Preface

Céad míle fáilte — one hundred thousand welcomes — to the sixth meeting of the International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media in Dublin.

Research into social media sits at the intersection of several fields in both computing and social science, so since its inception, ICWSM has always had an interdisciplinary flavor. As you read through the program, you will see that this is reflected not just in a balance in papers from several fields, but also within the contributions themselves, since many of the papers and posters demonstrate excellence in multiple areas. We believe this increasing integration reflects a new level of maturity in the field: investigators have moved beyond simply applying their trusted methods to social media topics, and have started to implement the ideas and approaches that are best suited to their research questions.

This integrative approach to understanding social networks and social media is exemplified in this year's high quality roster of keynotes and invited talks. Robin Dunbar, Head of the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology at the University of Oxford, will present one of our keynote addresses. Dunbar is the originator of Dunbar's number, a theoretical cognitive limit to the number of people with whom one can maintain stable social relationships. Lada Adamic, University of Michigan and serial ICWSM best paper winner, will present on information dynamics in networks. Andrew Tomkins, Engineering Director at Google, will speak about the first year of Google's social networking and identity service Google+, launched in 2011. Interestingly, Tomkins gave an invited talk at the first ICWSM conference in 2007 when he was at Yahoo!. We will also have an invited industry talk and discussion panel, bringing a strong enterprise element to ICWSM this year. Ireland is home to both the European headquarters of multinationals (Google, Microsoft, Facebook, LinkedIn, Populis, and others) and emerging indigenous tech companies (Storyful, Datahug, Distilled Media, Newswhip, and others), all operating in the social media space. We thank our local chairs Conor Hayes and Derek Greene for all their work in helping realize this conference and for communicating with the social media research community in Ireland.

Organizing a conference is a year-round commitment — from the conference committee, our AAAI colleagues, and the program committee and reviewers. We also recognize, however, that it is only with the passion and commitment of those carrying out the research work and submitting papers, posters and demos that our meeting would take place at all, and so we reserve the greatest portion of our gratitude to everyone who made a submission. As our conference grows, so does the quality of submissions and the quality of the final accepted papers. This year's full paper submission level again increased over last year's. We accepted 47 papers out of the 232 submitted (corresponding to an acceptance rate of 20 percent). Of those, 20 papers were selected for oral presentation, while the remaining 27 papers were selected as full paper posters. The latter is a track that we introduced in 2011 whilst maintaining the integrative spirit and single-track nature of ICWSM. The full paper poster sessions will be intimate (nine papers each) and will begin with a poster-boaster by the authors, followed by 45 minutes where conference participants get to visit the posters. An additional 67 papers were accepted for poster presentation, and three demos were accepted.

This year's papers cover both old and new ground, from the advancement of techniques to extract, summarize, and detect information from social streams, to understanding phe-

nomena in society by how they are reflected in and shaped by social media. For example, an analysis of the YouTube social network will show how it differs from traditional social networking sites but bears some resemblance to Twitter in terms of its network properties. In a very large study of browsing behaviors, web histories for a quarter of a million anonymized individuals are paired with user-level demographics to examine behavior change over time online, to revisit notions of the digital divide, and to show that user attributes may be inferred from browsing histories and potentially used for ad targeting. A method that can identify experts in social question-and-answer sites through evolutionary pattern detection will be presented that improves on previous non-evolutionary methods. A framework that accurately identifies sick individuals from the content of online communication will be presented and evaluated based on a large Twitter dataset. Research on the World of Warcraft multiplayer system will describe how destructive group dynamics can be predicted with medium-to-high accuracy. A clustering model and methodology for studying the structure and composition of a city, based on the social media its residents generate, will be described that has been tested using 18 million check-ins collected from a location-based online social network. These are just some samples of the high-quality work embedded in this year's topically and methodically diversity of research papers contributing to the future of online social media.

We are optimistic that the marriage of techniques from the computer and social sciences that is represented at this year's conference will contribute to the continued synergistic collaborations among the increasing number of disciplines associated with research on social media.

The conference starts with a day of workshops and tutorials. In keeping with the interdisciplinary balance of the conference, we selected five tutorials this year (out of ten tutorial proposals) covering relevant foundational material from the areas of social design and social network analysis. Derek Ruths will give an overview of how to analyze a massive social network without the need for a computing cluster. Marc Smith will demonstrate how to map networks found on social media sites and in email collections. Paul Resnick and Robert Kraut will give a tutorial on how to design an online community, using evidence-based social design principles. Denilson Barbosa will present on information extraction for social media analysis. Our final tutorial is by Lyle Ungar and Ronen Feldman, describing how to carry out sentiment mining on user-generated content, and building on their popular tutorial from last year. We are excited about this year's lineup of tutorial presenters and look forward to the breadth of ideas they will share. Sincere thanks goes out to Bernie Hogan, Tutorial Chair, and his great team of reviewers.

This year, we have accepted four workshops from ten submissions. They are Social Media Visualization, featuring an invited talk by University of Maryland's Ben Shneiderman; Real-Time Analysis and Mining of Social Streams; When the City Meets the Citizen Workshop, with guest speaker George MacKerron who created Mappiness; and The Potential of Social Media Tools and Data for Journalists in the News Media Industry. Sofus Macskassy led the charge to solicit and select workshops. Thanks to Sofus Macskassy and his team of reviewers.

The organizers would like to thank the program committee for their hard work in selecting this set of papers. Even more importantly, we would like to thank the broader ICWSM community for the excellent technical work that was submitted. Finally, we thank our sponsors — Science Foundation Ireland, Google, Bing / Microsoft Research, Fáilte Ireland / Meet in Ireland, Knoesis at Wright State University, Yahoo! Research, IBM, and Church & Duncan Group — that have made this event a reality.

We look forward to hosting you in Dublin!

– John Breslin, James G. Shanahan,
Nicole Ellison, Zeynep Tufekci