

August 13, 2015 | By Jan Zverina

SDSC Names Ilkay Altintas Chief Data Science Officer

Altintas to Lead Cyberinfrastructure Research, Education, and Development

Ilkay Altintas has been appointed Chief Data Science Officer of the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) at the University of California, San Diego, effective immediately. Altintas, who joined SDSC in 2001, will lead the strategic coordination of all computational data science activities at SDSC while overseeing application-based solutions and their related technologies.

Altintas was also named head of SDSC's Cyberinfrastructure Research, Education, and Development division, better known as CI-RED. CI-RED encompasses some 85 researchers at SDSC involved in a vast array of projects that involve technological and scientific research and deployment. Subject areas include bioinformatics, computational chemistry, data integration, geophysics, oceanography, 3D modeling, analysis and statistics, scientific workflows, visualization, and more.

In addition to being an assistant research scientist at SDSC and a lecturer in computer science and engineering, Altintas also directs the [Workflows for Data Science \(WorDS\) Center of Excellence](#), which she envisioned and created in 2014 to help train researchers in the use of scientific workflows. She also co-initiated the open-source Kepler Scientific Workflow System, and currently serves as principal investigator of the [WIFIRE project](#), a three-year program



Ilkay Altintas

valued at about \$2.65 million to support an integrated system for a wildfire monitoring and analysis cyberinfrastructure that is already assisting public safety organizations in disaster preparedness and alerts by better predicting a wildfire's rate of spread.

“As SDSC's first-ever Chief Data Science Officer, I am confident that Ilkay will leverage the expertise within CI-RED for the benefit of the entire Center and its users,” said SDSC Director Michael Norman. “She has a long and impressive history of leading research and development of application-oriented computational data science solutions for many scientific domains, exemplified by the award-winning WIFIRE project. Under Altintas' leadership, SDSC is well positioned to create data platforms that include big data software and expertise that is scalable and extensible to numerous computing and analytical needs.”

“Data science is a major area of expertise at SDSC, and I envision building on this expertise to develop both applications and multi-partner collaborations that deliver societal value across many areas, including natural hazard preparedness, genomics, and healthcare,” said Altintas. “I'm thrilled by this opportunity to oversee SDSC's computational data science activities, while leading efforts to strategically leverage their value among SDSC's partners in academia, industry, and government.”

Since joining SDSC, Altintas has been closely involved in different aspects of scientific workflows as a principal investigator, and in other leadership roles across a wide range of cross-disciplinary projects. She also is the co-author of more than 70 peer-reviewed publications related to computational data science at the intersection of scientific workflows, provenance, distributed computing, bioinformatics, geoinformatics, observatory systems, conceptual data querying, and software modeling.

Altintas received a Ph.D. degree from the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. With her new appointment, Altintas also joins SDSC's Executive Team.

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