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**27<sup>th</sup> International Meeting of Collectors and Researchers of  
Slide Rules and other Historic Computing Instruments**  
**ZOOM conference on September 11–12, 2021**

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We invite you to submit your presentation for the IM 2021. Traditionally, the main subjects of IM presentations are slide rules and other computational aids based on logarithms, but we are also interested in other types of mathematical instruments, like integrators, mechanical calculators, and tables. The focus is not on just getting a numerical result; we particularly value reports about applications and how specific instruments, like special purpose slide rules, solved the problem at hand. Furthermore, talks on educational and training issues are most welcome.

Traditionally, we have a theme or motto for some of the sessions, which also serves as motto for the conference and the title of its proceedings. These were typically concerned with the objects in one form or the other. This year's theme is about the process of collecting and researching, as it is different from our usual *modus operandi* due to the COVID-19 pandemic: No fleemarkets, boot or garage sales, auctions, or meetings with other collectors to look at slide rules etc. Also there can be no swapping, selling or buying them. Neither can we visit libraries, archives, antiquariats or antique shops. And more of such currently impossible actions. On the other hand, we can concentrate in seclusion on the items themselves, by for instance cleaning, repairing, restoring, photographing, documenting them. Writing is another activity, be it articles for conferences like this IM or for one of the journals of our community, or web pages. These and other restauration, preservation, research and publishing activities shall be subjects under our heading

## **Computing Instruments Collecting in Pandemic Times**

Notes on these subjects are usually shorter than standard articles for an IM. Nevertheless there are many techniques, tools, as well as little tricks we use in our hobby and our research, which usually remain undocumented or only exchanged at meetings. That knowledge shares the fate of a number of slide rule techniques, as they are generally simply not documented as being considered just minor items or aspects, yet they can be so helpful. So, do also write short papers or notes, which we will try to bundle for the proceedings as well as for brief presentations. It is also helpful as well as plainly interesting, what kind of interactions we have with others in pursuing our activities, how they are affected by the pandemic and what we have or miss. Lockdowns and quarantines affect our values and priorities.

There is one more subject in this context, which many of us repress. It can happen any time that you step out of your home into the street and are run over by a car, or have any other kind of accident. You may be of advanced age or of poor health, but this pandemic can be much worse, hitting you quick and unexpected. We live with a substantially higher level of danger to our life and wellbeing than normally. So, what will happen to your collection, if you are suddenly a victim? Does your family or some trusted friend know what to do with it? Not just the objects, the slide rules, calculators, planimeters, etc etc, but also the documents and literature around it. And do not forget the electronic stuff, your websites as well as the data on your computer and storage media. Is

there a catalogue, a list of the important, of the valuable, of the memorable item which should be preserved next to the “common stuff” you certainly also have? Are you prepared, not only in these high risk times? Looking at the members of the collector’s societies and IM participants, we can observe two of their characteristics: One is their age, and the other is their rational background by their professions in science and technology. We are certainly not at ease considering our fate, but can we address this question of preservation of our collections or at least of the important parts thereof in a rational way? There are no easy answers, but there should be a discussion about it, just because of these pandemic times. And for that we do need position papers, papers / presentations / notes about possible approaches, maybe even solutions, experiences. It may be hard personally, even unpleasant, but our rational character should be able to cope with it. Maybe you have a full paper, maybe a shorter (draft) contribution; just send them to the editor and we will see together how to put them into the programme and the proceedings.

Next to conference sessions addressing the theme above, we will have others for all kinds of issues around slide rules or any other mathematical devices, like tables, mechanical calculators, planimeters, and whatever ingenious people invented to help us to compute. In other words, the usual potpourri of stories and descriptions we have at each IM.

The conference language is English, with no preference for either English or American English. But please be consistent. If the conference language is an obstacle to making a submission we will arrange some help of a native speaker.

We ask you to inform us about your intention to submit a paper as soon as possible to help us with the planning of the conference, as well as its proceedings. The proceedings of IM 2021 will be professionally typeset as a book, just like the ones for IM 2013 in Berlin and for IM 2017 in Bonn<sup>1</sup>. Early paper submission is much appreciated to help spread the workload. In particular with respect to illustrations and their preparation, we would like to hear from you as early as possible. Furthermore, we prepared a *Guidelines for Authors* paper, also downloadable from the IM website, but you can start writing your paper right now with the text processor of your choice.

	05.04.2021	latest date for declaring your intention to submit a paper
<b>Essential dates</b>	16.05.2021	deadline for the submission of your paper
	13.06.2021	final version of the paper due

Please direct all your correspondence to the editor and conference chairman, Prof. Karl Kleine, by email: [editor@im2021.org](mailto:editor@im2021.org). Further information about IM 2021 can be found on the web at

**[www.im2021.org](http://www.im2021.org)**

**Please submit early!**

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<sup>1</sup>The special logistics to get the proceedings to the participants of this teleconference will be explained separately later on the IM web page [www.im2021.org](http://www.im2021.org).