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Programme Plenary Session

JKU
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Keynote

„Make the World Accessible“

Chieko Asakawa

IBM Japan and Carnegie Mellon University, USA

Abstract.

Technologies have helped open independence and opportunities for people with disabilities to actively participate in society. For example, voice-based Web access allowed blind to access a huge amount of information by themselves and the smartphone has opened completely new ways of accessing information. In the era of AI and IoT, location-based information from the Web can be utilized to provide rich context regarding the surrounding world for people without vision. In this talk, I will analyze central trends in the history of accessibility and discuss its relevance to my latest work in real-world accessibility. Throughout the talk, I will emphasize how AI can help improve the quality of lives for people with visual impairments.



Chieko Asakawa

IBM Fellow

Core developer of the IBM Home Page Reader

Working with The Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University.

Short CV. Chieko Asakawa is a blind Japanese computer scientist, known for her work at IBM Research – Tokyo in accessibility. A Netscape browser plug-in which she developed, the IBM Home Page Reader, became the most widely used web-to-speech system available. She received numerous industry and government awards. After her bachelor's degree in English literature at Otomon Gakuin University in Osaka in 1982, she began a two-year computer programming course for blind people using an Optacon to translate print to tactile sensation. 2004 she earned a Ph D. in engineering from Tokyo University. She joined IBM Research and became permanent staff researcher and was added to the Women in Technology International Hall of Fame in 2003. She became IBM Fellow in 2009, becoming the fifth Japanese person and first Japanese woman with that honor. In 2011 the Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology gave her their Women of Vision Award. In 2013 the Japanese government awarded her their Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon. A paper she wrote in 1998 with Takashi Itoh describing their work on web user interfaces for blind people was the winner of the 2013 ACM SIGACCESS Impact Award. In 2017 she was elected as a foreign member of the US National Academy of Engineering. Today, she is on assignment in the U.S., working with the Carnegie Mellon University to find out how accessibility technologies can play a key role in the real world to help create opportunities for more people to actively participate in the society. They openly collaborate with communities around the world by open sourcing fundamental technologies for researchers, developers and users to accelerate the cognitive assistant research and development.

Plenary Session

Friday, July 13, 13:00 - 14:30, Plenary Hall („Festsaal A“)

Keynote

- Chieko Asakawa, IBM Research, JP; Carnegie Mellon University, USA

WAI/W3C Keynote Panel

„Web Accessibility in the Connected World“

- Shadi Abou-Zahra, W3C/WAI, Austria (Moderator)
- Chieko Asakawa, IBM Research, JP; Carnegie Mellon University, USA
- Saqib Shaikh, Microsoft (Seeing AI), United Kingdom
- Paul Timmers, European Policy Centre Brussels, Belgium

The Panel:

Moderator Shadi Abou-Zahra

Shadi Abou-Zahra
W3C-WAI

Accessibility Strategy and
Technology Specialist

Coordinates the
accessibility priorities in
the W3C Strategy Team.



PANELISTS Chieko Asakawa



Saqib Shaikh



Paul Timmers



Saqib Shaikh. Saqib Shaikh is a software developer from London, England. In the pursuit of the freedoms that sighted people all take for granted every day, Shaikh has been personally involved in the development of a Microsoft application of Artificial Intelligence, cognitive computing, image recognition and mobile headset technologies called „Seeing AI“, using intelligence APIs from Microsoft Cognitive Services.

Paul Timmers. Paul Timmers is visiting research fellow for cybersecurity policy & digital transformation at Oxford University and senior advisor to the European Policy Centre in Brussels. Until 2017 he was director at the European Commission (EC), where he was responsible for policy, legislation and R&I in digital health & ageing, e-inclusion, e government, smart cities/mobility/energy, cybersecurity and digital privacy.