Forward

IDEAS series of symposiums provide an international forum for discussion of the problems of engineering database systems involving not only database technology but the related areas of information retrieval, multimedia, human machine interface and communication. The goal of IDEAS is to foster closer interaction among the industrial, research and user communities and provide an excellent opportunity for them to meet, discuss ideas, examine the current ones and develop new solutions and research directions. IDEAS’99 is the third in a these series of meetings; the last meeting was held in Cardiff, Wales in July 1998. IDEAS has emerged as a valuable symposium to address, in a timely manner, the complex problems of managing and mining data from not only traditional databases but also unstructured data. The engineering of novel methodologies to provide rapid and reliable implementation and solutions to these problems involve drawing on the expertise in many areas of Computer Science including the growing trend in engineering of reliable and safe software systems.

The current research in taming unstructured and semi-structured data represented by the amorphous and ever-changing Web is occupying the attentions of many researchers in the database community and it is reflected in the papers presented at this meeting. These applications go beyond those that have limited themselves to data representations of the numerical and textual or even the object format. The promise of the Internet in providing an international infrastructure for information sharing and electronic commerce without borders opens up many challenges for database engineers. Some of these problems can be seen from presentations at this symposium.

I wish to express my gratitude to the many people who have provided active support for IDEAS’99. The Program Committee and the external referees have ensured the quality of the symposium through meticulous refereeing of the submitted papers; the local organizing committee for arranging the local program. I would like also to thank all authors who submitted their work to the symposium. I wish to express my appreciation to Concordia University’s Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science and the Department of Computer Science, and IEEE for providing support to make IDEAS’99 possible.

Bipin C. Desai  (IDEAS, General Chair)