[Test] [Data+Service] Newsletter 03/2019

Newsletter #3
26.03.2019

Welcome to this month's Newsletter!

We have several exciting announcements this month. Learn about our new initiative in finding young talents in Switzerland via the "Student Awards".

Test your project ideas into prototypes through our member offering. Learn about our new member joined under the startup grant scheme.

Do not miss the upcoming events & Expert Group meetings, Summer School, Alliance's 2nd Match-Making event and more mentioned below, there are quite a few coming up.

Questions, remarks or contributions for the newsletter? Reach out to the editors.

Happy reading!

The Editors

Make sure to scroll all the way down -- don't-miss-it-goodie at the end!

Upcoming Expert Group Meetings

28.03.2019 - Spatial Data Analytics Expert Group meeting # 3
14:00 - 16:30, Location: Hotel Spirgarten (Lindenplatz 5, Zürich Altstetten). Find information here.

04.04.2019 - NLP in Action Expert Group meeting
16:30 - 19:00, Location: SBB (headquarters), Hilfikerstrasse 1, 3014 Bern. Find more information here.

11.04.2019 - Blockchain in Supply Chain Management Expert Group meeting
15:00 - 18:00, Location: Workshop Room, Trust Square, Bahnhofstrasse 3, 8001 Zurich. Find more information here.

12.04.2019 - Software & Tools Expert Group meeting
14:00 - 17:00, Location: SAP, Althardstrasse 80, 8105 Regensdorf. Find more information here.

13.06.2019 - Spatial Data Analytics Expert Group meeting # 4
11:00 - 12:00, Location: BFH (Brückenstrasse 73, Bern). Find information here.

24.06.2019 - Machine Learning Clinic Expert Group meeting
16:00 - 18:30, Location: CSEM Neuchatel. More information coming up here.

Upcoming Alliance Events

14.05.2019 - Data+Service Match-Making Event
13:30 - 17:00, Location: FFHS, Althardstrasse 60, 8105 Regensdorf. More information below.

13.06.2019 - GeoSpatial Data Day 2019 (SDS2019 Pre-Conference event)

12:15 - 19:00, Location: Berner Fachhochschule BFH, Brückenstrasse 73, Bern. Find more information [here](#).

14.06.2019 - 6th Swiss Conference on Data Science (SDS2019)

08:30 - 18:00, Location: Kursaal Bern. Find more information [here](#).

18-19.06.2019 - 4th Swiss Text Analytics Conference (SwissText 2019)

Location: Building TN, ZHAW, Technikumstrasse 71, Winterthur. Find more information [here](#).

04.09.2019 - 3. Konferenz Perspektiven mit Industrie 4.0

08:00 - 18:00, Location: ZHAW, St. Georgen-Platz 2, 8401 Winterthur. Find more information [here](#).

05.09.2019 - 4th European Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Finance and Industry

08:00 - 18:00, Location: ZHAW, Eulachpassage, Technikumstrasse 71, 8401 Winterthur. Find more information [here](#).

09-12.09.2019 - CLEF Conference 2019

Location: Università della Svizzera italiana (USI), Lugano. Find more information [here](#).

Change in Board Management per April 2019

by Christoph Heitz

We want to inform you about the resignation of our Board Member Giovanna di Marzo (University of Geneva), who had been serving since the Alliance was founded in January 2017. She took the decision to resign, effective from 31.03.2019, due to her increasing job obligations. We regret her demission sincerely, as she has contributed so much in founding and developing the Alliance during the last years, especially in Romandie. Without her, we couldn't have started many of our activities in Romandie. It was a great honour to work with her. Thanks Giovanna, for all your efforts as part of our management board!

Through circular decision of the General Assembly, we elected Prof. Dr. Anne Herrmann (FHNW, School of Applied Psychology) as the new board member. Congratulations Anne!

Anne has broad experience in industry-academia collaboration and innovation. As a business psychologist, she brings in the human and social perspective in data-based services, which is an important element in the multidisciplinary approach that we are promoting within Data+Service. Anne is well connected in our community and has already contributed much in the last years. We are excited that Anne is willing to increase her engagement within the Alliance by

joining the board, and we are convinced that she will add much value to our community.

