

SPEECH PROSODY 2028 CONFERENCE PROPOSAL

**Sønderborg, Denmark,
23-26 May 2028 (Tue-Fri)**

**Host: Centre for Industrial Engineering (CIE)
Acoustics Lab Team (Prof. Oliver Niebuhr)
University of Southern Denmark (SDU)**

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Suggested Conference Theme: “Prosody for Better Lives: From Basic Research to Human Connection and Societal Impact”

Speech Prosody has always brought together fundamental and applied perspectives on the prosody of spoken language. Alongside traditional topics such as intonational phonology, typology, rhythmic and information structure, and language acquisition, the field has long explored the role of prosody in learning, interaction, and speaking styles. More recently, these connections have broadened further, extending into areas such as healthcare, healthy ageing, human-computer interaction, speech technology, and wellbeing. While welcoming contributions from the full breadth of prosody research, Speech Prosody 2028 aims to highlight and strengthen these increasingly diverse connections between basic science and societal impact. The conference theme seeks to encourage interdisciplinary bridges between phonetics/phonology, psychology, speech technology, medicine, audiology, education, robotics, and user-centered design, fostering dialogue between researchers and practitioners and inspiring new avenues for collaboration.

DENMARK IS...

- a country with a strong tradition in acoustics, audiology, hearing research, and communication technologies.
- home to globally recognized companies and institutions in audio, hearing, and signal processing, including Bang & Olufsen, HBK, Oticon, GN, and a growing ecosystem of AI, VR, health-tech, and wellbeing initiatives.
- A place where industrial innovation and publicly funded research have long interacted to address challenges related to communication, hearing, healthy ageing, and quality of life.

It is the aim of the organizers that Speech Prosody 2028 benefits from this unique scientific and industrial landscape by building bridges to companies, research institutions, foundations, and healthcare initiatives in Denmark. Through keynote lectures, interdisciplinary special sessions, industrial participation, demonstrations, and informal exchanges, the conference seeks to provide an inspiring environment that celebrates both the diversity of prosodic science and its growing contribution to better lives.

The CIE Acoustics Lab

If you ask us what one of the particular strengths of SDU's campus Sønderborg is, then we would probably say: Building bridges! - Not only because a country with almost 400 islands generally likes to and often does build bridges. In our case, other bridges are meant. For example, those between the humanities and engineering or those between research, teaching, and learning. Interdisciplinary exchange, cross-border collaboration, and fun in addressing and solving problems that directly emerged from the everyday life of companies and “sounding” or talking machines, that is what defines SDU Sønderborg. The [agenda](#) of the CIE Acoustics Lab reflects this special spirit very well.

[The CIE Acoustics Lab](#) brings together traditional humanities scholars on the one hand and technicians and engineers on the other. We create innovations by applying phonetic knowledge to non-phonetic problems; and we try to advance phonetic knowledge through developing new instruments and analysis techniques or by making these instruments and techniques more accessible and effective for relevant groups in society. People or their unique and highly complex networks of signal patterns and communicative meanings are at the heart of our lab. And this heart is framed by tools and technologies.

The lab currently includes a team of 8 people - and 7 different languages: Two postdoc researchers (from Spain and Canada), three PhD students (from Germany, UK, and China), three research assistants (from Hungary, Iceland, and India), and the head of the lab (Oliver Niebuhr, from Germany).

