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**AMI
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Integrated Project
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**D.10.3 ANALYSIS OF TRAINING
ACTIVITIES IN Y3**

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D.10.3 ANALYSIS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN Y3

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Abstract:

WP10 aims to spread excellence by providing training for young researchers within the main AMI programme. The main activity is in supporting extended visits by researchers to AMI labs to work within the project's research scope. Over 40 such placements have been arranged. In addition the AMI training programme is supporting the Euromasters scheme in language and speech.

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1 Introduction

The aim of the AMI training programme is to spread excellence by providing training for young researchers within the main AMI programme. The major training activity is to support placements for researchers to work in AMI labs on projects which are AMI-related. In addition, the AMI training programme provides support to the Euromasters Scheme in Language and Speech and sponsors young researchers from AMI labs to attend the Euromasters Summer School.

There is a budget of €313K for these activities over the lifetime of AMI and an additional €220K specifically to support placements at ICSI.

The AMI training programme is managed by Prof Phil Green of USFD. Prof Green chairs the AMI training panel, whose 5 members direct the programme, with the help of a part-time administrator at USFD. The training budget is handled by UEDIN.

The home page for the training programme is <http://www.amiproject.org/edu.php>

2 Activities

The placement programme

The AMI placement programme (and its successor in AMIDA) is available to researchers at all levels, from undergraduates to post-docs. It pays travel costs and living expenses, not salary: applicants are expected to be studying or employed at a 'home' institution. Living expenses are €1,250/month for the general scheme and €2,000/month for the ICSI scheme. Travel costs are allowed on the basis of the cheapest available flights or trains.

The placement programme is open to researchers outside the AMI labs, and to researchers outside Europe. There are no restrictions on placement length, 6 months – 1 year is typical and less than 3 months is unusual.

The application process is as follows

- Applicants apply using a form downloadable from the web site,
- They have to describe the project they want to do and why,
- They require statements of support from their home lab & their prospective host lab, together with an academic reference and CV,
- Applications are considered by the training panel on a quarterly basis,
- A budget is negotiated for each successful applicant on an individual basis,
- At this point a formal offer is made and payments are set up.¹

Researchers on placement are allocated supervisors at their host lab and required to produce reports at the end of the placement. Abstracts of the work in each placement are posted on the AMI web site. At the end of a placement researchers receive an AMI Training Certificate signed by the training manager and the host institution.

Other Activities

As stated in AMI's contract, we are supporting the Euromasters scheme in Language and Speech (<http://www.cstr.ed.ac.uk/emasters/>), which allows students in participating institutes to gain an

¹ In AMIDA we will tighten these procedures a little: a photo and abstract will be required before payments start, the final payment will not be made until the questionnaire (see §3) has been received and the certificate will be similarly delayed.

additional qualification, signed by professional bodies. To do this, they must spend at least 1 semester outside their home institution, engaged on a language/speech project. In addition, they must attend a Summer School which is organised annually. AMI gave €5K to support this Summer School in 2004 , 2005 and 2006. In 2005 and 2006 the Euromasters Summer School was opened to AMI researchers and tutorial material was combined. The total spend on these activities was €42K.

3 Assessment of the Placement Programme

Placement statistics

Table 1 overleaf details the placements arranged by December 31st 2006. In summary,

- 44 researchers have taken placements, 5 have been rejected (highlighted in yellow) and 9 are under consideration or moving on to the AMIDA training programme (highlighted in turquoise).. As might be expected, applicants 'self-select' – they are generally high-quality and well-motivated.
- The ICSI scheme has 14 takers; the other hosts are USFD(6), IDIAP(9), UEDIN(6), UT(4) , BRNO(1), Muenchen(1) & TNO(3)
- There were 9 post-docs, 16 Ph.Ds, 8 masters students and 8 undergraduates
- 11 takers are from AMI labs, 33 from outside, so the scheme really is spreading excellence
- The budget committed on placements was €182K for the ICSI scheme and €270K for the general scheme.