Student Awards: a new initiative for the young talents

by Melanie Geiger

We will launch a new student awards program, awarding extraordinary students in our field. The award program will consist of a local and a national stream:

- The local stream allows academic members to award a cash prize in their diploma ceremony, in study programs that are related to Data+Service. Academic members interested in this opportunity should contact the [office](). The prizes will be sponsored by Industrial members (the flex budget may be used for this). The award will be handed over by a representative of Data+Service Alliance and a representative of the sponsoring company.

- The national stream awards the best Data Science student in Switzerland, and will be given once per year. The winner will be presented at our main conference, the Swiss Conference on Data Science (SDS).

This award program allows our Industrial members to get in touch with young talents at universities and to position themselves as future employers. It will also help to position Data+Service among the new generation of professionals. Last but not the least, it will allow us to create visibility and awareness for the newest high-quality research that is relevant in our community, helping us all stay up-to-date.

Both streams will be organized by an "awards committee" that will be established in the coming weeks. This committee will define all details (form of the prizes, selection process, award ceremony, etc…), and it will also care for the actual execution of the related activities. This is an interesting opportunity for our Industrial members. Being part of the committee allows you to get in contact with young talents. Being engaged in organizing the award program is an excellent form of an in-kind contribution. We would love to have one of our Industrial members to become the head of the award program.

So, please consider this opportunity to be actively involved in connecting with the best young talents of Switzerland in the area of data-based services:

- Industrial members may contact the office (info.office@data-service-alliance.ch) until **May 20, 2019** to become a sponsor of the awards and to be part of the committee. The sponsoring consists of an in-kind contribution in the form of participation in the committee, as well as of a cash sponsoring that can be covered by your flex-budget.

- Academic members may contact the office (info.office@data-service-alliance.ch) until **May 20, 2019** to volunteer as an expert in the committee.

Match-Making Event, May 14th 2019 at FFHS Regensdorf

We are happy to announce the 2nd Data+Service Alliance Match-Making Event,to be held on May 14, 2019 from 1:30pm to 5:00pm, at FFHS Althardstrasse 60 in Regensdorf.

The objective of this event is to bring together specific collaboration ideas from Academic and Industrial members, to sharpen them in a joint discussion, and to find best fits amongst the participating experts. The idea of this program is to push new ideas forward, set up projects and create tangible innovation.

The event will be in the form of a workshop. Every participant will share an innovation idea for which he/she searches partners within Data+Service. Academic members can present ideas based on their research results, for finding appropriate application partners for a research project, or for getting useful data from industry to support the research. For Industrial members, the event is an opportunity to discuss ideas, get feedback or inspiration for solution approaches, and of course to find appropriate project partners among the researchers or experts from other companies.

How can you participate?

- Register via e-mail until **May 3, 2019** to info.office@data-service-alliance.ch
- Send us a brief description of your collaboration idea until May 3, 2019

- Explain your collaboration idea in 3 minutes at the event using a poster or a A1 flipchart
- Be ready to discuss your idea with a small group

Overview on Alliance's Innovation activities in 2018

by Gundula Heinatz Bürki

Last year we started several innovation activities for creating new project ideas, starting new projects and bringing our members together.

The Match-Making Event is shaped for all Alliance members. The objective is to bring together different ideas from Academic and Industrial members, sharpen them in a joint discussion, and find the best fits among industrial and academic experts for pushing them forward and creating tangible innovation.

Our first Match-making event took place with 16 participants in September 2018 in Bern. The event was set up in the form of a workshop. Every participant shared an innovation idea for which he/she was seeking partners within Data+Service. After understanding the expertise and the needs of the different research groups and companies, several bilateral discussions followed. Finally, one close collaboration within the Alliance is in the making. Overall, the participants were satisfied and have been looking forward to the next event, which takes place on 14th of May 2019.

Our instrument Call for Participation should improve your projects substantially. With trusted partners in the community the requester can realize their ideas better than alone. With this tool, Academic and Industrial members can find the appropriate partner within the Alliance.

