SPLC 2014
18th International Software Product Line Conference
Florence - Italy, September 15-19, 2014

Call for Contributions: Doctoral Symposium

The SPLC Doctoral Symposium aims to provide a supportive environment that enables doctoral students to get feedback on and improve their research. Students will have the opportunity to discuss their work with experienced members of the community. Thus, the symposium offers a unique opportunity to gather valuable expert feedback and to get into contact with other students in the same field. The overall aim of the symposium is to improve the quality of doctoral theses in the area of software product lines. The event is dedicated to Ph.D. candidates (2nd year or later) with initial results that are not yet mature enough for a full conference paper. The SPLC doctoral symposium covers the same research topics as the main conference.

Part I: Research Plan

To participate, students should prepare a research plan answering the following questions:

What is the problem you intend to investigate?

Why is the work important?

How are you going to do the work?

When — what has already been done and what remains to be done?
In detail, the following structure and content is strongly recommended:

Front matter
Title, your name, email address, personal website, abstract

Introduction and Motivation
Introduction (area of study); description of the problem (that you tackle); what the literature says about this problem (where does existing work fail?); how you (plan to) tackle this problem; how you (plan to) implement your solution/envisioned result; how you (plan to) validate your solution

Research Issues, Objectives, and Questions (and Hypotheses)
The main research issues/objectives/questions/hypotheses clearly stated.

Research Methodology and Research Design
The research method(s) you are using or plan to use, with appropriate references.
The research design: how you concretely plan to apply the method(s), e.g., data collection and analysis, set-up for measurements/experiments, case studies, etc.
How do you plan to evaluate your results? Threats to validity?

Preliminary key results or contributions
Outline/Overview of the proposed solution, results of preliminary data analysis, etc.
An example to explain how the solution would work (this is very important!)
What is expected to be the main result or contribution?

Work plan
Outline of the structure of your thesis
Work accomplished so far and work remaining to be done
Publication plan and other tasks planned
A detailed work plan for the next 6-12 months.

Key references
The idea of the research plan is to provide clear material to be useful as a basis for guidance and discussion. Therefore, students should think about the above points carefully and try to make their ideas as concrete and clear as possible. Students at relatively early stages of their research will certainly have difficulty addressing some of these, but should still attempt to do the best they can. It is strongly recommended that students discuss these points with their supervisors!

Part II: Letter of Recommendation

Ask your supervisor/advisor for a letter of recommendation. It should include your name and an assessment of the current status of your thesis research and an expected date for thesis submission.

Doctoral Symposium Chair
Dave Clarke, Uppsala University, Sweden and KU Leuven, Belgium

Panel/Reviewers
Ina Schaefer, TU Braunschweig, Germany
Rick Rabiser, JKU Linz, Austria
Klaus Schmid, U Hildesheim, Germany
Maurice ter Beek, ISTI–CNR, Pisa, Italy

Submissions
Submissions should include a research plan (8 pages max. in ACM SIGS proceedings format http://www.acm.org/sigs/publications/proceedings-templates, tighter style) and a letter of recommendation. All submissions must be in English, in PDF format, and must not contain or cite proprietary or confidential material. The research plan should be submitted via EasyChair at https://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=splc14 (select Doctoral Symposium as submission type). The letter of recommendation should be sent by email to dave.clarke⟨at⟩it.uu.se.

Important Dates

Submission Deadline	June 13, 2014
Notification of acceptance	June 27, 2014
Final version	July 11, 2014
Doctoral symposium	September, 2014

Review and Evaluation Criteria
Submissions will be evaluated by at least two reviewers according to relevance, originality and feasibility of the described research. See also the points on the right sketching out the suggested content of the research plan. We recommend to discuss the submission, the letter of recommendation, and the travel with your supervisor early on.

Format
The symposium will be held in conjunction with SPLC 2014. Each participant gets the chance to present his/her work (full presentation or short presentation) and will get feedback from the panellists and the audience. In particular, the presenters will be provided with an opportunity for direct discussions with the reviewers. Students are recommended to prepare particular points they want to get feedback on and/or want to discuss.