

Upfront_

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Irish AI research pushes onto international stage

Since 2001, when 4C director, Eugene Freuder, accepted an SFI principal investigator award and moved his lab from the University of New Hampshire in the US to the computer department at UCC, Ireland has elbowed its way into the international league in terms of artificial intelligence and constraints programming.

The 4C centre (Cork Constraints Computational Centre) has had 18 papers accepted by three prestigious

international conferences this quarter. Four papers were accepted by the *American Association for Artificial Intelligence Conference*, which was held in Pittsburg, US, in July. Seven were accepted for last month's *International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence* in Edinburgh - where tough standards mean that only 240 of the 1,329 peer-reviewed papers submitted got through.

Seven 4C papers have been accepted for the *International*

Conference on Principles and Practice of Constraint Programming, scheduled for October 1 - 5 in Barcelona. In addition, two 4C researchers, Karen Petrie and Barbara Smith, were co-authors on one of two papers that recently won best-paper awards at this year's Constraints Programming conference. The 2004 biannual European Conference on Artificial Intelligence selected two of 4C's papers among the best 11 or 653 submissions, from 46 countries.

AI FOR CHILDREN

The centre took part in UCC's summer community science week. 4C researcher and community outreach coordinator, Karen Petrie, and her colleagues imparted principles of constraints reasoning to children aged 9-14. That might not sound easy - but, by all accounts the children grasped the concepts and truly enjoyed it. The science faculty says that more than double this year's number already sought to enrol for 4C activities at next year's event.