

# AMTA 20 VIRTUAL | 20

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The 14th Conference of  
The Association for Machine Translation  
in the Americas

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## PROCEEDINGS

Vol. 1: MT Research Track

Editors: Michael Denkowski & Christian Federman

# Welcome to the 14th Biennial Conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas – AMTA 2020 Virtual!

AMTA conferences traditionally provide a unique opportunity for academic and commercial researchers to share their results with colleagues as well as to understand real-world user requirements. Business and government participants benefit from updates on leading-edge R&D in MT and have a chance to present and discuss their use cases. At the same time, students who attend gain a broad perspective and understanding of the fascinating field of MT.

This year's conference, however, is significant in at least two aspects. The first is that neural machine translation (NMT) has become a de facto standard in research and industry. At our last conference in March of 2018, generic NMT systems had just begun to be widely used during the preceding year, but it was later in 2018 that customizable NMT systems became widely available, enabling many companies, governments, and other organizations to benefit from an even higher level of MT quality for their specific applications. Since then, NMT customization and usage across the spectrum from individual translators to large corporations has continued to snowball.

The second aspect has been more of a difficulty than an advantage. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in transforming AMTA 2020 from an in-person event at a spectacular venue in Orlando, Florida to a completely online conference. While this transformation has presented many unique challenges, we now see some silver linings in this cloud. Without the need to travel and its associated costs, our attendance numbers have doubled from previous years, and participation has come from around the globe. We have been fortunate to receive tremendous support from our many sponsors, for which we are most grateful. Notably, Microsoft has provided their Teams platform to support the virtual conference sessions.

I wish to offer my sincerest thanks to our conference organizing committee, without whom this virtual conference would not have taken place. They have worked long hours to organize and prepare for this unique format, navigating uncharted waters and overcoming various roadblocks. I trust that all who attend will benefit from the results of their diligent efforts.

Steve Richardson  
AMTA President

# Introduction

The AMTA 2020 research track continues the conference's tradition of bringing together machine translation users, developers, and researchers from around the world. The proceedings include ten long papers, two short papers, and three open source toolkit descriptions covering a broad range of topics. Some papers introduce extensions to widely used translation models and inference algorithms. Others focus on improving MT performance for specific domains and applications, including low resource languages and speech translation. Still others explore the connections between MT and other language processing tasks such as sentiment classification and lexicon induction.

This track is made possible by the hard work and contributions of many individuals. We would like to thank Steve Richardson and all members of the conference committee for their organizational support, Alon Lavie and the rest of the steering committee for specific advice on the research track, and all of the AMTA 2020 authors and reviewers.

Sincerely,

Michael Denkowski  
Christian Federmann

# Research Program Committee

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