

Reflecting on COLLNET 2024 - A legacy for Hildrun Kretschmer : Insights from the 18th International WIS Conference in Strasbourg

B. Markscheffel

J. C. Lamirel

P. K. Jain

B. Markscheffel *

TU Ilmenau
Ilmenau
Germany

J. C. Lamirel [†]

Université Strasbourg
Strasbourg
France

P. K. Jain [§]

Institute of Economic Growth
New Delhi
India

E-mail

* bernd.markscheffel@tu-ilmenau.de

† Jean-Charles.Lamirel@loria.fr

§ pkjain1310@gmail.com



Figure 1

COLLNET Announcement Poster and Christmas atmosphere

The enchanting city of Strasbourg, known as the “Capitale de Noël” (Capital of Christmas), set the perfect stage for the 18th International Conference on Webometrics, Informetrics, and Scientometrics (WIS) & 23rd COLLNET Meeting. Held from December 12-14, 2024, at the MISHA (Maison Interuniversitaire des Sciences de l’Homme), University of Strasbourg, this hybrid event welcomed global participants both in-person and online.

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Figure 2

Opening speech: Prof. Hildrun Kretschmer's legacy to the Scientific World by Dr. Markscheffel

A Moment of Reflection: Honoring Prof. Hildrun Kretschmer

This year's conference carried a profound sense of remembrance as it was the first COLLNET event following the passing of its founder, Prof. Hildrun Kretschmer. Her legacy as a pioneer in scientometric research and her visionary contributions to COLLNET were deeply honored throughout the conference. Many attendees began their presentations with heartfelt tributes, with the opening statement by General Chair Dr. Bernd Markscheffel titled: "*Prof. Hildrun Kretschmer's legacy to the Scientific World*" setting a reflective and respectful tone for the event.

A Global Gathering of Minds

The conference brought together researchers, academics, and practitioners from diverse corners of the globe, fostering meaningful discussions and collaborations. With 23 in-person presentations featuring experts from India, China, Germany, France, Japan, Estonia,

Philippines, Taiwan, Slovenia and the USA, and 11 online talks from South Korea, Canada, Belgium, Great Britain, and India, the event demonstrated impressive international participation.

This year's program was carefully curated through a rigorous review process, selecting the presented talks from over 80 contributions, ensuring a high standard of academic excellence and relevance.

Key Highlights

The conference delivered following engaging keynote sessions from renowned figures in scientometric research:

