

## **ERCIM WG: “Inclusive Digital Futures. Developing Technology and Culture”**

<https://ercim-ide-wg.ics.forth.gr/>

### **Kick-off meeting report**

**18<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 14:00-16:00 CET**

The kick-off meeting of the [ERCIM Working Group “Inclusive Digital Futures. Developing Technology and Culture”](https://ercim-ide-wg.ics.forth.gr/), took place online, on **May 18<sup>th</sup> 2026, 14:00-16:00 CET**. The agenda consisted of briefly introducing the aim and scope of the Working Group that could be summarized as how to step from institutional initiatives to a systematic approach in Computer Science discipline to promote inclusion and diversity in the digital space as well as in the working ecosystem and the human capital.

Thirteen out of the twenty-two registered members of the Working Group participated to this meeting and all of them presented their expectations their relevant background and ideas for actions and involvement. Then a round table discussion on setting up goals and future work took place.

Indicatively, colleagues expecting that this working group should aim to community building and research networking in order to develop interdisciplinary research threads together with translation of research outcomes to practical applications and best practices that can account for diversity of cultures and societies. Moreover, the WG could be the platform to develop interdisciplinary pilot studies and contribute to knowledge exchange and dissemination actions. Joint project proposals to relevant European calls could also be a deliverable of the WG.

The presentations and the zoom recording together with the chat exchanges can be found in: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1y2CvOF3zWoH8X\\_KbMlICH5sNhuBpz-Na?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1y2CvOF3zWoH8X_KbMlICH5sNhuBpz-Na?usp=drive_link)

Details can be found bellow together with the participants’ list.

#### **Kick-off meeting participants’ list:**

| <b>Seri<br/>al<br/>nu</b> | <b>First<br/>Nam<br/>e</b> | <b>Last<br/>Name</b> | <b>Email</b> | <b>Titl<br/>e</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Organization's<br/>Web Page</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
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| mb<br>er |                   |              |                                                                                      |              |                                          |                                                                                   |
|----------|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1        | Mag<br>dalin<br>i | Chatz<br>aki | magda@ics.forth.gr                                                                   | Ms<br>.      | FORTH-ICS                                | <a href="https://www.ics.forth.gr">https://www.ics.forth.gr</a>                   |
| 2        | Anna              | Szlavi       | anna.szlavi@jku.at                                                                   | Dr.          | Johannes Kepler University               | <a href="https://www.jku.at/en/">https://www.jku.at/en/</a>                       |
| 3        | Hui-<br>Yin       | Wu           | hui-yin.wu@inria.fr                                                                  | Dr.          | Inria                                    | <a href="https://www.inria.fr/">https://www.inria.fr/</a>                         |
| 4        | Eva               | de<br>Lera   | eva@raisingthefloor.org                                                              | Ms<br>.      | Raising the Floor                        | <a href="https://raisingthefloor.org/">https://raisingthefloor.org/</a>           |
| 5        | Otilia            | Kocsis       | otilia@raisingthefloor.org                                                           | Dr.          | Raising the Floor                        | <a href="https://raisingthefloor.org/">https://raisingthefloor.org/</a>           |
| 6        | Monica            | Pinto        | mpinto@uma.es                                                                        | Prof.        | ITIS/UMA                                 | <a href="https://itis.uma.es/en/home-2/">https://itis.uma.es/en/home-2/</a>       |
| 7        | Isabel            | Barbanocho   | ibp@uma.es                                                                           | Prof.<br>Dr. | Universidad de Malaga                    | <a href="https://www.uma.es/">https://www.uma.es/</a>                             |
| 8        | Cristobal         | Barbanocho   | cbarba@uma.es                                                                        | Prof.        | University of Malaga                     | <a href="https://www.uma.es">https://www.uma.es</a>                               |
| 9        | Lynda             | Hardman      | Lynda.Hardman@cwi.nl                                                                 | Prof.        | CWI                                      | <a href="https://www.cwi.nl">https://www.cwi.nl</a>                               |
| 10       | MARIA             | MAKRIDAKI    | makridaki@ics.forth.gr                                                               | Dr.          | ICS-FORTH                                | <a href="https://www.ics.forth.gr/">https://www.ics.forth.gr/</a>                 |
| 11       | Emma              | Liere        | emma.liere@ercim.eu                                                                  | Ms<br>.      | ERCIM                                    | <a href="https://www.ercim.eu/">https://www.ercim.eu/</a>                         |
| 12       | Thomas            | Schoegje     | tmschoegje@gmail.com                                                                 | Dr.          | Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca | <a href="https://www.unimi.it">https://www.unimi.it</a>                           |
| 13       | Bettina           | Toure        | <a href="mailto:bettina.toure@z.v.fraunhofer.de">bettina.toure@z.v.fraunhofer.de</a> | Ms<br>.      | Fraunhofer Gesellschaft                  | <a href="https://www.fraunhofer.de/en.html">https://www.fraunhofer.de/en.html</a> |

**Magdalini Chatzaki, FORTH-ICS** coordinated the meeting and introduced the aim and scope of the WG and some historical background on the work and collaborations that was based on. All the info discussed can be found in her presentation.

