

## **Impressions from attending AAI-26**

My name is Yehonatan Kidushim, and I am a Master's student in Software and Information Systems Engineering in the Faculty of Computer and Information Science at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. In January 2026, I participated in The 40th Annual AAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence, one of the leading conferences in the field of artificial intelligence, which was held this year in Singapore. As part of the conference, I presented my research work in the field of multi-agent path finding.

### **Conference organization and schedule**

Already at the organizational level, it was clear that the conference was very well planned. The organizers provided a dedicated conference application that served as the main tool for staying updated throughout the event. The app allowed participants to view the full schedule, receive updates, and navigate the venue using a map of the expo center. It also included the room numbers and locations of the sessions, making it easy to find and move between different talks. Using the application during the conference was very helpful for staying organized and navigating between sessions.

The conference days typically started around 8:30 a.m. and continued until approximately 6:30 p.m. Every hour, several sessions took place in parallel across different topics, allowing participants to choose talks according to their research interests. Due to the large number of sessions, it is highly recommended to review the conference program in advance and mark the talks that are most relevant, which helps in planning the day more efficiently and making the most of the conference schedule.

In addition to the talks, each day also included poster sessions lasting about two hours. These sessions were distributed across several halls and organized by topic. This format allowed participants to move freely between halls, explore different research projects, and engage directly with researchers presenting their work.

### **Tutorials, labs, and workshops**

Beyond the main conference days, the event also offered additional activities that allowed for deeper exploration of specific topics. During the two days preceding the conference, tutorials and labs were held, providing participants with more in-depth sessions on research methods, tools, and emerging topics in artificial intelligence.

In addition, during the two days following the conference, workshops were organized. These workshops typically focus on specialized research topics or emerging areas within the field and often involve smaller, more interactive discussions among researchers. The workshops cover a wide variety of subjects and provide an opportunity to engage more deeply with current research directions.

These activities allow participants to extend their conference experience beyond the main sessions and gain additional exposure to ongoing research developments.

### **Food and refreshments**

During the conference days, coffee breaks were organized where participants could take short breaks and enjoy refreshments between sessions. In addition, the conference organizers provided a list of restaurants and dining options located near the expo center where the conference took place, allowing participants to easily plan their meals throughout the day.

However, from the perspective of a kosher-observant participant, it is worth noting that while some kosher options were available, they were limited and mainly consisted of small snacks rather than full meals. Therefore, participants who keep kosher may want to prepare in advance by bringing suitable food or by checking in advance for appropriate dining options in the surrounding area.

### **Accommodation and transportation**

The organizers also provided helpful information regarding accommodation and transportation. The conference website included recommendations for hotels located near the expo center, as well as guidance on public transportation and travel routes to the venue. Reviewing this information in advance can make the overall conference experience smoother, especially during long and busy conference days. Choosing accommodation close to the conference venue can significantly simplify daily logistics.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, participating in the conference was a valuable professional experience. The efficient organization, the wide variety of talks, and the opportunity to interact with researchers from around the world greatly contributed to the overall experience and to expanding professional knowledge in the field.

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