IT University Travel Report

Conference: NordiCHI 22
Programme: KDDIT
Activity: Conference attendance with presentation of own contributions
Period: Fall 2022

Your stay abroad

Please describe your stay:
The conference was held in Aarhus from the 10th-12th of October, with a "pre-conference" consisting of workshops in the weekend leading up to the conference itself. I registered for the conference Sunday the 9th where a welcome bar was organized offering the opportunity for the attendees to meet and greet each other. I mainly used this to catch up with staff from ITU as I have been studying abroad this semester while the conference took place. The main program was structured as one would expect of a HCI conference; presentations of papers clustered by various themes, keynotes, demo-presentation, dinners and room for casual networking over a beer.

What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?
I wanted to attend NordiCHI because work I had done partly in collaboration with a professor – a "demo" and a critique paper – was accepted and therefore a part of NoridCHI's program. Naturally, I saw this as the perfect opportunity to familiarize myself with the conference format, introduce myself to colleagues from other universities and put face to authors of some of KDDIT's curriculum and lastly, give myself better grounds for deciding whether a career in research as I have considered would continue to feel *right.*

I'm pleased to have attended NordiCHI. It demystified conferences as a concept as I had hoped making them seem more within reach in the future. I found the presented papers were of varying interest to me but the ones I did find relatable definitely made an impact and inspired. Perhaps it should not have come as a surprise, but I found this variety of the conference contributions mirrored my experience of the materials at ITU, some we find valuable and interesting others to a lesser degree, and so my participation felt familiar than I expected.

Please describe what you got out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies?
As mentioned, it was a rewarding experience especially in terms of networking, both with staff from ITU, who also attended, and other institutions. Academically it allowed me to get a better grip on what constitutes "research" in the eyes of those who make up the community and getting introduced to new research within the field. Personally, it was helpful getting to know myself in this context and discover how I reacted to presenting my own research to others in such a context (and

what that experience was like). Going forward my experiences from the conference, both those acquired formally and informally, will definitely influence how I approach work with HCI and RtD. Attending NordiCHI also confirmed to me that I wish to pursue a career in research. The conference was a valuable experience in itself, but my work done prior to the conference – on the paper for the submission to the conference, including all the discussions with my professor this work involved – has without doubt meant the most to my development.

Arranging your stay

Please give a short description of the process involved in arranging your stay:
It was fairly easy to make the practical arrangements such as booking flights and train tickets. The most difficult aspect was finding out how to get the registration fee covered as ITU does not generally offer this, even if a student is presenting projects or accepted papers that will naturally represent the school. It worked out in the end, but only because I was lucky to get help from certain ITU staff members who were willing and eager to help me make these arrangements.

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?
Tom Jenkins co-authored the papers and demo accepted at NordiCHI. He was also of big help in preparing our materials to be presented at the conference and in contacting the appropriate staff in regards of the financing of the registration fee. The practicalities around my attendance were easily arranged.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad
Early (student) registration fee was 1760DKK, return flight tickets (Milan/CPH) were 2760DKK, return train tickets (CPH/Aarhus) were booked late and ended costing 490DKK. Accommodation was free as I stayed with relatives. Almost all food/beverages during the conference were free as they were included in the registration free.

Did you apply for scholarships and would you recommend any ones in particular?
I did not apply for scholarships besides ITU's own travel fund.

Recommendations for other students:

If the opportunity to attend a conference like NordiCHI arises to other students, I will definitely recommend going! See if you can find a teacher that you're comfortable with to show you around, assist you in managing expectations and make introductions to other attendees at the conference itself. Read up on the program and go to the presentations that catch your eye, don't feel shy about introducing yourself to others and relax – it's not as intense as one might expect.

If you're interested in seeing the work we presented it is now part of the acm-digital library and you can find it by searching for "aural-visualiser 1000".

Feel free to reach out if you would like to hear more; abpa@itu.dk or martinpadalak@icloud.com.