Then, **Lynda Hardman, CWI** offered many useful ideas based on her extended experience and involvement in relevant subjects, consortia and committees. Lynda won the service award of **ICT Research Platform Netherlands (IPN)** for all her work on inclusion and diversity through her career. <https://ict-research.nl/2026/04/ipn-service-awards-for-inald-legendijk-and-lynda-hardman/>. **ICT Research Platform Netherlands (IPN)** is the national

network and advocacy body uniting academic computer science and ICT research departments across Dutch universities and research institutes.

She introduced us the Booklet from Informatics Europe “More Women in Informatics Research and Education” that could be a baseline to develop a more ERCIM oriented booklet to be shared to the ERCIM Members.

She further introduced to us other booklets from EUGAIN: <https://www.informatics-europe.org/services/publications/best-practice-booklets.html> and another one “Why would I want to do a PhD in Computer Science?” for BSc. or MSc. Students <https://www.informatics-europe.org/dl/more-women-in-informatics-research-and-education>.

She is a member of the Human Centered Data Analytics group of CWI <https://www.cwi.nl/en/research/human-centered-data-analytics/> with heavy interest in research projects on identifying bias in data collection. She will invite people in CWI who would be interested to participate in the works of our Working Group.

She noted that we should design an appropriate logo for the Working Group.

Because of huge work already done by EUGain and Informatics Europe in this area, we should be careful that we have a good way of connecting with Informatics Europe and ACM women Europe charter and Lynda suggests to invite the chairs to all of our meetings. It’s up to them to decide if they would turn up or not. This is the way we get knowledge exchange.

**Note: Monica Pinto’s** presentation included work by her colleagues namely **Isabel Barbancho** (who sent us a separate presentation), **Ismael Navas, Christobal Barba**), **ITIS/UMA** representing the CAOSD Research Group.

The contribution of each participant per section of interest, namely *Expectations, Ideas for Actions, Involvement to the WG* and *Relevant Background* can be found in the following sections.

## 1. Expectations

**Isabel Barbancho, Universidad de Malaga**

- Collaborative research networks to establish connections with research groups interested in music, EEG-based analysis of art, music and language, as well as with complementary expertise.
- Develop interdisciplinary research lines, promote joint projects combining neuroscience, music, technology and cultural sectors like museums and

performance spaces. Build strong partnerships aimed at applying for competitive European funding programs

- Enhance technology transfer and societal impact. Translate research outcomes into practical applications, including new music paradigms, artistic experiences, cultural innovation, and tools for understanding brain activity through sonification.

**Emma Liere, ERCIM Office**

- Consolidate and give visibility to existing D&I initiatives across ERCIM member institutions, turning scattered efforts into coherent, established program.
- Reinforce ERCIM's strategic, scientific and social impact by fully integrating D&I as a cross-cutting theme in our work.
- Create scientific and research benefits on these topics.

**Hui-Yin (Helen) WU, Inria**

- Exchange of expertise with other partners for actions that can account for diversity of cultures and societies

**Maria Makridaki, FORTH-ICS**

- Best practices exchange, networking, development of collaborative initiatives related to gender inclusivity.
- Joint project proposals opportunities.

**Eva de Lera & Otilia Kocsis, Raising the Floor (RtF)**

- Knowledge exchange on emerging technologies, identification of inclusion risks, promotion of inclusive-by-design digital innovation, policy recommendations and standardization

**Anna Szlavi, JKU**

- Community building

**Tomas Schoegje, Univ. Milano-Bicocca**

- Research on neurodiversity in relation to workplace challenges and information technology.

**(Lynda's Question to Tomas):** The booklets by Informatics Europe have been designed for head of departments etc. The question is: Is there sufficient knowledge so far to write a similar booklet on how to create a neuro-inclusive work environment? Or is it still a research topic?

The answer by Tomas was that there is enough research to write something and that he would like to work on something like that.

