Hussein Suleman

Biography

Hussein Suleman is Head of Department and Associate Professor in Computer Science at the University of Cape Town. His research is situated within the Centre for ICT for Development (ICT4D) and the Digital Libraries Laboratory. Hussein's main research interests are in digital libraries, ICT4D, information retrieval, cultural heritage preservation, Internet technology, high performance computing and computer science education. He has in the past worked extensively on architecture and interoperability issues related to digital library systems, with a growing emphasis on the relationship between low resource conditions and such architectures. This has evolved into a focus on ICT for development (ICT4D); this is a new research area in computer science that looks into the application of ICT to solve key developmental problems, as defined locally or by multinational agencies like the United Nations.

He completed his undergraduate degrees and MSc at the then University of Durban-Westville (now University of Kwazulu-Natal) and finished a PhD at Virginia Tech in 2002, in the area of component-based digital libraries. He actively advocates for Open Access in South Africa, and works closely with the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), which promotes/supports the adoption of electronic theses and dissertations and generally digital libraries worldwide. He currently manages the South African ETD portal as well as the international ETD Union Archive and Global ETD Search discovery service. He collaborates with the Centre for Curating the Archive at UCT, developing software tools for preservation, dissemination and discovery for the Bleek and Lloyd and related collections. He was a member, representing South Africa, in the recently-completed Multilingual and Multi-faceted Information Access EU collaboration project and the ongoing Citizen Cyberscience Centre, which focuses on volunteer computing for development.

He has served as an editor of the South African Computer Journal and is currently on the editorial board of the PLOS One journal. He has and continues to serve on the programme committees of most international Digital Libraries conferences (JCDL/TPDL/ICADL), often also being on the organizing or senior programme committees.

Position Statement

The IEEE Technical Committee on Digital Libraries has a long history of community development and the support and endorsement of academic events, such as the JCDL and ECDL/TPDL conferences in Digital Libraries. This is an important pillar of the TCDL’s work that should continue in the foreseeable future.

The TCDL has produced publications on other activities in the past but these are not widely publicized and membership is also not a focus. I believe that the TCDL could strengthen its membership base and expand the community to include the ever-changing digital libraries research
community members, many of whom may have heard of the TCDL but are not members.

As a community of researchers, the TCDL has not been a focal point in the definition of the research agenda, and I think there is potential for this to change. A collective definition of the priorities of the research community will help to evaluate and sustain progress on key problem areas, such as preservation and evolution of architectures, where progress has been noticeably slow. It may also be possible to define more clearly what relationships exist between digital libraries as a discipline and its various and constantly-evolving sister disciplines.