

# Preface

The first Artificial Intelligence Planning Conference (AIPS-92) was held at the University of Maryland in June 1992, organized by Jim Hendler and Drew McDermott. The second conference (AIPS-94) was held at the University of Chicago in June 1994 and was organized by Kristian Hammond. This conference was held in Edinburgh, Scotland on May 29th – 31st 1996. Planning: formulating a course of action, and related fields such as scheduling or reasoning about actions have a long research tradition in AI, with many re-searchers world wide working in them. It is one of the aims of this conference to bring a number of these re-lated themes together and this has been reflected by the selection of a number of scheduling papers, with the aim of promoting discussion between the two communi-ties. An additional aim of the conference is to promote the application of planning technologies in the real world, as a number of initiatives have shown the time is now ripe to start applying planning and scheduling technologies and seeing the benefits of many years of research. Evidence of this is a joint session of AIPS-96 with the participants of the \$66 million dollar ARPA/Rome Laboratory Planning and Scheduling Initiative, which shows the techniques being used and the areas in which they have been applied. The AIPS-96 call for papers was sent out in May 1995 and the response was very good with a total of 102 pa-pers being submitted. Due to the restrictions of a three day meeting the program committee had to be very selective, accepting only 32 (31%) of the submitted pa-pers. This guarantees that the papers in this proceedings are all of a very high quality, measured by international standards. In addition to the reviewed papers three in-vited talks were presented by Alan Bundy, Dan Weld, and Brian Williams. These served to show the state in various fields of planning, and the applications to which the technology is now being applied.

Below I will try to outline the major topics covered by the papers in this proceedings. The proceedings have tried to bring together a diverse group of researchers representing the various aspects and threads of the planning community. As with all previous AIPS conferences the papers have been selected on technical merit but it is gratifying to see the range of papers which have appeared. The papers include practical algorithms for achieving efficiency in planning, formal results on the completeness and complexity of planning domains, clas-sical planning, formal specification of planning knowl-

edge and domains, constraint satisfaction techniques and their application, reactive planning, repair and consis-tency checking in schedules, and many more. Many people have helped make this conference pos-sible, and like an acceptance speech at the Oscars there are too many to mention. I would particularly like to thank the program committee as well as all additional referees who have taken great care in refereeing the pa-pers, despite the heavy work load caused by having three independent reviewers for each paper. The spon-sors have naturally played an important role, making it possible to have invited speakers and subsidizing the attendance costs for students. I would like to thank AAAI, the British Computer Society Specialist Group on Expert Systems, IJCAI Inc. and Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise Ltd. for their support, be it moral or cash. Last but not least I would like to thank all authors and partic-ipants for writing and presenting papers and contribut-ing to the discussions.

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