Report on IVA 2013 – held at Edinburgh School of Informatics 28-31 August 2013

Intelligent virtual agents are animated characters that not only move, but also exhibit human-like competence when dealing with the world around them, be it virtual or real. In particular these agents communicate with humans or with each other using natural human modalities such as speech and gesture. They are capable of real-time perception, cognition and action that allows them to participate autonomously in dynamic social environments. IVA is the leading international event for researchers in this highly inter-disciplinary field, covering knowledge, methodologies and theories from a wide range of fields including artificial intelligence, sociology, psychology, computational linguistics, cognitive science and multi-model interaction.

The special topic of IVA 2013 was cognitive modelling in Virtual Agents. This topic touched on many aspects of Intelligent Virtual Agent theory and application such as models of personality; theory of mind; learning and adaptation; motivation and goal-management; creativity; social and culturally-specific behaviour. Several papers dealt directly with these topics. The remaining papers covered important themes linked to the design, modelling and evaluation of IVAs as well as system implementation and applications of IVAs.

IVA 2013 received altogether 104 submissions. Out of 69 long paper submissions, only 18 were accepted for the long papers track. Furthermore, there were 18 short papers presented in the single-track paper session, and 32 poster papers were on display. This year's IVA also included four workshops that focused on "Computers as Social Actors", "Cultural Characters In Games and Learning, "Multimodal Corpora: Beyond Audio and Video", "Techniques Towards Companion Technologies". Using SICSA's support, there was also for the first time in the IVA series a Doctoral Consortium where PhD students received feedback from peers and established researchers.

The event was attended by 119 delegates, of which 50 were PhD students. SICSA-sponsored students came from the following Universities:
Heriot-Watt University (5 students), University of Aberdeen (2 students)