In 2018, the call for participation was used seven times by the members, 4 research groups were looking for Industrial implementation partners and 3 Industrial members were seeking the right research group to collaborate with. Especially the Innovation program "Manufacturing Technologies" supported the research groups to enlarge their project application.

Finally as a result of the activities in 2018, one Innosuisse proposal is in the making, one Innosuisse project was accepted and two bilateral exchanges took place successfully.

The Innovation Initiative "From ideas to projects" started in May 2018 and is specifically shaped for Industrial members. The objective of this initiative is to

support Industrial members developing vague ideas into a concrete project proposal, to define a roadmap, to set up a suitable project team by involving the different competencies within the Alliance, to take the first steps towards a solution, and to help getting funded. This initiative supports companies in the first steps of the innovation process.

Identitas AG operates national registries for livestock and companion animal species. This data is almost fully geo-referenced which allows spatial data analytics. Several open questions regarding this topic was supported by our member geo7 and a project will start in 2019. Unfortunately, the innovation initiative opportunity was used only once.

In May the Alliance launched a specific support program for startups for the next two years (2018/2019) for allowing small companies with restricted financial means to become a member of Data+Service and enrich the community with their creative potential.

The main idea is that startups may receive a free membership for 2 years if they engage in an innovation project with another member of the Alliance. So, if a startup is active in creating innovation within the context of the Alliance, they are doing exactly what the Alliance is made for, and they are added as a member of our innovation community even if they cannot contribute financially as a regular member right away.

We are happy that this program started very successfully in 2018. Four startups got accepted by the board: NextInsights, Skillue, SpinningBytes and WinJI. Two companies started an Innosuisse project and two of them got direct funding for their projects. Three applications were conditionally accepted because the projects are in the approval period and have not started yet. The program is well received, in 2019 we already got two new members.

If you are curious to start your innovation project with support by one of these innovation instruments please contact me directly (gundula.heinatz@data-service-alliance.ch). I am looking forward to hearing from you!

Welcome new member ExoLabs Ltd liab. Co

We are happy to announce that the UZH start-up ExoLabs Ltd liab. Co, represented by Reik Leiterer, has been accepted for the Alliance's Startup Grant with its innovative project idea of a monitoring system to map agricultural areas with a very high spatio-temporal resolution using data of multiple Earth observation (EO) satellites - on a global scale.

Complex global systems like agriculture, but also like water cycles, forestry, and many others, affect billions but are still poorly understood. Understanding these systems is crucial not only for the well-being of humanity, but also for companies that need to adapt to a changing environment. In this context, ExoLabs will ensure that cutting-edge scientific research finds a direct implementation in user-defined applications by providing custom solutions that deliver financial and operational advantages.

The motivation to found ExoLabs as a service provider for EO products arose as a unique opportunity of several emerging developments: (1) The diversifying space sector provides an ever increasing number of satellite data that is in part freely available, (2) machine learning algorithms and artificial intelligence tools transformed data analysis with unprecedented levels of accuracy and (3) cloud computing solves previous data storing and processing power issues to scale EO products in time and space. In 2017, ExoLabs started with the development of a first operational monitoring system - mapping of snow coverage for Switzerland based on satellite data only, updated daily and with a unique thematic and spatial accuracy. And the journey began...

It is a great pleasure for us to welcome Reik Leiterer, founder and CEO and co-founder of ExoLabs, and his team, as a new Industrial member in the Swiss Alliance of Data-Intensive Services.

Call for Student projects : Propulsion Academy Projects and Program Offerings

by Nitin Kumar, Propulsion Academy

Why student projects for Propulsion students?
We all have amazing ideas however, not enough resources (primarily man-power is missing) to test our ideas. With the push for digitalization across all industrial sectors a place is needed to quickly test new ideas and develop product prototypes. That's where Propulsion comes in to help. Propulsion graduates around 60-80 FullStack and 60-80 DataScience students per year. As part of student development and training program Propulsion brings corporate projects for both Full-Stack and Data Science students. Usually 2-3 students work on this project with pre-defined deliverables. Information about some example projects and companies propulsion students have worked with can be downloaded [here](#).

