

Abstract Reloaded – MESSE BREMEN Launches a New Abstract Management System for ACTUATOR Conference – Guidelines for Reviewers

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Abstract:

Everybody knows the situation: Although known for several months, each deadline appears totally unexpected. Abstracts as well as manuscripts are usually sent in just at the due date. Every time when approaching the deadline for ACTUATOR abstracts there always was a flood of abstracts coming in in response to the Call for Papers. No doubt, we have always been happy about this huge response, but it was frustrating to leave in the evening with a queue of unprocessed mails longer than that one in the morning, although all colleagues involved had done their very best. It was time to find a solution in 2011. In that year we decided to introduce the Conference Management System OpenConf. In a number of tests we found this tool promising to make this procedure more effective for both sides, contributors as well as organisers. Furthermore, we expect it to facilitate the abstract handling during the evaluation process. May be, the procedure differs a little bit from that one used in the past, as it is not a tool individually created for ACTUATOR, but in a joint initiative of contributors, committee members and organisers we managed to introduce it in 2012 and further improved it in 2014 and 2016. Thanks for your cooperation.

Keywords: conference, scientific papers, deadline, abstract management system, OpenConf

Introduction

OpenConf is an abstract and peer-review management system proved in hundreds of previous events. It greatly facilitates the submission and review processes for conferences, workshops, and symposia. Authors can upload their contribution including the short abstract dedicated for publication and they can modify and reload it later on, provided the final deadline has not been reached. They can even withdraw their contribution or watch its status during the evaluation process.

This tool offers a performance very close to the procedure we are all familiar with and even some additional features: Authors, reviewers (committee members) as well as the organizers do have their personalized access to this online database. At any time they are aware of their personal data, the status of their submissions, the number and quality of abstracts received, and, of course, the evaluation status after the deadline. And all this is performed within a secure https connection.

Access to OpenConf

The entrance window to OpenConf is shown in Figure 1. It may be found on the welcome page of the event homepage www.actuator.de under “Conference Contributions” in the navigation bar on the left side.

There are different access levels for authors, reviewers, and the programme chair. At the reviewer level we have already entered most of the personal data, so you do not need to sign up. The username and a preliminary password have been provided in a separate e-mail. After entering please make sure to enter your correct e-mail address and to personalise your password.



Fig. 1: Entrance to OpenConf

Fig. 2: Total list of submissions received (available for all reviewers)

Fig. 3: Submissions to be reviewed by you

Access for Reviewers / Review Procedure

As the entrance portal is personalised you may select between the complete list of submissions received (“view submissions”) and the list of submissions assigned to you for evaluation (“submissions to review”). The assignment has been made by the Programme Chair. In case you feel not responsible for this submission, please send him an e-mail (“Email Chair”). In case you notice a submission obviously assigned to “wrong” reviewer please inform the Programme Chair

“Abstract” is the short abstract, “Eval. Abstract” is the abstract for evaluation. A click on “Title / Review Form” opens the correlated review form we kindly ask you to fill in for each contribution. The question for the “best submission award” will not be used this time. Please note: The field “Comments for

Authors” is active, content will be available for authors when they log-in to check the status of their submission. In case you intend to contact the author we recommend to send an email or to ring him up in case you expect a soon reply. We ask you to save the filled review form received by email for your documents.

Your review results will be transferred to your Session Co-Chair and the Programme Chair automatically. Please keep in mind to click the button “Review Completed” when you have concluded the review. Having once completed the own review you are able to have a look at your Session Co-Chair review results. Furthermore, this click is the signal for the Programme Chair to set the flag to “Submission Accepted” which can be seen by the author when checking the status of his submission.

At this moment the first step of the evaluation process is done: the selection of accepted and rejected submissions. Now, in a second step the two Session Chairs have to agree on those suited for oral presentation in their session and the order in the session schedule. Unfortunately, this cannot be done with OpenConf at this moment.

Therefore, the Programme Chair expects the final schedule to be sent by email by mid of January 2018.

Arrangement of Sessions/Conference Programme

As usual, the Programme Chair will make a suggestion for the whole conference programme based on session schedules provided by the Session Chairs. He will inform the authors about the evaluation results end of January 2018 and also publish the Conference Programme online and in a print version.

In case of any question please do not hesitate to contact the organiser / Programme Chair.