HCI Across Borders: Towards Global Solidarity

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"This is a time for solidarity. I mean it's like just because I—and I'm doing a theoretical "I" here, or a figurative "I"—just because I have health coverage here doesn't mean I shouldn't be standing in solidarity with those who stand to lose it under this regime. Just because I have a US passport doesn't mean I'm not supposed to be standing in solidarity with people who are undocumented. [...] Because that's how we win, and that's how we survive in the meantime." — Barbara Smith, 2017 [24]

ABSTRACT

Recent global developments, such as the war in Ukraine and uprisings in Iran, motivate this year's HCI Across Borders (HCIxB) workshop at CHI 2023, asking how we can foster greater global solidarity. Our workshop aims to brainstorm and discuss pathways to engage in solidarity as a global research, practice, and education community. HCIxB has already gathered a diverse audience annually by conducting workshops and symposia annually since CHI 2016. At CHI 2023, we hope to hold a hybrid workshop to focus on themes of solidarity and resilience, and how we might support and nurture the growth of a diverse and growing body of students and early career researchers across the SIGCHI community.

CCS CONCEPTS

• **Human-centered computing** → **Human computer interaction (HCI)**.

KEYWORDS

HCI Across Borders; Geographic Diversity; Cultural Diversity; HCI and Global Development

1 INTRODUCTION

HCI Across Borders (HCIxB) is now an established global community of approximately 700 members, many of whom have regularly met at CHI over the past seven years [7, 14, 15, 17, 20]. Our community's goal has been to invite and support participation at CHI from students and early career researchers in conversations that connect our globally and culturally diverse member group. Our first event was a development consortium for researchers crossing various types of borders at CHI 2016 [15]. Since then, we have met every year at CHI to further strengthen our community. Over the years; we have discussed the shifting challenges in the pandemic in 2022 [7], we've reflected on design challenges stemming from decolonial thinking in 2021 [14], discussed designing for UN's SDG goals 2020 [14], highlighted intersectionally diverse contexts in 2019 [20]. and promoted early career mentorship in our earlier years [16, 17].

Recent global developments, such as the war in Ukraine, uprisings in Iran, and political polarization more broadly have prompted people worldwide to stand together as a community to express solidarity. Within HCI, solidarity is frequently expressed as a means to work through difficulties as a community (e.g., [23]). It has taken the shape of activist affiliations [18], equity [10], and allyship [23]. Researchers have voiced a need for solidarity by inviting global participation [4, 9] and creating inclusive spaces for early career researchers from around the world [22]. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated support for community-driven initiatives globally [19]. Therefore, we intend to continue and strengthen our conversations as a community at our workshop at CHI 2023 to express global solidarity in concrete and practical ways.

Global solidarity aligns well with CHI 2023's theme of *reCHInnecting* [1] as a global community in the post-pandemic world. HCIxB has, over the years, demonstrated solidarity as a community during COVID-19 and provided practical support to junior HCI scholars. During the pandemic, we stayed connected and grew as a community through a series of virtual events demonstrating solidarity [6, 7]. We provided creative ways of asynchronous participation through digital tools such as Discord[1] and our Medium publication[2]. Lastly, we encouraged the participation of more junior researchers from economically developing countries by applying for support through the SIGCHI Development Fund and Gary Marsden Travel Awards [3].

Continuing HCIxB's tradition of supporting and nurturing diverse and global scholarship, this year, we plan to support worldwide participation through a hybrid one-day workshop at CHI 2023. We expect our workshop to foster an inclusive environment

with a focus on the following two agenda items: (a) **strengthening our research**—discussing global problems and channeling these conversations towards responsible design for addressing different world challenges, and (b) **developing our researchers**—infrastructuring digital mentoring and peer-based support for early career researchers (ECRs) and researchers based in historically underserved academic contexts.

The first agenda item focuses on the ways HCI research in cross-cultural contexts can better design appropriate technology for issues of public and global interest (e.g., [21]). The second agenda item aims to augment existing researcher development priorities within SIGCHI by providing mentoring opportunities around publications and academic practices [19]. The organizers of this workshop are best positioned to carry out this agenda as they are also active contributors on the organizing and steering committees for key global south research spaces (e.g., the AfrCHI [5], CLIHC [8], and COMPASS [2] conferences).

2 ORGANIZERS

We recruited our initial list of organizers from our Facebook group, Discord Server[3], and Slack channel. We list the initial team of volunteers below, in alphabetical order of first name:

Bernard I. Akhigbe is postdoctoral scholar at the University of Cape Town, where he does research in human-computer interaction for development.

Christian Sturm is a Professor at the Hamm-Lippstadt University of Applied Sciences in Germany. His academic background includes computer science, cognitive psychology, and cultural anthropology. He has worked in academia and industry for several years in Mexico, Spain, and Egypt and taught computer science in China. His research interests include experience research and design, cross-cultural interactions, and entrepreneurship.

