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.