

ECSA rulebook

V1.1 (accepted by the SC on 19/12/2024)

Meta-Rules (for the SC)

- The list of rules is formed by the Steering Committee (SC) and is meant as boundary conditions for the ECSA OC to operate and ensure sustainability of quality from one edition to the next, as well as support for the OC.
- Rules are distinguished as:
 - Mandatory (M): The OC can deviate only after the agreement from the SC.
 - Strongly recommended (S): The OC can deviate but still needs to justify their decision to the SC.
 - Optional (O): The OC can deviate without required justification.
- The rules can be decided upon by the SC. Edits must be in Suggesting Mode, until they are accepted by the SC (or its executive board)
- The current version of the rulebook is an editable Google doc. Previous versions are stored in PDF format in the SC Google Drive folder.

General

Hand-over

- The General Chairs of Edition N hand over to the General Chairs of Edition N+1.
 - Credentials to the Social Media accounts: Twitter/X and LinkedIn (M)
 - Contact info and a summary of any prior agreements with the publications publisher (M)
- The Program Chairs of Edition N hand over to the Program Chairs of Edition N+1 a google drive folder containing (M)
 - All operational details that can be reused, such as copies of emails, task lists, etc.
 - A Google sheet with the details of the PC of edition N. These can be used also for Easychair and the web pages. Any remarks about individual PC members (e.g., quality of reviews, timeliness) should be included in that list.
 - Statistics about the number of submissions and acceptance rate per track.

Submission system and website

- The submission system should allow multitrack management. (M)
- Easychair should be used by default, but other submission systems (e.g., HotCRP, EquinOCS) are also acceptable, in consultation with the SC. (S)
- The General Chairs of Edition N provide the General Chairs of Edition N+1 the information recorded in Easychair related to the conference by exporting the configuration, including submission and review forms (under Administration/Configure in the Easychair menu). The General Chairs of Edition N+1 can then import the configuration (under Administration/Configure in the Easychair menu). This facilitates the management of the submission system and guarantees uniformity along the editions. (S)
- The website of ECSA should be hosted on <https://conf.researchr.org/> for the sake of continuity of location, structure and look-and-feel, as well as reusability (M)

Proceedings

- The proceedings of the conference are published as two Springer LNCS volumes (main conference and companion volumes). The grant given by Springer (1k€) can be used to (partially) fund the participation of Early Career Researchers. Note that Springer has a rule on the maximum number of papers *authored by the PC members* that can appear in the proceedings. When inviting PC members inform them in advance that no more than 2 papers are allowed in the proceedings (M)
- The General Chairs of Edition N provide the General Chairs of Edition N+1 the address information of the Springer employees to be contacted. Both volumes should be published before or during the conference. Post-conference proceedings should be avoided as neither authors nor organizers appreciate them. (S)
- The main conference proceedings volume includes: (i) full and short research papers in the main track, and (ii) full and short industrial papers (if included in the CfP). The editors

of the main proceedings volume are: the General chairs, the Program chairs, and the Industrial Chairs. (S)

- The companion volume includes papers from: (i) the workshops, and (ii) all the other tracks. The editors of this volume are the Proceedings Chairs, the General chairs, the Workshop chairs, and the chairs of other tracks whose papers are published in the companion volume (e.g., tools and demos). The Proceedings Chairs are the lead editors of the volume. (S)
- General Chairs and Program chairs are not allowed to submit papers to any track of the conference including the co-located workshops. Their students are allowed to submit, but in those cases, the respective General Chair/Program Chair will be “blinded” to the submission of their students in the submission system and their co-chair will take over the decision (M)
- Track chairs and Workshop organizers are not allowed to submit papers to their tracks or workshops. (M)

Scheduling

- The following schedule applies to research papers and industrial papers (all categories), and can be adapted according to each year’s calendar. Potential deadline extensions can be taken into account. (S)
 1. Abstract submission: 4 months + 3 weeks before D-Day
 2. Paper submission: 4 months + 2 weeks before D-Day
 3. Reviews due: 3 months + 3 weeks before D-Day
 4. Acceptance notifications: 3 months + 2 weeks before D-Day
 5. Camera-ready: 3 months before D-Day
 6. Proceedings sent to Publisher: 7 weeks before D-Day
 7. Conference dates: D-Day (Wed-Fri of a week in September)
- The following schedule applies to workshops and workshop papers. (S)
 1. Workshop proposal: 7 months before D-Day
 2. Workshop proposal notification: 6 months before D-Day
 3. Workshop papers submission: 3 months before D-Day (approx. 2 weeks later than acceptance notifications of research papers, to allow some rejected papers to be revised and resubmitted as workshop papers)
 4. Reviews due: 2 months + 2 weeks before D-Day
 5. Workshop papers notification: 2 months + 2 weeks before D-Day
 6. Camera-ready copy: 2 month + 1 week before D-Day
 7. Proceedings sent to Publisher: 7 weeks before D-Day
 8. Workshops: D-Day (Mon-Tue of a week in September)
- The submission deadlines for papers and conferences should not conflict with submission deadlines of related conferences. (S)