Cuauhtémoc Rivera-Loaiza is an associate professor at the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicoñás de Hidalgo, in Morelia, México. He has been an active member of the HCI communities in México and Latin America for more than twenty years. His research interests are in technology adoption, mobile computing, and education. He is a Co-Chair for Globalization and Inclusion for CHI 2023, and general chair of the Ninth Mexican International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction.

Delvin Varghese is a Research Fellow in Human-Centered Computing at Monash University, Australia. His research is on designing digital technologies for community voice inclusion. He has worked on digital media projects with not-for-profits in Asia, Africa and South America.

Dipto Das is a PhD student in the Department of Information Science at the University of Colorado Boulder. His research interest lies at the intersection of human-computer interaction and social computing. Drawing on critical perspectives, he studies and designs around the colonially marginalized communities in the Global South.

Faria Noor is a M.Sc candidate in Human Factors in Information Design at Bentley University. Her background is in Computer Science and she has worked in Software Quality Assurance. She

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[1] https://discord.com/invite/YJF4nNGH3f
[2] https://medium.com/hccxb

[3] https://discord.com/invite/YJF4nNGH3f

plans to use her graduate education and skills to improve the User Experience of products through User Research.

Marisol Wong-Villacres is an Associate Professor at Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral in Ecuador. She explores how cultural and learning science theories can inform an assets-based participatory design of technologies that support historically marginalized groups, such as immigrant families from developing regions, in pursuing sustainable, emancipatory transformations.

Melissa Densmore is an Associate Professor in Computer Science at the University of Cape Town, where she does research in human-computer interaction for development. She has a PhD from the University of California, Berkeley in Information, Management, and Systems.

Meiyin Chang-Rizzo is an undergraduate Computer Science student at Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral in Ecuador. She is interested in approaches for human-centered data analytics.

Naveena Karusala is a Postdoctoral Fellow at Harvard. She recently finished her PhD in the Information and Communication Technologies and Development lab at the University of Washington. Her work is at the intersection of HCI and global development and looks at why and how emerging technologies are being used to shape healthcare work in the Global South.

Neha Kumar is an Associate Professor at Georgia Tech, conducting research at the intersection of human-centered computing and global development. She has been co-organizing HCIxB since 2016. She currently serves as SIGCHI president.

Nova Ahmed is an associate professor at North South University, Bangladesh. She completed her Ph.D. at the Georgia Institute of Technology and went back to her home country to teach. She has a systems background and loves to solve a variety of problems. HCI comes in the way natu- rally when these problems need to look at 'developing coun- try' challenges and opportunities.

Pranjal Jain is a PhD Researcher in the Centre for Doctoral Training at Swansea University, focusing on enhancing human interactions and collaborations with intelligence-driven systems. His work involves identifying and capturing tacit knowledge to improve an organisation's knowledge management. His research intersects Computer Science, Neuroscience, Psychology and HCI. He is a founding member of the Srishti SIGCHI chapter in India.

Sarina Till is a PhD student at the University of Cape Town, where she does research in human-computer interaction for development.

Susan Dray is President of Dray & Associates, Inc., where she provides contextual and ethnographic user research, usability evaluation, and interface design consultation for a wide range of products systems, and applications. She contributed to the founding of ACM SIGCHI, was the 2006 recipient of the SIGCHI Lifetime Service Award, and a recipient of the SIGCHI Lifetime Achievement in Practice Award in 2015. She is an ACM Distinguished Engineer and a Fellow of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. She is also an ACM Fellow.

Vikram Kamath Cannanure is a PhD candidate in Human Computer Interaction at Carnegie Mellon University. His research is on building and evaluating appropriate systems for low-resource contexts. He is currently working on improving teacher training in Côte d'Ivoire and providing health information in Rwanda.

3 WEBSITE

Our website[4] will include all information about the 2023 workshop as well as all our past initiatives. It will present our Call for Participation, submission links, organizer information, and details about prior HCIxB sessions at CHI. Selected participants will be invited to publish their work in our Medium publication titled *Human-Centered Computing Across Borders* [5], to receive asynchronous feedback from the HCIxB community at large. We will also post the final plan for, and a summary of, the workshop on the website.

4 PRE-WORKSHOP PLANS

To further orient ourselves according to our theme of choice this year—global solidarity—and CHI's theme of reCHInnecting, we aim to publicize our workshop to a global audience. We will recruit volunteers by advertising across our Facebook, Discord, and Slack communities. Our Facebook Group HCI Across Borders[6] has a large community, with 700 users. We will also recruit participants from other global initiatives within HCI, such as ArabHCI [12], Latin American HCI [13], EduCHI [11], AfriCHI [5], that routinely participate in CHI.