**Monica Pinto, IT IS/UMA**

- Connect with researchers working on inclusive software engineering
- Exchange knowledge on the development of inclusive applications
- Inclusive policies and best practices exchange between other European institutions
- Joint research and European project proposals preparation

**Christobal Barba-Gonzalez, IT IS/UMA**

- Strengthen knowledge in AI, Machine Learning and Big Data and collaborate on innovative digital solutions
- Applying inclusive technologies to digital health and intersectionality and exchange ideas, learn from others and contribute to projects that address challenges in the health area.

**Bettina Toure, Fraunhofer Gesellschaft**

- Computer Science could actively promote inclusion. This working group seems to be a good idea in this time.

**Magdalini Chatzaki, FORTH-ICS**

- Inclusion and diversity in research and innovation in CS&ICT
- Education and raising awareness
- Policy making and interventions design
- Develop collaborations
- Organize workshops/events

## **2. Ideas for actions**

**Isabel Barbancho, Universidad de Malaga**

- Develop interdisciplinary pilot studies. Initiate experimental setups combining brain data, artistic stimuli and technology to investigate how sensory experiences can be augmented, shared and better understood.
- Contribute to knowledge exchange and dissemination. Share methodologies, tools and best practices across disciplines to bridge neuroscience, technology and the cultural sector.

**Emma Liere, ERCIM Office**

- Mobilizing ERCIM's existing activities and networks.
- Ensuring visibility and communication of the WG's outputs, bridging between the WG and ERCIM's governance and member institutions

**Hui-Yin (Helen) WU, Inria**

- Education and awareness on media accessibility, accessible media creation, women in science.
- Training, workshops, state of the art on accessibility and inclusive design for immersive media (VR/AR/MR), digital narratives and gaming

**Maria Makridaki, FORTH-ICS**

- Content creation for awareness-raising activities and campaigns related to gender inclusivity in research and innovation
- Joint proposals for relevant European calls
- Interested in activities promoting inclusive innovation, youth engagement, and gender-sensitive approaches in research and entrepreneurship.

**Eva de Lera & Otilia Kocsis, Raising the Floor (RtF)**

- Training materials for inclusive design, white papers and recommendations for policymakers, development of guidelines & recommendations, connection between technology providers and adopters.

**Anna Szlavi, JKU**

- Joint papers, joint project proposals, best practices sharing and raising awareness campaigns.

**Monica Pinto, IT IS/UMA**

- Systematic literature reviews on software engineering practices that support the systematic development of inclusive software
- Shared datasets of user behaviour patterns associated with different disability types and situational limitations, as a common resource for training and evaluating ML-driven adaptation mechanisms

**Christobal Barba-Gonzalez, IT IS/UMA**

- Co-authoring research proposals, sharing best practices and developing training material focusing on AI and digital health like a shared repository of datasets and tools for collaborative research

**Bettina Toure, Fraunhofer Gesellschaft**

- Sharing best practices

**Magdalini Chatzaki, FORTH-ICS**

- publication opportunities to consolidate research work within the thematic of diversity&inclusion
- work closely with allies in Europe and internationally
- increase expertise and gain capacity to provide consulting
- motivate organizations to align with EU policies and funding framework prerequisites
- new research opportunities

### **3. Involvement to the WG**

**Isabel Barbancho, Universidad de Malaga**

- EEG signal analysis, music analysis, automatic composition, and sonification.
- Co-develop inclusive artistic and musical experiences based on brain activity.
- Find partners to design innovative applications for museums and cultural environments, enabling new ways to experience and feel art and music.
- Support the development of joint proposals and interdisciplinary research lines.
- Contribute to creating expanded and shared sensory experiences, where art, music and language can be perceived in new ways benefiting both people with diverse functional abilities and the broader public.

**Hui-Yin (Helen) WU, Inria**

- Participate or lead actions directly in link with expertise/projects.

**Eva de Lera & Otilia Kocsis, Raising the Floor (RtF)**

- Promote inclusive design, accessibility, open-source solutions and standards to advance social equity through digital inclusion for people facing digital barriers related to disability, literacy, age, culture and digital skills.

**Monica Pinto, IT IS/UMA**

- Actively contribute to collaborative projects and participate in the development of publication or joint initiatives.

**Christobal Barba-Gonzalez, IT IS/UMA**

- Contribution to collaborative projects and participate in the development of publications or joint initiatives

**Magdalini Chatzaki, FORTH-ICS**

- Coordination of the WG

## **4. Relevant Background**

**Isabel Barbancho, Universidad de Malaga**

- Computational music analysis, transcription & Sonification.
- Developing signal processing and AI methods for music analysis and automatic transcription, alongside sonification techniques to better understand brain activity and enrich artistic interpretation.
- Studying neural responses to music perception and engagement, as well as generating music automatically based on computational models and brain data
- Investigating how visual art influences brain activity using EEG, including emotional and cognitive responses and enhancing artistic experiences through neural-informed sonification.
- Exploring brain dynamics underlying language comprehension and production, including emerging research on sign language processing using EEG.