Table 1: AMI TRAINING PROGRAMME - STATUS OF APPLICATIONS**December 2006**

Applicant	Home Institute	Host Institute	Level	Visit period	Decision	cost (Euro)
Xavier Anguera Miro	Polytechnic Uni of Catalonia	ICSI	Ph.D	Sep 04 - Sep 05	Yes	24,780
Marc Ferras	Polytechnic Uni of Catalonia	ICSI	Masters	Start Jul-Sep End Dec-Feb	Yes	12,813
Matthew Aylett	Rhetorical Systems Ltd	ICSI	Postdoc	April - Nov 05	Yes	16,000
Jean-Christophe Lacroix	ENST	USFD	Masters	Jul-Nov 04	Yes	5,805
Guillaume Heusch	EPFL	IDIAP	U/G	Sep 04 - Feb 05	Yes	7,500
Martin Karafiat	Brno	USFD	Ph.D.	Jun-Sep 04	Yes	3,865
Harikrishna Maganti	University of ULM	IDIAP	Ph.D.	Oct 04 - Sep 05	Yes	15,510
Michael Pucher	Telecommunications Research Center, Vienna	ICSI	Ph.D.	Jan-June 05	Yes	12,594
Frantisek Grezl	Brno	ICSI/IDIAP	Ph.D.	Jul 04 - Jun 05	Yes	15,461
Mihaela Bobeica	University of Nice Sophia Antipolis	TNO	Ph.D.	Oct 04 - May 05	Yes	9,715
Darren Moore	IDIAP	USFD	Postdoc	Aug 04 - Sept 04	Yes	2,830
Arlo Faria	ICSI	UEDIN	U/G	Feb 05 - Jul 05	Yes	8,700
Joe Frankel	UEDIN	ICSI	Postdoc	Sept 05 – June 06	Yes	16,000
Liudmila Boldareva	UT	TNO	Ph.D	Dec 04 – Jun 06	Yes	22,800
Gufran Khan	Blekinge Institute of Technology	IDIAP	Masters	Oct 04 - Mar 05	No	
Olatunji Akande	University of Limerick	IDIAP	Ph.D.	Jan 05 - May 05	No	
Vikas Panwar	Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati	UT	U/G	8 May 05 to 22 July 05	Yes	3,855
Naresh Bansal	Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati	UEDIN	U/G	2 May 05 to 31 July 05	Yes	4,550
Volha Petukhova	Tilburg University	UT	Masters	1 Feb 05 to 1 Jul 05	Yes	6,250
Robert Eklund	Linkoping University	ICSI	Postdoc	June 05 to Feb 06	Yes	18,000

Ferran Diego	UPC Technical Uni of Catalonia	UEDIN	Masters	Feb 2005 to July 2005	Yes	7,900
Sophie-Anne Thobie	LIMSI/CNRS France	UT	Postdoc	1 Mar 05 to 31 Aug 05	Yes	7,860
Mateu Aguilo	University of Catalonia	ICSI	Masters	Mid Feb to Mid August	Yes	12,890
Dennis Doubovski	UT	Muenchen	U/G	1 Feb 05 to 30 April 05	Yes	4'000
Rosa Martinez	Technical University of Catalonia	ICSI	Masters	March 05 to Aug 05	Yes	12,891
Gaurav Pandey	Indian Institute of Information Technology	Brno	U/G	15 March 05 to 30 June 05	Yes	3,300
Abhishek Rawat	Indian Institute of Information Technology	University of Sheffield	U/G	1 May 05 – 31 July 05	No	
Jachym Kolar	University of West Bohemia in Pilsen	ICSI	Postdoc	1 Oct 05 – 1 April 06	Yes	Awaiting Travel Cost
Binit Mohanty	Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur	USFD	U/G	May 05 – July 05	Yes	4,460
Jan Peciva	Brno	UT	Ph.D	1/4/05-15/5/05; 1/6/05-15/7/05; 23/8/05- 23/11/05	Yes	8,280
Nynke Van der Vliet	UT	UEDIN	MSc	1/10/05 – 30/4/06	Yes	8,825
Gerwin van Doorn	UT	IDIAP	MSc	1/9/05 – 31/3/06	Yes	8,875
Octavian Cheng	University of Auckland	IDIAP	PhD	1/10/05 – 30/9/05 (max)	Yes	16,700
Mathias Creutz	Helsinki University of Technology	ICSI	PhD	11/05 – 4/06	Yes	12,820
Cuong Huy To	IDIAP	EPFL	PhD	3/06 – 12/06	Yes	13,731
Roel Vertegaal	Queen's University	UT	Postdoc	1/11/05 – 1/5/06	Yes	10,150
Andreu Cabrero	University Polytechnic Catalunya	UEDIN	Masters	2/06 – 7/06	Yes	7,570
Anh Duc Nguyen	Vietnam National University	UT	Masters	1/06 – 6/06	Yes	8,300
Patrick Herzig	Dalarna University in Borlange, Sweden	IDIAP	MSc	2/06 – 7/06	No	
Anna Llagostera	Technical	ICSI/UEDIN	MSc	15/10/05 –	No	

