

# Welcome from General Chair

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Amsterdam for the 2013 Genetic and Evolutionary Computation Conference (GECCO-2013). This year GECCO is being held in Europe, and we very much hope you enjoy the city of Amsterdam, as well as the many historical and modern places directly reachable from it. We hope to offer you an appealing combination of research and culture worth experiencing.



Organizing GECCO has been for me both a pleasure and an honor. A pleasure, because I have been involved in it since 1999: now a long trip, with this incredible community of skilled people and close friends. An honor, since I am having the possibility to give back to the community what I have got from GECCO, personally and in my own research. The high quality, the ideas, and the possibility to interact with GECCO's attendees had a profound impact in my students, my postdocs, and my actual research program.

Christian Blum served as the editor-in-chief this year, and did a superb job in maintaining the well-known high quality of this conference. GECCO-2013 accepted 204 full papers for oral presentation out of a total of 570 submitted. This large number of submissions accounts for the world interest in this year's GECCO. But also, it represents an acceptance rate of less than 36%, what tells on the expected quality of the accepted works. I am very thankful to Christian Blum, Leonardo Vanneschi (this year's Proceedings Chair), and all the track chairs for their hard work managing the review, selection, and scheduling process for the scientific papers. Thanks also to Linklings and Sheridan Printing for their assistance with the publication of the proceedings.

One of the highlights of every GECCO is the set of free tutorials and free workshops held during the first two days of the conference. I found these to be incredibly helpful when I was still learning about the field, and even now, to keep my knowledge fresh on specialized new trends. Thanks to Gabriela Ochoa for chairing the tutorials and Mike Preuss for chairing the workshops. Guys, you are great.



In addition to the main program, there are many other parts that make GECCO a special and meaningful experience. Evert Haasdijk and Peter Bosman served as Local Chairs, and were very helpful with planning our visit to Amsterdam. Xavier Llorà did an excellent job of publicity with the help of our webmaster and design consultant, Gerardo Valencia. Daniele Loiacono did a great job as the Competitions Chair and, as Student Chair, Emilia Tantar masterfully oversaw the process of awarding student travel grants. I would also like to thank Thomas Bartz-Beielstein and Joern Mehnen for their role as EC in Practice Chairs.

I could not have planned GECCO-2013 without the generous commitment of all the chairs mentioned above. I would also like to thank Marc Schoenauer and Darrell Whitley from the ACM SIGEVO Business Committee, as well as Franz Rothlauf and Wolfgang Banzhaf, for their encouragement and assistance navigating an enormous number of details, from budgets to planning and execution. Additionally, I would like to thank Roxane Rose and Cara Candler from Executive Events for their expert handling of the many logistical and registration-related details that are needed to make the conference a success.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the authors, presenters, reviewers, and all the other attendees. It is your participation that makes GECCO what it is, one of the premier conferences on evolutionary computation and a source of inspiration for the future of our community. Thank you all for your involvement.

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