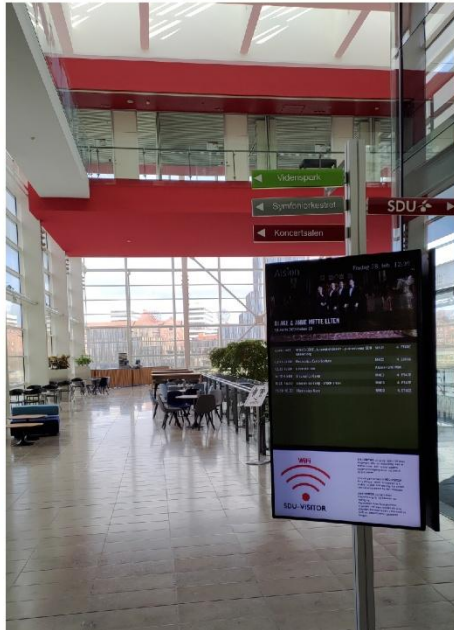


The SDU campus Sønderborg

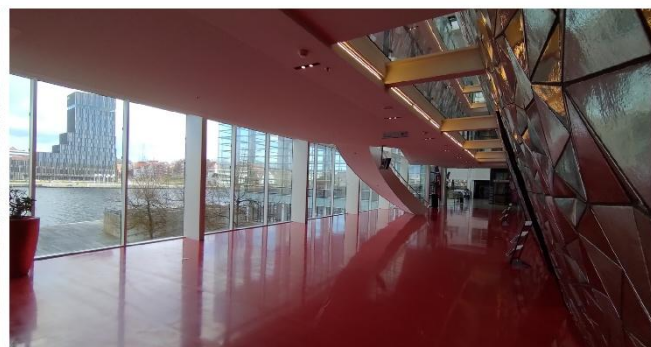
The University of Southern Denmark is both the third-largest and the third-oldest Danish university and currently educates about 32,000 students. Since the introduction of the ranking systems in 2012, the SDU has consistently been ranked as one of the top 50 young universities in the world by both the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the QS World University Rankings. The SDU is also among the top 20 universities in Scandinavia. Its [campus Sønderborg](#), on which the Acoustics Lab is located, is probably the most international university campus in whole Denmark. More than 50 nationalities and languages are present here. The lab itself is part of the Faculty of Engineering and the Depart. of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering at SDU.



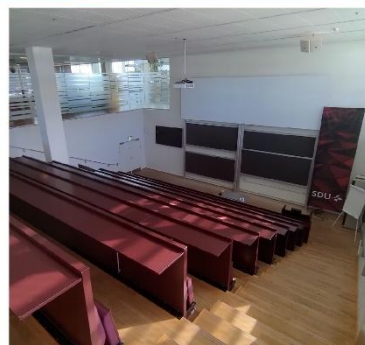
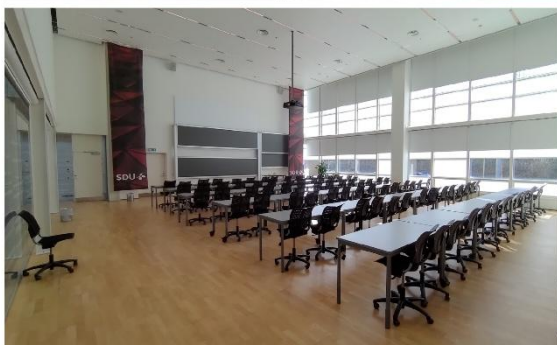
Sønderborg campus, located in the award-winning Alision building on the waterfront of the Alsund. Combining research, education, and culture under one roof, Alision provides a modern and inspiring environment ideally suited for scientific meetings and international exchange. The venue offers spacious, light-filled lecture halls, numerous breakout rooms, open networking areas, excellent catering facilities, and robust digital infrastructure with high-speed Wi-Fi and modern audiovisual equipment. Its compact layout, scenic waterfront location, and close proximity to hotels and restaurants create ideal conditions for scientific exchange, networking, and collaboration.



Areas for opening, closing ceremony, plenary sessions, welcome reception and other events (e.g. demo booths)



Areas on campus for individual oral and (e.g., parallel) poster sessions



Sønderborg, nestled on the picturesque island of Als in Denmark's southern region, is a charming town (with about 80,000 inhabitants) steeped in history and natural beauty. Dominated by the medieval Sønderborg Castle, dating back to the 13th century, the city showcases a captivating blend of historical architecture and modern amenities. The castle, once a royal residence and later a prison, stands as a testament to Sønderborg's rich past. The town enjoys a scenic location along the Flensburg Fjord, offering breathtaking views of water, forests, and cultural landmarks.