	University of Catalonia	/USFD		15/4/06		
Kumutha Swampillai	n/a	USFD	PhD	1/1/06 – 30/6/06	Yes	8,943
Barbara Caputo	KTH, Stockholm	IDIAP	Postdoc	10/12/05 – 30/6/06	Yes	9,170
Lei Chen	Purdue University	IDIAP	PhD	1/07 – 6/07	Yes	
Naresh Bansal	Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati	ICSI	U/G	6/06 – 5/07	Yes	24,000
Fernando Fernandez Martinez	Universidad Politecnica de Madrid	IDIAP	PhD	6/06 – 8/06	Yes	4,050
Junichi Yamagishi	Tokyo Institute of Technology	UEDIN	Postdoc	4/06 – 3/07	Yes	13,250
Shivam Goel	Indian Insitute of Technology		U/G	5/06 -7/06	Application incomplete	
Abishek Kumar	Indian Insitute of Technology	USFD	U/G	5/06 – 8/06	Application incomplete	
Marijn Huijbregts	University of UT	ICSI	PhD	9/06 – 3/07	Yes (AMIDA from Jan 07)	
Masoud Alipour	EPFL	IDIAP	Masters	8/06-10/06	Yes	
Joan-Isaac Biel	UPC Technical Uni of Catalonia	ICSI	Masters	2/07 – 8/07	Yes (AMIDA from Jan 07)	3,750
Beatriz Trueba	UPC Technical Uni of Catalonia	ICSI	Masters	2/07 – 8/07	Yes (AMIDA from Jan 07)	
Matej Konecny	BRNO	TNO	Masters	1/10/06 – 31/3/07	Yes (AMIDA from Jan 07)	
Ivan Himawan	Queensland University of Technology	UEDIN	PhD	3/07-9/07	Yes (AMIDA from Jan 07)	

AMI Trainee Questionnaire

All AMI trainees were asked (in Autumn 2006) to complete the following questionnaire at the end of their placement. We had 18 responses - some trainees are still on placement.

Feedback on your placement

Please express your degree of agreement with the following statements. Give your answers on a scale of 1 to 5:

1. I disagree strongly
2. I disagree
3. I am not sure
4. I agree
5. I agree strongly

A: The AMI training placement provided me with valuable research experience.

B: In the AMI training programme I learned about topics which will be important for me.

C: The AMI training programme provided me with experience I would otherwise not have been able to obtain.

D: The AMI training placement will assist me in my future career.

E: The financial support provided by AMI was sufficient.

F: The administration of my placement application was well-organised.

G: The host lab provided a good working environment.

H: My host lab provided me with sufficient direction in my work.

I: I was given sufficient freedom to pursue my goals.

J: I would recommend taking an AMI placement to a close friend

Results are shown as histograms overleaf, and are almost uniformly enthusiastic about all aspects of the placement.

Publications

We also asked the trainees about publications resulting from their placement. For the 18 respondents, 29 papers are in print and 5 are submitted or in publication.

Career

We asked the trainees:

'Briefly outline your next career steps after the placement.'

9 respondents are in academic research positions, 8 are still studying and 1 has moved to industrial research.

Further comments

We asked the trainees:

'Please add any further comments you have about the AMI training programme below.'

The responses we received were

'If possible AMI should:

- 1) collaborate with good schools worldwide such as IITs, NTU etc.
- 2) should arrange informal discussion (for U/G trainees) with senior AMI researchers worldwide.'

'Since then I have been working in a largely unrelated field (text classification for medical decision support).'

'I am very happy with the opportunity. It has empowered me to do the research for my PhD. I am very grateful to Nelson Morgan, Chuck Wooters and Barbara Peskin for their help at ICSI. I recommended the program to 3 other AMI visitors.'

'This programme could be an outstanding opportunity for everyone. Specially for students.'

'It was a really good experience to live some time in the foreign country. To see people and their life there.'

'Great experience working with top researchers at ICSI'

'The most valuable part was maybe to meet interesting and important people and do some "networking" for the future.'

'This was an excellent opportunity for me, and prepared me for a future in research. Thank you!'

'I think the AMI programme is a valuable opportunity to experience working in a research environment.'

4 Conclusions

In our opinion the AMI training programme has been a notable success. It has disseminated knowledge, skills and experience to more than 40 young researchers, many of whom will go on to distinguished careers. At a total cost of around €500K we think this represents excellent value for money. The experience of participating in a leading research project at an early career stage is particularly valuable and we know of no other mechanism for providing this experience systematically. We recommend a training programme of this type for future IPs.