**Emma Liere, ERCIM Office**

- Member of the Human Capital Task Group.
- Manager of the Fellowship Program of ERCIM (post-doc mobility program).
- Co-initiator of a dedicated section in ERCIM News to address D&I questions, raising the visibility of these topics across our community

**Hui-Yin (Helen) WU, Inria**

- Research in HCI (XR/VR), digital accessibility, gaming, AI and Machine Learning, HanditechLab for developing solutions for and with people living with handicaps in response to their needs.

- Using computing and media studies for investigating the representation of gender and objectification in films

#### **Maria Makridaki, FORTH-ICS**

- Gender inclusivity activities and participation in research and innovation ecosystems at FORTH-ICS.
- Contributor the FORTH-ICS institutional change project “Mind the Gender Gap in Computer Science (MindGenGapICT)” that addresses gender disparities in the ICT sector through research, stakeholder engagement and awareness-building activities.

#### **Eva de Lera & Otilia Kocsis, Raising the Floor (RtF)**

- Human-centered AI for inclusive civic participation, accessible open-source tools for inclusive game co-creation, AI-enabled urban planning with citizen engagement.
- Otilia Kocsis (RtF) has a PhD in AI applied to health care. Human Computer Interaction speech-based systems. Post doc. At Electrical Engineering of Patras with professor Moustakas and Fakotakis

#### **Anna Szlavi, JKU**

- A holistic view of how to achieve diversity, inclusion and equity in the computer science education and industry context by identifying and applying interventions, addressing challenges and barriers and create routes into and through the discipline for diverse groups and individuals.

#### **Tomas Schoegje, Univ. Milano-Bicocca**

- Human-Computer interaction and diverse technologies to support neurodiversity

#### **Monica Pinto, IT IS/UMA**

- Expertise in dynamic, runtime adaptation of software systems
- IoT-based inclusive mobile applications
- Model-Driven Development (MDD) + Software Product Lines (SPL + Machine Learning for the development of inclusive mobile applications
- Role model talks and workshops in STEM fields in primary and secondary schools

#### **Bettina Toure, Fraunhofer Gesellschaft**

- Accessibility (software and offices)
- Initiatives for inclusion (attract disabled employees) is proposed to 20 of the Institutes (ongoing) as well as for gender
- Policy accessibility definition published by Fraunhofer

## **Magdalini Chatzaki, FORTH-ICS**

- Member of the Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Committee of FORTH
- Applied research work in institutional change projects for evident based designed interventions for inclusion and diversity in research and innovation ecosystems.
- Applied research in developing augmented audio reality soundwalks and sound maps for in field inclusive sensorial experience of a place, the landscape, the soundscape the cultural and bio/geological reserve.

**Dr. Emma Beauxis Aussalet** representing the [ERCIM WG on Digital Ethics](#) participated as an observer to the kick-off with the aim to reach common points and find ways for collaboration.

Magdalini Chatzaki initiated a round table discussion between the participants in order to reach common points objectives and milestones for the coming period. A lot of opinions were expressed by the participants:

1<sup>st</sup> step: to decide what is inclusion and diversity, what are we doing, why, and who is affected. Shared knowledge and common understanding. E.g we talk about disabled people and people with disabilities. Change the view as people variability.

A mention to **ACM SIGACCESS** was made: The SIG membership (from both academia and industry) focuses on the application of technologies to serve the needs of persons with impairments, but not limited to: vision, motor, hearing, and speech impairments; Cognitive limitations, including learning disabilities; Issues of ageing.

Other important notices were the opportunity for interaction between ethics, digital ethics and diversity, the notion of uniqueness by RtF, the humanistic view of technology development and innovation. How the view of uniqueness expressed by RtF is different from the humanistic point of view we express in this working group?

There was a suggestion to the Digital Ethics ERCIM WG coordinators, to write an article for ERCIM news to put together the notion of ethics and diversity and try to identify common points and differences.

There were some suggestions for next steps for the coming period:

Produce a summary of the kick-off to be shared with the participated members together with all the info of the meeting to be commented and completed by the recipients

Lynda will do some political work to persuade the ERCIM Directors to empower members of their organizations to participate to this WG.

Magda suggested to setup a workshop event on a specialized theme and invite experts to present research work. Similar events could be held for policy and interventions development.

We need to keep regular online meetings and setup the event after the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of September so we could report on the October meetings of ERCIM.

Magdalini Chatzaki

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Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas

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