Key conference figures

The 2024 and 2026 issues of the conference took place **Tue-Fri**. We intend to use the same 4 days of the week to give participants the opportunity to arrive the weekend before and to use (at least) the weekend after the conference for tourist purposes - and Monday for tutorials. Our suggested dates are therefore: **23-26 May 2028**. Note that on the 26th, we will offer an optional daytrip (p. 7).

We expect a total of **300-400 participants** to take part in the conference, with at least 20-30 coming from our own national network of practitioners, researchers, and industry partners.

ESTIMATED REGISTRATION FEES

The CIE Acoustics Lab has hosted 4 mid-size international conferences since 2021, the 1st International Conference of Tone and Intonation ([TAI](#), Dec 2021, about 140 participants, hybrid), the 33rd Conference on Electronic Speech Signal Processing (ESSV, March 2022, about 70 participants, hybrid), the 13th International Conference of Nordic Prosody (NP13, August 2022, about 50 participants, on site), 51st IEEE Professional Communication Conference ([ProComm](#), July 2025, about 150 participants, on site). For this reason, we can estimate the required registration fees relatively precisely.

	Full (non-member*)	Full (member)	Student** (non-member*)	Student** (member)	Accomp. Person
Regular registration fee	450€	390€	270€	220€	---
Conference dinner	100€	90€	80€	70€	90€
Social activity (Fri, 18 July)	110€	110€	90€	90€	110€

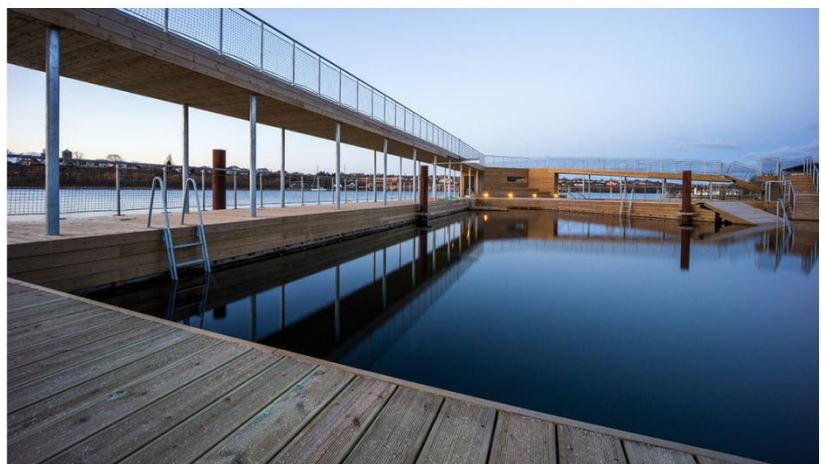
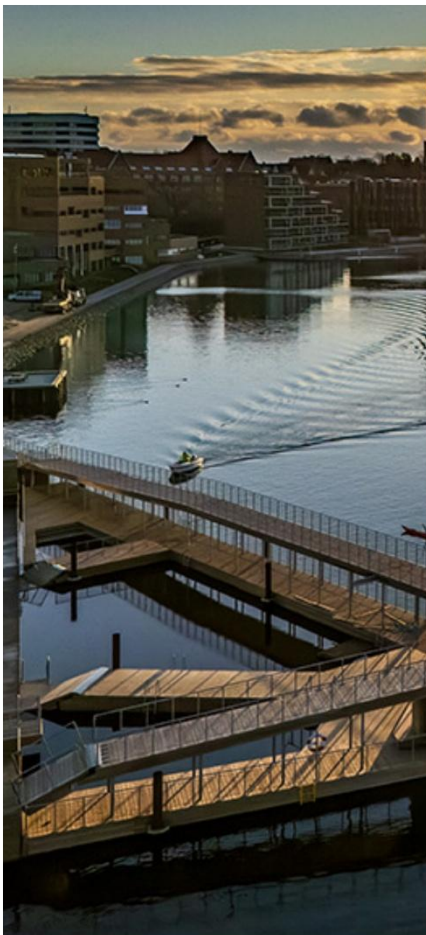
*Membership refers to a valid ISCA membership

**The discounted prices also apply to retired senior researchers

The registration fees cover all expenses, such as daily lunch breaks and 2 coffee breaks per day (morning & afternoon), the welcome reception as well as the costs of 4 invited keynote speakers (trip and accommodation), rooms, entertainment, student assistant salaries, baby/child day care, etc. Furthermore, the registration-fee calculations take into account preliminary agreements with potential conference co-sponsors, see the logos below.