Project duration
The student projects run for 3.5 weeks.

What is required from companies?

- A project template with clear deliverables if possible (download example and empty [project template](#)).
- A kick-off meeting with Propulsion team that clarifies the expectations and deliverables
- One meeting per week in person or remotely.
- Total time investment of 4-5 hours per project over a duration of 4-5 weeks.

What happens after the project delivery?
Propulsion usually only works at prototype stage. We are well aware of the challenge that some projects are big and require constant development and integration. For such projects we will be more than willing to split the project across batches and develop it in parts.

Therefore, we request and encourage you to submit student projects. **Please send your ideas about concrete student projects to Gundula (gundula.heinatz@data-service-alliance.ch) latest by 30th April 2019.**

International Summer School in Data Science, Bayonne France

1st - 10th July 2019

Contact: Kurt Stockinger, ZHAW

Datalab, ZHAW and the Business Analytics Institute in France are organizing a **summer school in Data Science from July 1 – 10 at Bayonne at the beautiful Atlantic coast of France**:

https://www.baieurope.com/summer

The Summer School is open for all members of the Alliance. Here are some quick facts:

- The Summer Session will focus on t**he Practice of Data Science** using examples from the **Life Sciences, Smart Cities and Logistics**
- The session is open to **upper class and graduate** management and engineering students, **as well as working professionals** aiming to develop their practical knowledge and skills in Data Science
- This summer's international faculty will be composed of **Profs.** Sieber, Cielen, Stockinger**, and** Schlenker. Course syllabi are available on request.
- Company speakers and/or visits are planned with **Sophia Genetics, the cities of Lyon or Dubai, and Lufthansa.**
- Our cultural visits will include **San Sebastien, Biarritz, and Laàs**, as well as a B**asque cooking class, surfing lessons, and an introduction to Pelota**
- The practicums will be run using **Microsoft Azure Machine Learning, ProM, Semdee and Spark**
- **The basic fees** for the session are 1195 euros for the class fees, 250 euros for social budget, and 200 euros for student housing for the 10 days session.

Contact Kurt directly if you are interested.

Project Proposal for "Speech-to-Text in Swiss German"

by Mark Cieliebak

How can you automatically generate text from Swiss German audio? This is the main task that three academic members of the Alliance for Data-Intensive Services want to solve in their joint research proposal. The three universities, University Zurich, FHNW and ZHAW, are applying for a large-scale project at BRIDGE to generate solutions to automatically transcribe audio in Swiss German to text, either to Swiss German (phonetically) or Standard German (translation). To achieve this, they will:

1. Collect large amounts of data, especially audio data, and their transcripts and
2. Develop and improve fundamental algorithms for Speech-to-Text for Swiss German based on these resources.

In order to increase the chances to be funded by BRIDGE – a Swiss funding agency for innovation projects – they are looking for companies and organizations who would be interested in Speech-to-Text for Swiss German. More precisely, they need "letters of endorsements" which basically say that your company/organization has a potential use case for such technologies, and that you encourage BRIDGE to support the project. **These letters have to be provided until April 1st.**

For more details and information, please contact Mark Cieliebak, ciel@zhaw.ch.

Upcoming Member events

Send events that you are (co)organizing that can be useful to our members and we will include this information in our newsletter.

SAP Machine Learning CodeJam @ PAX
Thursday, 28th March 2019
Schweizerische Lebensversicherungs-Gesellschaft AG, Aeschenplatz 13, 4002 Basel
Register here https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sap-codejam-basel-registration-55230647353

Daten und Vertrauen – wieso erarbeitet die Schweizer Datenwirtschaft Selbstregulierungen?

10. April 2019 at 17:30. Location: AXA in Winterthur (Pionierstrasse 3)
More information.

Data Science Read of the Month

Das Beste zum Schluss

Training classifiers with natural language explanations

https://blog.acolyer.org/2018/08/24/training-classifiers-with-natural-language-explanations/

mailchimp