



Introduction



Measuring Behavior started in 1996 as a workshop in the framework of a European research project “Automatic Recording and Analysis of Behavior”, aimed at sharing the results of our project with colleagues from abroad. It was hosted by Utrecht University, was heavily supported by Noldus Information Technology and attracted over 150 participants. At the recent meeting held in 2012, we returned to the birthplace of *Measuring Behavior* and the meeting brought together over 350 delegates from 37 countries and multiple scientific disciplines.

Measuring Behavior is a unique conference about methods and techniques in behavioral research and therefore measuring the function of the brain. While most conferences focus on a specific domain, *Measuring Behavior* creates bridges between disciplines by bringing together people who may otherwise be unlikely to meet each other. At a *Measuring Behavior* meeting, you find yourself among ethologists, behavioral ecologists, neuroscientists, experimental psychologists, human factors researchers, movement scientists, robotics engineers, software designers, electronic engineers, human-computer interaction specialists, etc to name but a few.

In this Special Issue, we celebrate the success of this conference and make some of the exciting contributions of the 8th *Measuring Behavior* conference available in greater depth to a wider audience.

During the conference, we have participated in many discussions, visited numerous workshops and symposia and the overall quality was excellent. In selecting contributions for this special issue, we particularly weight the relevance to methodical novelty and importance in Neuroscience, the recent conceptual progress in the development of translational tools highly relevant for medical research, the technical advances in terms of hardware and software for improved recording of behavior, and progress in response to the ever increasing challenges of data analyses. Work invited was not species specific and we sought to create a mix of reviews and original contributions that best encompassed the spirit and excitement which the conference offered.

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