



9 August 2021

Professor Yves Moreau
By email: yves.jl.moreau@gmail.com

Dear Professor Moreau

Facial feature discovery for ethnicity recognition

I refer to our previous correspondence and the serious concerns you have raised regarding a paper published by Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery, of which Associate Professor Wan-Quan Liu of Curtin University (as he then was) is currently listed as a co-author. The relevant paper is:

- Wang C, Zhang Q, Liu W, Liu Y, Miao, L. *Facial feature discovery for ethnicity recognition. WIREs Data Mining Knowl Discov. 2019;9:e1278.* <https://doi.org/10.1002/widm.1278> (**WIREs paper**).

Wan-Quan Liu has resigned from Curtin University, and is now understood to be a Professor at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangdong.

Curtin accepts and wishes to meet its obligations under the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) (**Code**) to establish and maintain good governance and management practices for responsible research conduct and facilitate the prevention and detection of potential breaches of the Code in order to conduct research in accordance with the principles of responsible research conduct set out in the Code.

Under the Code, Australian universities have a continuing obligation to address a research complaint even when a respondent leaves the institution following a complaint.

Curtin University has found that Professor Wan-Quan Liu breached the Code in relation to the WIREs paper, as follows:

- a) In breach of the Code, he did not gain the required ethical approvals to utilise the data in the manuscript and provide documentary evidence of the approval(s);
- b) In breach of the Code, he did not gain informed consent to utilise the data in the manuscript and provide documentary evidence; and
- c) In breach of the Code, he claimed co-authorship for the paper when he was only involved in the research technically.

I also refer to the matter you recently brought to my attention regarding the IEEE retraction of the article "Interpretable Facial Semantic Extractor Based on Axiomatic Fuzzy Set" by Yan Ren; Shuting Zhang; Xiaofei Ji; Chengcai Leng in IEEE Access, Vol 7, November 2019. As you noted, this article is not by the same authors as the WIREs article but it used the same data set and so faced the same issues.

For completeness, I note that the Retraction Notice includes the following statements: "It has been brought to the attention of the Editors that the data underlying this study are no longer accessible. Therefore, the data are not available for request by readers wishing to repeat the analyses presented in this work. Additionally, the Authors did not respond on whether the person depicted in the paper gave consent or the picture was in the public domain."

Given the matters set out above, I have once again written to Wiley with my view that the matters set out above necessitate that the WIREs paper be retracted, and requiring that any reference to Curtin University should be immediately removed from the WIREs paper.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. I will provide you with further updates regarding the above matters that may arise.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Moran', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Professor Chris Moran
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
Curtin University