The International Workshop on Similarity Search and Applications (SISAP) is a new conference devoted to similarity searching, with emphasis on metric space searching. It aims to fill the gap left by the various scientific venues devoted to similarity searching in spaces with coordinates, by providing a common forum for theoreticians and practitioners around the problem of similarity searching in general spaces (metric and non-metric) or using distance-based (as opposed to coordinate-based) techniques in general.

SISAP aims to become an ideal forum to exchange real-world, challenging and exciting examples of applications, new indexing techniques, common testbeds and benchmarks, source code, and up-to-date literature through a Web page serving the similarity searching community. To encourage uniform, fair, and reproducible comparisons, SISAP authors are expected to use the testbeds and code from the SISAP Metric Library (http://sisap.org) for comparing new applications, databases, indexes, and algorithms in their papers. They are also welcome to enrich the library with their own contributions.

Contributions to the conference are welcome in three categories: (1) general indexing and searching methods that apply to arbitrary metric spaces, nonmetric or (dis)similarity spaces, or high-dimensional vector spaces; (2) methods that apply to specific similarity search problems; and (3) new spaces where searching is challenging, which uncover novel applications of the paradigm.

SISAP 2008 is the first edition of this conference. It has enjoyed an enthusiastic reception from the top researchers in the field as well as by upring authors who have contributed their papers. We expect that, in the years to come, SISAP will become the main reference and meeting point of the similarity search community, which for many years has been spread along several venues.