Community Growth and Early Career Researchers

- Ensure that early career researchers comprise at least 10% of the PC (M)
- Implement a Junior PC in a lightweight manner: each paper is reviewed by both regular and junior PC; one of the regular PC members mentors the junior PC members for that paper on how to formulate their feedback and what to focus on. Whether reviews come from regular or junior PC is transparent to authors. Two junior PC co-chairs will manage the Junior PC and keep track of well-performing Junior PC to be nominated for regular PC in following years (S)
- Invite members from other related communities (e.g., requirements engineering, MSR, product lines, model-driven engineering) to the PC (O)
- Send an open invitation to anyone interested for self-nomination to both the OC and the PC and also ask OC and PC for nominations (M)
- Consider co-locating ECSA with other Software Architecture-related conferences (e.g., SEAA and ACM SAC SAT-TA), software engineering fields (e.g., requirements engineering, modeling), related communities (e.g., IoT, services, systems engineering conferences), domain-specific conferences (e.g., ICT4S on sustainability), or industrial software architecture conferences (e.g., GSAS23 or ISAQB) (O)

Industry

- Have at least one industrial keynote (S)
- Ensure that the types of papers accepted for the Industry Track are *clearly different* to what is submitted to the Research Track (M)
- Have a best industry collaboration award for the best paper that includes at least one industry author (O)
- Include an-industry sponsored poster session, potentially including free participation for sponsors and local industry (O)
- Include industrial micro-sessions for cutting-edge topics (O)
- Implement other ideas from <https://www.computer.org/conferences/organize-a-conference/organizer-resources/engaging-industry> (O)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Include diversity issues as an explicit topic in the conference calls (M)
- Include at least 30% of diverse members in terms of gender and geography (i.e., outside Europe and North America) on the OC and PC (M)
- Limit the number of members in the OC and PC to 5% per country, except when justified (e.g., local organization) (S)
- Use a double-anonymous review process to improve equity, including in the guidelines for the review process a statement such as “PC members will avoid any attempt to uncover authors’ identity to avoid bias of the review process”. (S)

- Collect information to check actual diversity levels of authors, PC, OC (S)
- Facilitate the participation of researchers from developing countries, e.g., through reduced fees (S)
- Create a channel to facilitate the interaction between the SC and the community members regarding e.g., the submission process, evaluation, PC composition (O)

Open Science

- Introduce the “Best Artifact Award” in the CfP of the research track, for the best open artifact of a research paper (S)
- Invite the authors of accepted papers to upload their artifacts to the ECSA Collection on Zenodo (this collection contains approved ECSA artifacts) (M)
- Assign badges to papers that include open artifacts (S)
- Organize a ROSE-like festival (e.g., during a coffee break or together with the tool demos session) for papers that have open artifacts (O)

Quality

- Provide review guidelines (e.g. slides) and use them to train the PC (M)
- Invite potential authors more proactively, e.g., “scout” other conferences for authors that have published papers related to software architecture and invite them individually (O)
- Refine the PC each year according to quality criteria, such as (S):
 - a. Ensure PC members are active, i.e., have at least one publication at ECSA/ICSA conferences in the last 5 years (any track!)
 - b. Achieve good expertise coverage according to the main theme of the conference
 - c. Include some SC members in the PC but rotate them across years to make space for early career researchers
 - d. Avoid overlap between the PC members of the main research track with that of the industrial track
- Consider introducing a rebuttal phase for borderline papers (O)
- Edit a special issue for ECSA papers in a journal (e.g., JSS) (M)
- Have a Best Paper award (M)
- Have a Best Artifact award (“Best paper with an open artifact”) (S)
- Have a Most Influential Paper award (S)
- Have an Outstanding Reviewer award (M)
- Have a separate research sub-track for secondary and tertiary studies, and allocate expert PC members to review those submissions (O)
- Organize a mentoring program for PhD students (O)

Sustainability

- Include a carbon calculator as part of the registration procedure; the calculated carbon footprint and the place of origin of each delegate should be anonymously collected for trend analysis. (M)
- Aim at zero-carbon conference editions. This may entail initiatives in at least the following focus areas: venue selection (S), transportation (O), food and catering (S), conference material (S), digital communication (S), community participation ranging from in-person, blended, and hybrid (S), and community engagement (to counterbalance the carbon footprint) (S)
- Have two sustainability co-chairs (each serves for 2 years and they overlap for one year) transferring their experience over to the next year and the next co-chair (S)
- Have a Sustainability webpage containing all sustainability actions being endorsed, and not, by the corresponding conference edition (e.g., see <https://conf.researchr.org/attending/ict4s-2023/sustainability>) (M)