

International Conference on Program Comprehension (ICPC)

Guidelines for Program Committee Selection and Composition

Version 1.1, adopted January 2006

PREAMBLE

The International Conference for Program Comprehension (ICPC) provides an opportunity for researchers and industry practitioners to present and discuss both the state-of-the-art and the state-of-the-practice in the general area of program comprehension.

Program comprehension is a vital software engineering and maintenance activity. It is necessary to facilitate reuse, inspection, maintenance, reverse engineering, reengineering, migration, and extension of existing software systems.

ICPC was formerly known as the International Workshop on Program Comprehension (IWPC). The change of name was approved by the IEEE Technical Committee on Software Engineering at its May 2005 meeting in St. Louis, Missouri.

This document outlines the guidelines for selection and composition of ICPC program committees, originally adopted by the ICPC Steering Committee in August 2005.

1. RESPONSIBILITY FOR FORMATION

The composition of a Program Committee is the most important factor in determining the quality of a conference and of the accepted papers. The Program Committee helps define the long-term perception and broader impacts of the event. For this reason the Steering Committee (SC) has adopted a set of guidelines and recommendations for use by Program Chairs in assembling the Program Committee (PC).

The Steering Committee, in conjunction with the General Chair, delegate the entire responsibility for formation of the Program Committee to the Program Chairs. However, the SC reserves the right to ask for changes in Program Committee composition in cases where these guidelines are wholly or wantonly ignored.

2. COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Program Committee members must be well qualified to judge the technical soundness, contribution to the field, and novelty with respect to related work of the submitted manuscripts. Additionally PC members need to be familiar with the ICPC/IWPC venue

and with the review process from the point of view of an author. Continuity in the PC is required to ensure that the goals of the conference continue to be met. Likewise, it is important that new researchers be included to help guarantee the success of future events.

Thus, it is recommended that Program Chairs take into consideration the following guidelines when selecting PC members:

1. PC members should have an active and documented role in the field of program comprehension during the preceding five years. New PC members should normally have published a paper and participated in ICPC/IWPC at some time.
2. Program Chairs must ensure that the PC includes members whose areas of expertise sufficiently cover the topics of the projected submissions.
3. Normally PC members should not serve for more than four or five consecutive years. At least a one year reprieve is recommended until they serve again.
4. Each year, between 10% and 30% of the membership should be new with respect to the previous PC.
5. Program Chairs are not obliged to retain, for historical reasons, committee members who have not fully participated in the process of preparing high-quality reviews.
6. To help ensure the success of future events, the Program Chairs and General Chair associated with next year's event should be on the PC.
7. Given the desire to project ICPC as an international and inclusive venue, Program Chairs should make every effort to achieve diversity on the PC with respect to gender, geographic distribution, experience and school of thought.

3. MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

The quality of reviews is central to author's perception of the conference and to the conference's subsequent prestige. This in turn affects the conference's ability to attract high quality submissions and to have long-term broader impact. Therefore, Program Chairs should make every effort to invite individuals who are expected, and agree, to abide by the following conditions before agreeing to serve on the PC:

1. PC members are solely responsible for their reviews. Although it is acceptable to obtain co-reviewers, such as students or colleagues, who may provide relevant additional expertise and opinion – the PC member is ultimately responsible for the review, and must be prepared to personally argue for-or-against the merits of the submission.
2. PC members must play an active role in helping authors improve their submissions. Reviews should contain sufficient detail to support their conclusions and offer constructive advice for improvement.

3. PC members must agree to complete their reviews in a timely manner (i.e., by the specified due date) and be available for further discussion and clarification during final accept/reject deliberations.
4. PC members should also make all possible efforts to participate in and attend the conference itself.

Program Chairs should include these conditions prominently in the invitation sent to prospective PC members, stating that acceptance of the invitation implies agreement.

4. COMMITTEE SIZE

The size of the program committee should be based on the submission figures of recent events. Each submission requires a minimum of three reviews. It is recommended that each PC member review a minimum of six and a maximum of ten submissions in order to get a complete picture of the overall quality and diversity of submissions while keeping workload at a reasonable level. So for example, an event with 100 projected submissions typically would require a PC with 30 to 40 members, each member reviewing between seven and ten submissions.

17. GLOSSARY

- **Program Committee (PC):** Program Chair(s) and program committee members, who are members of the ICPC community chosen by the current Program Chair(s) to serve as primary referees in the current Conference
- **Program Chair(s):** Chair(s) of the current ICPC program committee selected by the Steering Committee according to the Steering Committee Charter
- **Steering Committee (SC):** ICPC Steering Committee, elected by the ICPC community according to the Steering Committee Charter
- **ICPC:** International Conference on Program Comprehension
- **IWPC:** International Workshop on Program Comprehension (former name)