Our organizing team will put together a subcommittee to handle submissions, recruit panelists, and manage logistics, and publicity. We plan to invite diverse global audience participation, with a focus on early career researchers. We plan to submit a proposal to the SIGCHI development fund to support travel from students in the global south, also labeled as economically developing countries by ACM.

5 WORKSHOP STRUCTURE

Our workshop will be held in a hybrid format, i.e., allow for in-person and virtual participation. We expect 30 participants to travel in person. We will allow remote participation through relevant meeting applications (e.g., via Zoom). Workshop volunteers will share their laptops with remote poster presenters to support remote participation. Lastly, we will record the summary and digital links to support asynchronous communication among interested community members. The first half of the workshop will focus on discussions on solidarity, and the next half will focus on mentoring early career researchers(see Table 1). After a short welcome, we will start with a panel discussion introducing the workshop theme, which will guide the rest of the event. Our panel members will discuss global issues and opportunities to express solidarity as a community. We will then request the groups to discuss ideas to express solidarity and critically reflect on designing appropriate technology for these contexts. Finally, we will regroup to share our key insights from the small group. We will spend the last session synthesizing ideas into themes to consider for global solidarity. A final report will be shared as a blog post to continue the conversation with the global, flourishing HCIxB community.

Our second half will focus on mentoring early career researchers. We will start with a poster session where authors (ECRs) share a poster in different parts of the room while the participants walk

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around and give feedback. We will then assign mentors, i.e., senior researchers, to early career researchers. The authors will then have feedback sessions from their mentors about their work and career. We conclude the workshop after a short town hall.

Time	Activity
15 mins	Welcome from the organizers
60 mins	Panel discussion and themes for solidarity introduced
30 mins	Group discussions on expressing solidarity
15 mins	BREAK
30 mins	Peer-discussions on posters (small groups)
30 mins	Reflections and synthesis
90 mins	LUNCH
60 mins	Poster presentation
15 mins	Assigning mentors to group of mentees
15 mins	BREAK
45 mins	Feedback session from mentors
15 mins	BREAK
30 mins	Closing and townhall

Table 1: Tentative Agenda for HCIxB 2023

6 POST-WORKSHOP PLANS

This year, we aim to provide opportunities for researchers to express and solicit global solidarity through their research, practice, and education. We plan to focus on understanding and addressing mentorship needs of early-career researchers in particular. Beyond the workshop, we would like to uncover mechanisms for supporting authors in submitting their work to other SIGCHI sponsored and in-cooperation conferences. We will aspire to set up hubs for our community members to continue meeting post-workshop. Some concrete plans:

- Authors will receive feedback on their ideas and find connections to community members beyond the workshop (e.g., mentors for AfriCHI [5], COMPASS [2], both taking place in Africa in 2023).
- We will collectively create a final report on our website for future members of the HCIxB community.
- We will meet virtually (in "coffee hours") as a group to check up on the authors' progress and provide early feedback. We also expect some co-working sessions to provide relevant materials for early career researchers (such as paper exchanges, co-writing sessions etc).

7 CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

HCI Across Borders (HCIxB) is a global community developed through six years (and running) of concerted efforts, focusing on connecting research and researchers across diverse cultures and geographies. It started as the Development Consortium at CHI 2016, followed by workshops at CHI 2017 through 2022. Today, it has evolved into a collaborative initiative with a shared mission to foster community across geographies, backgrounds, methodologies, and other boundaries.

The HCIxB workshop at CHI 2023 will be a unique venue to showcase HCI-related work and initiatives from communities across geographies to a global audience. **This workshop will focus on "fostering global solidarity" at CHI.** We would like to reflect as a community towards global issues and critically examine the design of technology for the same. Thus we invite participants to share how global issues have shaped their research, practice, or education. We hope to start a discussion to express solidarity as a community in these challenging times. We welcome broad participation. The workshop website is at https://hcixb.org.

At least one author from an accepted submission must register for the workshop.

8 SUBMISSIONS

Those interested in participating are asked to submit a position paper (300-500 words, single column, PDF format preferred) and a single-page CV on hcixb2023.hotcrp.com. We are also open to more variable submission formats, and welcome videos, blog posts, abstracts, or pictorials that express diverse perspectives on this year's theme.

Below are some questions applicants may wish to consider answering in their submissions:

- Who are you? Please include your department, year of study, organization, etc.
- In what context are you working? What are the social, political, or cultural conditions you contend with in your work?
- What problems do you care to address? What solutions, if any, are you hoping to deliver?
- What does solidarity mean for you?
- How have the years of the pandemic affected your research, education, and/or practice?
- How do you think attending HCIxB 2023 will be beneficial to your work and the communities you (hope to) connect with?

Important Dates

- February 23: All submissions due
- March 1: Participant notifications sent
- April 14: Posters due
- April 23: HCIxB workshop

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