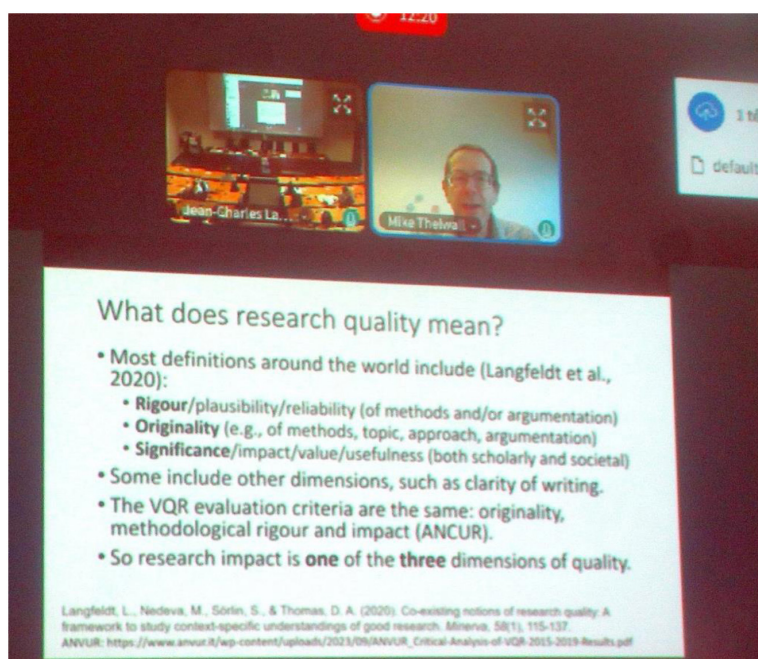


Figure 3

Keynote by Mike Thelwal

- Mike Thelwall (GB): *"Can Large Language Models Replace Citation Data for Research Quality Indicators?"*
- Grant Lewison (GB): *"Research Evaluation in an Age of Collaboration"*
- Marc Bertin (France): *"Analysis of Citation Contexts: Past, Present and Future"*
- Wolfgang Glänzel (Belgium): *"Challenges in Measuring Interdisciplinarity – On Concepts, Methods, and Caveats"*

Interactive Q&A sessions ensured active engagement across both in-person and virtual attendees, while topics such as scholarly profiling, bibliometric advancements, and interdisciplinary research evaluation sparked lively discussions.

Celebrating Excellence: Best Paper Awards

This year, two outstanding papers received the spotlight:

- **Fang Cheng et al.:** *“Research on Scholar Profiling Based on Generative Pre-trained Language Model.”* This groundbreaking paper addresses the challenges of extracting scholar information from unstructured internet sources by introducing an innovative attribute-entity extraction method based on generative pre-trained language models. The proposed approach achieves unprecedented accuracy in scholar profiling, outperforming existing models across all 12 types of scholars’ attribute entities with a remarkable 99.34% F1 score, while significantly improving the extraction of complex attributes like *“research direction.”*



Figure 4

Chen Fang’s Best Paper Award speech

- **Aparna Basu et al.:** *“International Scientific Collaboration: Core-Periphery Structure in the Regional South Asian Network of Countries.”* This innovative study investigates the

international research collaboration network among SAARC countries in South Asia, uncovering a distinct core-periphery structure with significant implications for regional scientific cooperation. The analysis, based on co-authorship data from Web of Science (2016-2019), reveals a regional sub-core formed by India and the USA, while other countries occupy positions ranging from Outer Core to Near and Outer Periphery, demonstrating stronger ties to global core countries than intra-regional collaborations.

Beyond the Conference Halls

Strasbourg's magical holiday charm added a unique cultural dimension to the event. Attendees explored the iconic Christmas markets, strolled through beautifully illuminated streets, and soaked in the festive atmosphere. The conference dinner at Salambo Amilkar, a renowned Tunisian restaurant, provided a cozy setting for relaxed conversations and networking over delicious cuisine.



Figure 5

Strasbourg- City Noel and Conference Dinner

Closing Ceremony and Future Plans

The conference concluded with a memorable closing ceremony, where Prof. Jean Charles Lamirel was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of Scientometrics and Informetrics.



Figure 6
Honoring Prof. J.-C. Lamirel at Closing Ceremony

Additionally, Dr. PK Jain officially announced the next edition of the conference: the 19th International Conference on Webometrics, Informetrics, and Scientometrics (WIS) & 24th COLLNET Meeting, scheduled to take place in New Delhi, India, from September 19-21, 2025, at the prestigious Institute of Economic Growth.

Looking Ahead

The COLLNET 2024 conference reaffirmed its position as a premier platform for global knowledge exchange and collaboration in the fields of Webometrics, Informetrics, and Scientometrics. The General Chair concluded the conference by emphasizing the importance of maintaining the professional connections established during the conference. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all speakers, participants, and staff for their dedication and contributions, their vibrant discussions, inspiring presentations, and the sense of community that has filled our time here accompanied by the hope that the participants would continue the dialogues initiated during the event and actively seek collaborative opportunities that could potentially result in significant scientific or professional advancements. Furthermore, the speaker warmly invited attendees to participate in the upcoming event in the conference series.

As the curtains close on this memorable gathering, participants eagerly anticipate the next COLLNET conference 2025 in Delhi at Institute of Economic Growth, ready to continue advancing research and fostering cross-border collaborations in these dynamic fields. Stay tuned for updates on COLLNET's future events and initiatives.