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ISIC 2026

16th International Conference

ISIC: The Information Behaviour Conference

Full and Short Papers

June 1-4, 2026

McGill University

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Editors: Pam McKenzie, Sarah Polkinghorne, and Rebekah Willson



Editorial

This is a landmark year for ISIC, as 2026 brings both the 30th anniversary of the conference and its first time being hosted in North America (more specifically, Montréal). This anniversary gives the community a chance to reflect on the field, including what has changed and what has stayed the same. Thirty years ago the first ISIC conference took place in Tampere, Finland. The conference name 'ISIC' stood for Information Seeking In Context. Today we refer to it as 'ISIC: The Information Behaviour Conference'. ISIC was conceived as an international conference; since 1996 it has been held in 14 countries across four continents. The 2026 conference marks 15 countries across five continents.

This year, the conference received a large number of submissions, with 151 in total across full papers, short papers, posters, panels, and workshops. Of these, 53 papers were accepted. This includes 36 full papers (acceptance rate 44%) and 17 short papers (acceptance rate 57%). Papers represent a range of topics and approaches. Roughly 60% are primarily empirical, 20% are primarily review studies, and 20% are primarily theoretical or conceptual. The papers come from authors from around the world, travelling from 16 countries across five continents. With the conference being located in North America for the first time, there is an increase in the number of papers from this region, relative to past ISICs. Also included are papers focused on information experiences in countries less often represented at ISIC, such as Indonesia and Saudi Arabia.

Looking at the [papers presented at the first conference](#) in 1996, topics ranged across theory and models, the information behaviour of specific groups, interactions with technology, and new ways to think about the field. This echoes the papers that will be presented in 2026, which also contribute theoretical advances, explore the experiences of different groups of people, document people's interactions with technology, and propose new approaches, metaphors, and frameworks. The breadth and diversity of work presented at ISIC has been consistent across the decades.

In 2026, the enduring themes of our field remain well-represented, and tuned in to complex contemporary challenges. Papers touch on "classic" domains such as health, the workplace, everyday life, and academic information seeking, while addressing vaccine hesitancy, the impacts of "genAI" tools, inequality and precarity, and the risks brought by a fracturing information environment. Authors contribute advancements around enduring conceptual concerns such as context, uncertainty, and trust, while bringing them into conversation with theories and concepts such as intersectionality, decoloniality, and epistemicide.

Overall, the papers in these proceedings give a rich sense of ongoing growth in our field. Advances in both qualitative and quantitative methods are represented here. People with diverse life experiences are given voice, from software developers, to members of distinct fandoms, to vehicle dwellers. The proceedings also include Indigenous, Black, LGBTQ+, and decolonial perspectives on information experiences and infrastructures.

Building such a program, and reviewing a large number of submissions, takes a great deal of work. As in past years, this work was taken on collectively, by the disciplinary community. For ISIC 2026, we decided to host a peer review workshop, tailored for doctoral students and focused on learning how to do a review, working through a review together, and then inviting attendees to be a reviewer for the conference. This workshop supported numerous new reviewers in contributing to the peer review process.

We thank all the people whose hard work has made this conference and these proceedings happen. We want to start by recognizing the other ISIC track chairs: poster co-chairs Dr. Africa Hands (University at Buffalo) and Dr. Rebecca Noone (University of Strathclyde); workshop and panel co-chairs Dr. Anna Mierzecka (University of Warsaw) and Dr. Amy VanScoy (University at Buffalo); and doctoral workshop co-chairs Dr. Heidi Julien (University at Buffalo) and Dr. Lisa M. Given (RMIT University). We also thank:

- all the reviewers for their thoughtful work – a team of 117 reviewers provided constructive feedback on all the submissions.
- the copyeditors – Nik Doré and Andrea McDermid Boue – who spent an incredible amount of time ensuring each submission was ready to go.
- the editorial staff of *Information Research* for helping us through the process of putting together the proceedings.

This 30th anniversary ISIC has achieved its twin goals of creating space to reflect on our field, and sparking exploration of future challenges and directions. We trust that readers will enjoy responding to and building on the distinctive papers in these proceedings.

**Rebekah Willson
Sarah Polkinghorne
Pam McKenzie**

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Authenticity, performativity, and contextuality
Tyler Youngman

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