The welcome reception of the conference (with fingerfood, softdrinks, wine, beer) is scheduled for the first evening (Tuesday, 23 May) and takes place on the 16th floor of the Steigenberger Alsik hotel, i.e. the viewing platform “point of view”, see the top photo below. The conference dinner will be either inside the historic royal castle of Sønderborg or a “Beach” BBQ at the [city’s new seawater pool area](#), see the photos below.



Photos of Venues for Welcome Reception and/or Conference Banquet of SP28 (Alsik “Point of view”, Sondeborg Castle, Seawater pool Sonderborg)

OPTIONAL DAYTRIP TO RØMØ ISLAND

The Acoustics Lab team has decided to offer you an optional full-day trip as a social activity. Our team's favorite is Rømø Island on Friday, 26 May, i.e. after the end of the conference. Come with us and see one of Europe's biggest and most beautiful beaches, "[Lakolk](#)". It is 6.2 miles long and 1.3 miles wide and, according to the Vogue magazine, one of Europe's best kept secrets.



A bus service takes us to our destination in about 50 minutes, and there is plenty of time on site for swimming, for long walks in or along the Wadden Sea (UNESCO World Heritage Site) - and of course we will have a joint lunch break with Danish beer (or soft drinks) as well as with an original Danish hot dog and Danish soft ice cream (included in the trip, vegetarian and vegan options are also available).

Although our team's favorite is Rømø Island, there are also several attractive alternatives we can choose from (participants will vote after registration to SP28). Science enthusiasts may enjoy Universe Science Park, Denmark's largest hands-on science and technology center, located just 30 minutes from Sønderborg. Those interested in maritime history and relaxation can join us for a visit to the picturesque Flensburg harbor, including a leisurely cruise aboard a traditional salon steamer "Alex" - the last one of its kind in Germany. Finally, culture lovers may prefer a journey to Denmark's west coast, combining Esbjerg and Ribe, Denmark's oldest town, with its charming medieval center and Denmark's oldest cathedral.

Whichever destination you choose, you will have plenty of opportunities to experience the local culture, enjoy the beautiful surroundings, and spend time with fellow conference participants. Joint meals and refreshments are included in all excursions, with vegetarian and vegan options also available.



Travel

BY CAR

Sønderborg is directly connected with the Danish and European highway network (E45) facilitating travel by car. Car rental is available at all airports, including Sønderborg. You can reach Sønderborg by car within 4-8 hours from most cities in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Sweden.

BY TRAIN

There are direct connections to Sønderborg, see www.dsb.dk or www.rejseplanen.dk (German and English versions). Among others there is a direct train from both the airport and the central station in Copenhagen about every 2 hours. The train ride itself is about 3.5 hours. When travelling via Hamburg, there are regional trains to Sønderborg via Flensburg/Padborg, see www.bahn.de. These trains run every 30 minutes. The trip is about 2.5 hours.

BY PLANE

... to Copenhagen (CPH), Denmark's biggest airport. It is easy to reach and easy to find your way around there. The best thing is that you can take a direct flight from Copenhagen to Sønderborg (SGD) with a flight time of only 35 minutes. Departures are 5 times a day on workdays, see [Alsie Express](#).

... to Billund Airport: busses and trains run every 30-60 minutes from the airport to Sønderborg via Vejle Station or Kolding (www.rejseplanen.dk). It takes about 3 hours to get to Sønderborg.

