Odense Manifesto at ICSA 2025 – Summary of Working Session

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Introduction

At ICSA 2025, the IEEE International Conference on Software Architecture in Odense, Denmark, we organized and ran a working session with this title: Dear "Academia", Architect for the future, for sure, but please don't forget about the present. Best regards, "Industry".

The working session had the following description: Academic researchers look and should look into the future; they should be "architecting for the next generation of intelligent systems". Industrial practitioners should create today's systems to their customer's satisfaction. Systems should be fit for use, have good quality, and be delivered within agreed time and budget. The latter is not easy and many IT projects fail. How do academics' and practitioners' goals align; are they far from each other? Many will agree that there is some distance, and also that bridging or narrowing the gap between academia and industry is both important and challenging. In this working session, we welcome academics, industrial practitioners and students to meet, exchange viewpoints and discuss how we together can move things in the right direction. Examples of subjects for discussion: (1) Should industry change some ways of working and/or thinking to facilitate better knowledge transfer from academia? (2) should academia adjust curricula (or even research agendas) to better help industry, (3) are students properly prepared for the challenges that are waiting "on the other side"?

Both the title of the working session and the description were inspired by the overall theme of ICSA 2025 that was: "Architecting for the next generation of intelligent systems".

Working Session Contents

We set an ambitious goal for the session, knowing well that we would only have time to start the work on the subject, in the 90 minutes that was the duration of the working session. We worked towards what we called "the Odense Manifesto" about how academia and industry should collaborate about software architecture today and in the future. Even though the initial focus was on software architecture, it soon became clear that the discussions and results were more general, applicable to software engineering more generally.

The working session started with an introduction, with a mentioning of the key inspiration to the goal of this session, namely the famous and impactful Agile Manifesto [1] that consists of four very well-known "Manifesto statements" (example: "Working software over comprehensive documentation") and 12 lesser

known "Manifesto Principles". A Manifesto statement is a bold declaration of a core belief on the form "A over B", where B is something that the statement authors value, and A is something that the statement authors value more. The example we gave was "helping the industry over publishing papers". Admittedly, it was *deliberately provocative and strongly biased towards the interests of the Industry*, and perhaps even "disruptive" for one of the core academic activity, i.e., producing new knowledge and publishing it in papers, in a way academia's "raison d'etre". A Manifesto Principle is to guide behaviour and decision-making, on the format 2-3 lines consisting of core intent, problem addressed and actionable guidance. Example: "To understand the challenges of software architecture in practice, academia should take their sabbatical out in the industry to experience it." This, in fact, we do not see as provocative; it is a suggestion for an activity that we genuinely think can help to better align industry and academia.

The session continued with a "let's get inspired" part with three short talks, one by an academic, one by a student and one by an industrial practitioner. Each of the speakers presented his perspective on the subject, and they included "bold statements", with the aim at catalyzing discussions. The academic said "Industry, please call us!", the student "Industry, please hire us as helpers while we are students, even though we still don't have years of experience; we are very concrete here and now bridge builders between academia and industry!", and the industrial practitioner said "Academia, please help us now, it's urgent!"

The main parts of the working session were two group sessions. The participants were divided into groups where we deliberately mixed academics, industrial practitioners and students. There were 7-9 groups, each with 10-12 participants. In the first group session, the task the groups were given was to write a Manifesto Statement. After this session, there was a break where the statements were printed on posters and hung on the wall. People were asked to walk to the poster with the statement they would prefer to continue working with (many participants preferred the statement created in the group where they had been a member themselves). With this re-shuffling of groups, in the second group session, the task was to write a Manifesto Principle.

Towards the end of the session, statements and principles were presented and discussed in a plenary session.

Working Session Results

Nine Manifesto Statements and 11 Manifesto Principles were produced and are reported below, *exactly as they were written at the session.*

Manifesto Statement	Manifesto Principle
S1: Applied (practical) research over research	
S2: Novel applications over novel methods	P2.1: Align the education with industry & academic needs by teaching fundamental theories through practical applications to ensure future of industry & academia is secured for innovative real-world solutions
S3: Solve hard real-world industrial problems over artifical academic problems	P.3.1: Academia should be able to understand industry problems, develop solutions and then generalize as a common knowledge

	P3.2: The academic system should consider industry-relevant research /grants for academic tenure or for academic promotions.
	P3.3: The students should be put in real world scenarios where they can work with industry during their coursework.
S4: Pracitical applications of scentific knowledge over smallest publishable unit	P4.1: Make use of scientific knowledge as driver for mutual learning
S5: Relevance over originality	P5.1: Ground the research in relevant industrial concerns, before creating an original solution
S6: Relevance over rigour	P6.1: To achieve relevant industrial impact, the project needs to bridge the gap between research and product development
S7: Critical thinking over latest technologies	P7.1: To bring true value, the training of (future) software architects should add to 'foundational knowledge', 'critical thinking' more importantly than the 'latest technologies'.
	P7.2: (cont.) "critical thinking stays, latest technologies go"
S8: People over profits	P8.1: PEOPLE over profits -- We should find the way to increase profits, but never forget that the target is to improve people's situation
	P8.2: PEOPLE over profits -- To begin your study or research, you need a strong motivation: make sure you choose a path of (personal) growth, where you can also make some money
S9: Ideas and people over intellectual property	

Initial Version of the Odense Manifesto

After ICSA 2025, the authors have refined the results and synthesized six statements for inclusion in the initial version of the Odense Manifesto. The six statements are listed below. We encourage interested readers to consult [2] that gives more context and explanations of the manifesto and thus a basis for a better understanding.

- S1: Applied research over fundamental research
- S2: Novel applications and refinement of existing methods over novel methods
- S3: Solutions to practically relevant problems over results for theoretically interesting and tractable problems
- S4: Practical applications of knowledge over smallest publishable unit

- S5: Relevance over originality
- S6: Relevance over rigour

Conclusion and Future Work

We believe that the working session has been useful for raising awareness in the ICSA community and as a building block towards improvements for academia-industry collaboration.

Planned next steps include balancing the manifesto with academic perspectives, adding actionable guiding principles, and encouraging endorsements from the broader community.

References

[1] Beck, K. et al., 2001. Manifesto for Agile Software Development. Retrieved from https://agilemanifesto.org

[2] Jørgensen, J.B., Jokumsen, M., Spalazzese, R., 2025. Dear Researchers: Think about the future, for sure, but please don't forget about the present – the Odense Manifesto for academia–industry collaboration at ICSA 2025. *Journal of Systems and Software*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jss.2025.112681