Message from the Program Chairs
DSN 2024

On behalf of the entire research track program committee, it is our great pleasure to present you to the research track of the 54th Annual IEEE/IFIP International Conference on Dependable Systems and Networks (DSN 2024). The program includes very solid contributions addressing diverse aspects of system robustness (including reliability, dependability, safety and security) across multiple domains including hardware, software, networks, cyber-physical and autonomous systems, artificial intelligence and machine learning. The program of the research track consists of 42 contributions, comprising 34 research papers, 4 practical experience reports, and 4 tool papers.

The 42 papers you will be exposed to were selected from 204 complete paper submissions, which constitutes a 21% acceptance rate. The Program Committee (PC), consisting of 105 experts with widely diverse backgrounds, made this selection, aided by external expert reviewers in cases where additional expertise was deemed important. In total, 109 reviewers wrote 727 reviews. The selection process was double-blind to ensure mutual anonymity between authors and reviewers.

We employed a two-round reviewing system to reduce reviewer load. All valid submissions received at least 3 reviews each. Submissions that did not have any positive rating from any of the 3 reviewers assigned in the first round were rejected early and authors were notified of the early rejection. 70 submissions, i.e., 34% of the initial set, made it to the second round and each of them received at least two more reviews.

This year, we have used the same paper revision process as the one introduced last year. Each paper was assigned a discussion lead from one of the PC members to ensure active engagement of the reviewers in the discussion. For the papers rejected after the first round, the discussion lead was also responsible for summarizing in a metareview the arguments that led to that decision. The authors of papers that passed the first round were invited to submit a revised paper, after receiving their first and second round reviews. The major goal of the revision process was twofold: 1) to help improve the strength of the final papers, 2) to help the authors to clearly demonstrate how they addressed the reviewer feedback. The authors of the 70 papers invited for a revision were given two weeks to submit three documents: 1) a revised version of the paper, 2) an "author response and summary of changes" letter, 3) a complete "diff" of the revised version from the original submitted version (to aid the reviewers). The authors had the option to use one extra page in the revised version of the paper to address the reviewer comments.

We received revisions for all papers that made it to the second round. The program committee and reviewers evaluated the revisions and author responses over the course of two weeks, until and during the PC meeting. The reviewers used the online discussion before the PC meeting to categorize the papers into three categories: 1) accept, 2) needs discussion in the PC meeting, and 3) reject. The PC meeting was held online on March 14 and 15, accommodating the diversity of time zones and the need for discussion. Before the PC meeting, 33 papers had been accepted as a result of the online discussions and 19 rejected. The remaining 18 papers were discussed in the PC meeting, 9 of which were accepted and 9 rejected. Discussion in the PC meeting centered around building consensus across reviewers for acceptance or rejection. All discussed papers were decided based on consensus developed during the discussion, without resorting to voting across the PC. For each paper, as for the first round, the discussion lead produced a summary of the discussion in a metareview to explain the decision, positive or negative, to the authors. All 42 accepted papers were assigned shepherds to ensure specific comments from the PC were addressed in the final version.

This year, we followed the same process as the one introduced last year for the Best Paper Award recognition. Three papers were selected based on Program Committee input and final Steering Committee down selection. They will all be awarded the Best Paper Award and be presented in the Best Paper Session. Among these, one paper will be chosen to receive the Distinguished Paper Award based on votes by the attendees of the session. Recognizing three papers with the Best Paper Award instead of a single one enables multiple benefits, including the recognition of multiple strong works done in the community without requiring the singling out of only one as Best Paper via a necessarily-imperfect process.

This entire process was possible only with the hard and dedicated work and participation of the Program Committee members and external reviewers, who provided insightful reviews and engaged in active discussions over the course of several months. We thank them gratefully. We are also indebted to Domenico Cotroneo, the Steering Committee (SC) Chair, and the DSN SC members for their precious advice and useful suggestions throughout the process. We thank the DSN 2023 PC Chairs for their suggestions based on their experience in the prior year. We are grateful to the DSN Organizing Committee members who handled various issues related to the website and the Publication chairs for seamlessly working with us in handling the final versions of the papers.

We are also thankful to all authors who submitted their papers to DSN. We believe the revision process improved both the quality of both the final papers and the feedback the authors received. We hope that the authors of rejected papers have found useful suggestions that can help them to improve their work and its presentation.

The research track technical program of DSN 2024 reflects a strong and thriving effort by a diverse community, shaped literally by hundreds of contributors. We hope that you enjoy the conference and are looking forward to the technical program and discussions as much as we do. We would very much welcome any feedback you may have on the process.

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