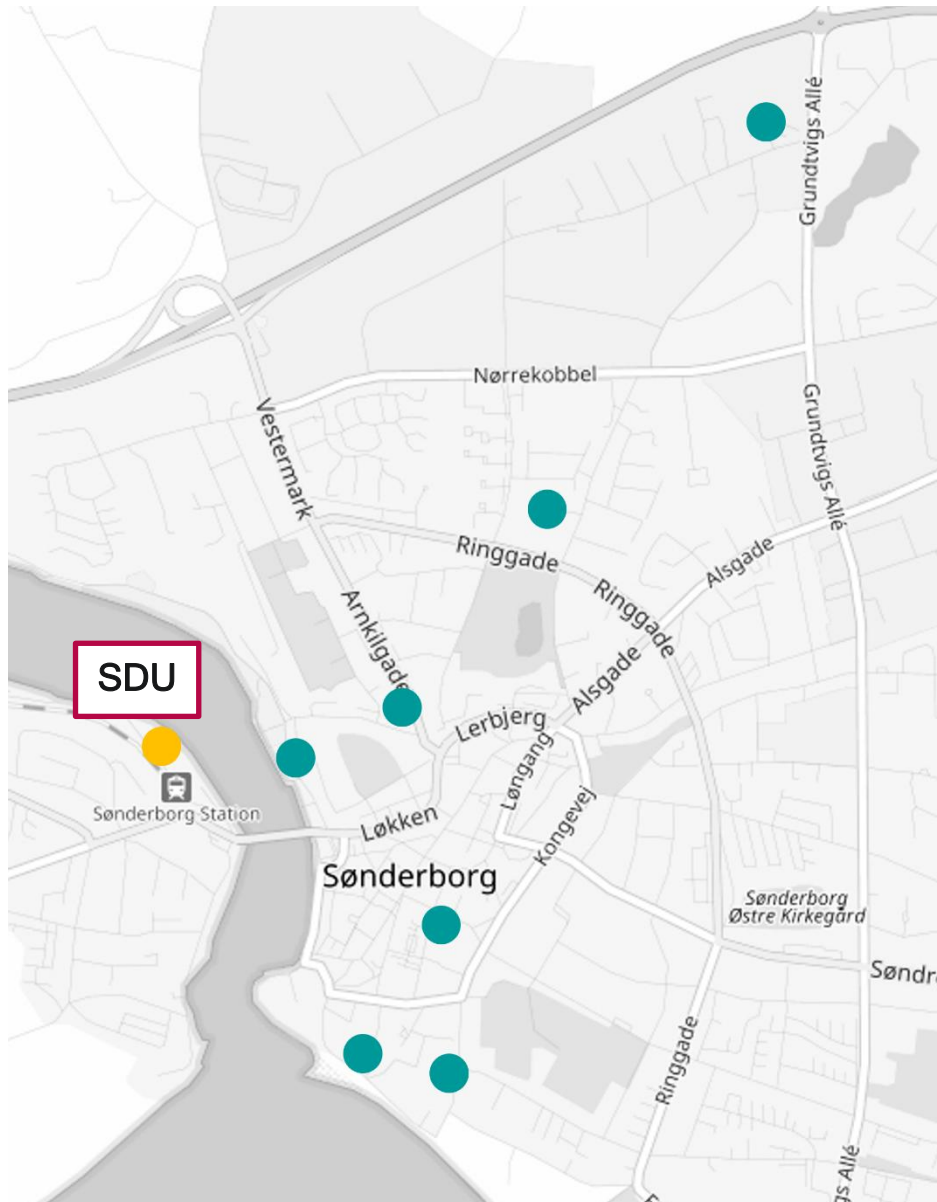
... to Hamburg Airport (HAM), one of Germany's major airports. You can take a train from there and Hamburg central station and then further to Flensburg at the German-Danish border and, across the border, to Sønderborg.

OUR RECOMMENDATION FOR TRAVELLERS FROM THE US

... Either fly to Copenhagen (CPH) and board the next "Alsie Express" flight there to Sønderborg (SGD, the airline is named after the island "Als" on which the city of Sønderborg is located, and you will enjoy a very scenic flight and see many islands and beaches from above);

... Or fly to Hamburg (HAM) and get on the next train to Flensburg. From there we organize a taxi shuttle service several times a day that picks up groups of 4-5 conference participants and brings them across the Danish border directly to their respective hotels in Sønderborg.

