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To the Semantic Web Science Association

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Support of Nomination of Dr. Petar Ristoski for the SWSA Distinguished Dissertation Award

Dear members of the award committee,

Dr. Petar Ristoski has worked as a PhD student in my group starting from August 2013, and has defended his PhD thesis on „Exploiting Semantic Web Knowledge Graphs in Data Mining“ under my supervision in January 2018.

In his thesis, Dr. Ristoski has analyzed the usage of Semantic Web and Linked Data as background knowledge in data mining tasks, including contributions in methodologies, applications, and datasets. His thesis comprised various achievements, which include, but are not limited to

- the prototype of his implementation in RapidMiner (the RapidMiner Linked Open Data extension) winning the Open Track of the Semantic Web Challenge at ISWC 2014,
- the application of that prototype to the problem of building recommender systems, winning the challenge for LOD-enabled recommender systems at ESWC 2014,
- a comprehensive survey on Semantic Web in data mining and knowledge discovery, which is one of the top three cited articles in the Journal of Web Semantics,
- the invention of RDF2vec embedding method, which has been presented at ISWC 2016 and has become widely used, reaching 100 citations already in the first two years after its publication, and finally
- a total list of no less than six journal and 13 conference papers publishing results from his thesis. Some of those quickly became heavily cited and lifted Dr. Ristoski's h-index to 14 in the first year after his dissertation.

Besides these achievements, Dr. Ristoski has also become a very active member of the Semantic Web research community and served as a reviewer for journals such as Web Semantics, as well as for conferences such as ESWC, ISWC, and IJCAI. Overall, considering his entanglement with the research community, the quality of his thesis, and most of all the outstanding list of contributions and achievements, I fully support Dr. Ristoski's application for the SWSA distinguished dissertation award.

With kind regards,



Prof. Dr. Heiko Paulheim