparing and maturing the lab proposal for submission. If your lab proposal falls into the scope of an already existing CLEF lab, the mentor will help you to get in touch with those lab organizers and team up forces.

Lab proposals for mentorship have to be submitted at the following address:

<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=clef2021>

choosing the “**CLEF 2021 Lab Mentorship**” track.

## Important Dates

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year’s schedule for the lab proposal submission has been significantly changed:

- Requests for accelerated mentorship submission (only newcomers): 24 July 2020
- Accelerated mentorship period starts: 27 July 2020
- Lab proposals submission (both newcomers and veterans): 26 August 2020

- Notification of lab acceptance: 15 September 2020
- Advertising labs at CLEF 2020: 22-25 Sept. 2020, online event
- Submission of short lab description for ECIR 2021: 15 October 2020
- Lab registration opens: 5 November 2020
- Advertising labs at ECIR 2021: 28 March-1st April 2021, Lucca, Italy

#### **CLEF 2021 Lab Chairs**

- Alexis Joly, Inria, LIRMM, University of Montpellier, France
- Maria Maistro, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- Florina Piroi, Vienna University of Technology, Austria

#### **CLEF 2021 Lab Accelerated Mentorship Chair**

- Lorraine Goeuriot, Université Grenoble Alpes, France
- Henning Müller, University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland, Switzerland