Accommodation



Sønderborg offers a wide range of accommodation options across all price categories, from student-friendly hostels and budget hotels to four- and five-star establishments. All major accommodation options are located within comfortable walking distance of the conference venue (many hotels also offer bike rental), typically requiring no more than 5-20 minutes on foot.



Hotel Sønderborg Strand looks directly onto the beach, in a beautiful natural location of historical interest, just 250 metres from Sønderborg town centre. The view over Flensborg Fjord and Alssund can be seen from the hotel. The beautiful castle of Sønderborg Slot is opposite the hotel, with the marina, woodland and beautiful nature of Als all close by.



Price: Single room approx. \$140 per night, inclusive of VAT. An extensive breakfast buffet is also included in the price.

SDU gets a 10% discount on bookings for its event guests here!



Hotel Sønderborg Kaserne is situated along the old quay at the Sønderborg harbor. Despite a modern renovation, the hotel retains the charming and majestic character of the old military barracks. The old barracks now stands ready to accommodate guests - this time, shoe polish, metal cabinets and bunk beds has given way to modern and comfortable surroundings, with soft beds and a lovely breakfast venue with a beautiful view.



Price: Single room approx. \$110 per night, inclusive of VAT.



Hotel Scandic Sønderborg. Stay in scenic surroundings 3 kilometres from the centre of Sønderborg and close to attractions such as Universe and Dybbøl Mill. The hotel has a pool, squash court and modern gym. For you who arrive by car, it offers more than 200 free parking spaces right in front of the hotel.



During holiday periods, it offers special activities for the children staying there as well as a playroom including a computer, TV and games.

The hotel also has special ticket arrangements with many of the attractions in Southern Jutland and can therefore offer its guest discounted tickets or other benefits, such as Speedy Entrance.

Price: Single room approx. \$140 per night, inclusive of VAT. An extensive breakfast buffet is also included in the price.



The beautiful hotel **Steigenberger Alsik** is one of the biggest, most fascinating hotels in Denmark. Its hallmarks are tasteful Nordic design and natural materials, and the hotel is part of renowned architect Frank Gehry's master plan for the Sønderborg waterfront. The inviting, ultra-modern rooms and suites have views of both the town of Sønderborg and one of the loveliest fjord landscapes in Denmark.

The hotel includes one of Denmark's largest pool and spa areas (extra charge).

Price: Single room approx. \$190 per night, incl. breakfast, inclusive of VAT.



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Hotel 6400 (named after the zip code of the city) is a 4-minute walk from the nearest bus stop, this casual hotel features a contemporary exterior with wood and brick accents, and is 2 km from the city center and 3 km from Sønderborg Castle.



The casual rooms come with free Wi-Fi, flat-screen TVs and desks; some rooms feature private balconies and/or sitting areas.

Freebies include a breakfast buffet and parking. There are indoor and outdoor lounge areas with street views. A special service of the hotel is its bike rental. You would like to come to the conference by bike in the morning? Then you should book here.

Price: Single room approx. \$130 per night, inclusive of VAT. An extensive breakfast buffet is also included in the price.

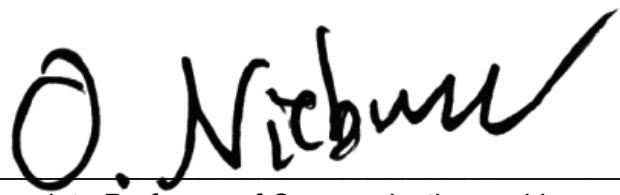
Committees

Need to be determined in close coordination with ISCA, SProSIG and organizers of previous Speech Prosody conferences.

Questions?

Please feel free to contact the Head of the CIE Acoustics Lab, Oliver Niebuhr, when you have questions (olni@sdu.dk). My whole team and I hope for your positive response, and we look forward to hosting you and the 2028 issue of Speech Prosody here!

“ Vi glæder os til at byde jer velkommen og ønsker jer en rigtig dejlig sommer - med masser af hygge!”



Associate Professor of Communication and Innovation
Head of the CIE Acoustics Lab
Founder and CEO of AllGoodSpeakers ApS
Secretary of the International Phonetic Association
University of Southern Denmark, Sønderborg

