Fast and reliable online learning to rank for information retrieval
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Now that I am writing this section of my thesis, it feels like a luxury to be able to take the time and look back at the last few years, and think of all the people that have affected me throughout this time. So many people have affected me in so many ways that it is impossible to name them all; I will do my best to name all those that most strongly impacted this journey.

I started working on my PhD project four and a half years ago. At that time I had already been working in the Information and Language Processing Systems (ILPS) group at the University of Amsterdam for two years, and very much enjoyed working there. This strongly affected my decision to spend the next few years here. Central to this group is my supervisor, Maarten de Rijke, and he is the person I have to thank most. I am deeply grateful for his guidance and support throughout these years. He always had an open ear for me, despite being one of the busiest and most productive people I know. Most importantly, Maarten has created a research group that is built on trust and mutual respect, and that is a supportive environment for learning, cooperation, and discussion.

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Katja Hofmann
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