Foreword

1975-1985-1995-2005 — the decennial Aarhus conferences have traditionally been instrumental for setting new agendas for critically engaged thinking about information technology. The conference series is fundamentally interdisciplinary and emphasizes thinking that is firmly anchored in action, intervention, and scholarly critical practice. With the title Critical Computing – between sense and sensibility, the 2005 edition of the conference marked that computing was rapidly seeping into everyday life.

In 2015, we see critical alternatives in alignment with utopian principles—that is, the aspiration that life might not only be different but also radically better. At the same time, radically better alternatives do not emerge out of nowhere: they emerged from contested analyses of the mundane present and demand both commitment and labor to work towards them. Critical alternatives matter and make people reflect.

The fifth decennial Aarhus conference, Critical Alternatives, in 2015 aims to set new agendas for theory and practice in computing for quality of human life. While the early Aarhus conferences, from 1975 and onwards, focused on computing in working life, computing today is influencing most parts of human life (civic life, the welfare state, health, learning, leisure, culture, intimacy, ...), thereby calling for critical alternatives from a general quality of life perspective.

The papers selected for the conference have undergone a meticulous reviewing process looking at methodical soundness as well as potentials for the creating alternatives and provoking debate. Among 71 full and short paper submissions 21 were accepted. The accepted papers span a broad range of positions and concerns ranging from play to politics.

We would like to express great thanks for help and support to the numerous people who have contributed to making the conference possible. In particular we want to thank Marianne Dammand and Ann Mølhave for secretarial help, including registration and hotel arrangements. We want to thank the center for Participatory IT (PIT) and the Department of Computer Science, University of Aarhus for providing resources for the planning and operation of the conference.

We hope that the conference will inspire critical and alternative thinking and action for the next decennium.

Welcome

Olav W. Bertelsen and Kim Halskov
Conference Chairs

Shaowen Bardzell, Susanne Bødker, Ole Sejer Iversen and
Clemens N. Klokmose
Chairs of the Program

Henrik Korsgaard
Proceedings Chair