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Editorial

Tristan Behrens · Mehdi Dastani · Jürgen Dix · Jomi Hübner · Michael Köster · Peter Novák

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This special issue, "The Multi-Agent Programming Contest: History and Contestants in 2009" (edited by Tristan Behrens, Mehdi Dastani, Jürgen Dix, Michael Köster and Peter Novák), is about an annual programming contest in the area of multi-agent systems (which we started in 2005). We give a detailed history of the contest and describe its development from 2005 until 2010, including some technical remarks concerning the underlying platform. The special issue also contains short papers from the contestants describing their own approach, the used agent system, programming methodology and lessons learned. In order to better compare and understand these different approaches, all papers are based on the same template. Additionally, they conclude with short answers to the questions catalogue presented in the Appendix of the special issue.

The follow-up special issue, "The Multi-Agent Programming Contest: Environment Interface and Contestants in 2010" (edited by Tristan Behrens, Jürgen Dix, Jomi F. Hübner and Michael Köster), contains, besides the descriptions of the approaches used by the 2010 contestants (in the same format as in the first special issue), a paper proposing an environment interface standard. The question of the precise structure of an environment and the interplay between it and an agent system (via some standardized interfaces) is an important

T. Behrens · J. Dix · M. Köster
Department of Informatics, Clausthal University of Technology,
Julius-Albert-Str. 4, Clausthal-Zellerfeld 38678, Germany
E-mail: {dix, behrens}@in.tu-clausthal.de, michael.koester@tu-clausthal.de

M. Dastani
Intelligent Systems Group, Utrecht University, P.O.Box 80.089,
TB Utrecht 3508, The Netherlands
E-mail: mehdi@cs.uu.nl

J. Hübner
Department of Automation and Systems Engineering,
Federal University of Santa Catarina,
P.O. Box 476, Florianópolis, SC, 88040-900, Brasil
E-mail: jomi@das.ufsc.br

P. Novák
Department of Cybernetics, Czech Technical University in Prague,
Karlovo namesti 13, Prague 2 12135, Czech Republic
E-mail: peter.novak@fel.cvut.cz

one and no consensus is reached yet. The authors discuss this problem thoroughly and work towards a solution.