

Message from the Chairs of MSR2018

Welcome to MSR 2018, the Fifteenth International Conference on Mining Software Repositories, held on May 28 and 29 in Gothenburg, Sweden, co-located with the 40th International Conference on Software Engineering (ICSE 2018).

In 2004 the first highly successful International Workshop on Mining Software Repositories was held in Edinburgh, Scotland. In the 14 years since, MSR has grown into a thriving community that organises a large, mature and reputable yearly conference. This year we had more than 200 submissions in the main track categorised as research papers, reusable tools, and practical experiences, along with the Mining Challenge and Data Showcase tracks. Based on feedback from within the community, MSR used double-blind reviewing for the second year in a row to reduce reviewer bias as much as possible and ensure fairness in the review process.

This year, we received a total number of 154 submissions of research papers (113 full and 41 short). Out of the 113 full paper submissions, we accepted 37 papers, and out of the 41 short paper submissions, we accepted 11. These are acceptance rates of 32.7% for full papers and 26.8% for short papers. We did not fix any quota on the number of papers to be accepted. Rather, the acceptance decisions were made based on the program committee's discussions on the content and quality of each paper individually. Following tradition, MSR 2018 accepted or rejected papers at their submitted length, and did not permit downgrading a paper from a full paper to a short paper.

For the sixth year in a row, MSR 2018 has had a Data Showcase, in which papers present datasets curated by their authors, and made available to the community at large. These papers provide a description of the dataset, how it was put together (including the methodology to gather it), its schema, how it can be used, and its limitations/challenges. This year we received 24 submissions, of which 14 (58%) were accepted.

We also continued the tradition of the Mining Challenge, where researchers from across the community apply their mining techniques to a common problem. For the third year, we issued an open call for challenges, which attracted seven competitive proposals. From those, we then selected the one that we considered to have the widest appeal: Enriched Event Streams, a public data set for empirical studies on in-IDE activities of software developers. The Mining Challenge received 31 submissions, out of which 13 (42%) were accepted. These 13 papers will compete in the finals of the Challenge in Gothenburg.

As is tradition, a selection of the best research papers, and for the third year also data showcase papers, will be invited to submit an extended version for consideration in a special issue of the Springer journal Empirical Software Engineering. The invitees will be announced during the opening session of MSR 2018. As we did already for three years, MSR 2018 will also recognize papers with ACM SIGSOFT Distinguished Paper Awards.

Following the practice of the last editions, MSR 2018 presents a Most Influential Paper award honoring a paper from MSR 2008 that stood that test of time and that has shown to have a high impact on the MSR community. The award has been selected by a committee consisting of the organisers of MSR 2008, who came to an unanimous decision. The award goes to Abram Hindle, Daniel German and Ric Holt for their paper "What do large commits tell us? A taxonomical study of large commits". The paper in question not only has had by far the most impact in purely academic terms (as in: number of citations), but has also greatly increased our overall understanding of commit behaviour.

For the second time, the MSR community recognizes outstanding contributions in the MSR field, through the establishment of two series of awards: the MSR Early Career Achievement Award, and the MSR Foundational Contribution Award. The MSR Early Career Achievement Award recognizes outstanding junior researchers who provided outstanding contributions in the MSR field. The MSR Foundational Contribution Award recognizes individuals, or groups of individuals, who produced fundamental contributions in the MSR field, where such contributions have helped many others (not limited to the MSR community) to advance the state of the art.

We are also very happy to have a great keynote speaker this year: Andy J. Ko. He is an associate professor at the University of Washington. Unique to MSR 2018 is that Andy's keynote will be shared with ICPC 2018, the International Conference on Program Comprehension.

MSR is prepared by a large team. We thank all the members of the Program Committee (74 members this year), and invited reviewers, the chairs of the Mining Challenge (Sebastian Proksch, Sven Amann, and Sarah Nadi), and of the Data Showcase (Georgios Gousios and Sarah Nadi), and all the members of their reviewing teams. Their diligence in reviewing and discussing the submissions, and the high quality of their reviews and contributions to those discussions have made us proud one more year of the results of the review process. Special thanks

to Massimiliano Di Penta and Christian Bird (chairs), and their committee members, who have for the second time organized the MSR Awards, and Michele Lanza, who selected the Most Influential Paper from MSR 2008. This year we also had a SWAT team that was available to help us out during the critical phase of stimulating the discussion on our large number of submitted papers, which coincided with one of the PC Co-Chairs having a bout of prelabor. Chris Bird, Ahmed Hassan and Thomas Zimmermann did an amazing job as SWAT team!

We thank our corporate sponsor Microsoft Research for their financial support and sponsoring prizes, and our other sponsors: IEEE Computer Society, Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), Technical Council on Software Engineering (IEEE TCSE), Special Interest Group on Software Engineering (ACM SIGSOFT), Drew University, Kyushu University and Delft University of Technology.

Our most sincere gratitude to the people who worked closely with us in the other organizing aspects of MSR 2018: Qianqian Zhu (Web Chair), for managing the MSR website; Cor-Paul Bezemer and Stefanie Beyer (Publicity Co-Chairs), for so much work with social media; and Jesus M. Gonzalez-Barahona, for establishing the FOSS Impact Paper Award, which is granted to papers that show outstanding contributions to the FOSS community.

We also thank ICSE 2018 General Chair Ivica Crnkovic, and Co-Located Events Chair Thomas Zimmermann, for their help with co-locating MSR with ICSE and local arrangements. And of course, we thank the MSR steering committee for their advice in organizing the conference.

We have waited to the end to mention the most important part of MSR: its community. Thanks to all the authors for their submissions, and the whole MSR community for the great enthusiasm being shown to this exciting and always timely research topic. Welcome to Gothenburg, Sweden. Enjoy the charming city, its architecture, the surrounding nature and sea. So while mining those repositories, be sure to also look around in Gothenburg!

Have a lot of fun at MSR 2018!!



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