
Computer Science Workshops

*Blurring the distinction between
conferences and workshops,
and duplicate-submission policies.*

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Journals and Conferences

- In the beginning, there were archival journals.
- Then conferences became important in computer science.
- The community had to work hard to make the case that conference publications should carry (at least) as much weight as journal publications for promotion and tenure.
- CRA Best Practices Memo - 1999
*Evaluating Computer Scientists and Engineers
For Promotion and Tenure*
 - Authored by D. Patterson, L. Snyder, J. Ullman.
 - Widely adopted in academia.

CRA Best Practices Memo - Excerpts

- "... conference publication is preferred in the field ..."
- "Publication in the prestige conferences is inferior to the prestige journals only in having significant page limitations and little time to polish the paper. In those dimensions that count most, conferences are superior."
- "Though standard publication is one indicator of academic achievement, other forms of publication, specifically conference publication, and the dissemination of artifacts also transmit ideas. Conference publication is both rigorous and prestigious."

Journals, Conferences, and Workshops

- In the beginning, there were archival journals.
- Then there were conferences and conference proceedings.
- Now, there is a proliferation of workshops with
 - Large program committees (20+ members);
 - Rather short review period (typically, 4-5 weeks);
 - Proceedings published in various venues.
- The CRA Best Practices Memo does **not** mention workshops.
- Many conferences have developed **duplicate-submission policies** concerning papers presented earlier in workshops.

A Snapshot of CS Workshops

- 20 workshop CFPs posted at [dbworld](#) -- June 10-17, 2008
- Each was the n-th edition of the workshop, for $n \leq 3$.
- Length of (regular) papers varied from 4 to 16 pages.
- Workshop proceedings publication venues:
 - IEEE CS Press/Digital Library (indexed by EI): 5
 - ACM Press: 2
 - LNCS: 3
 - Other online venues ([CEUR](#)): 3
 - No explicit information in the CFP: 7

SIGMOD/VLDB Duplicate-Submission Policy

Duplicate submissions are not allowed. A submission is considered to be a duplicate submission if, at any time during the time when the submission is under consideration, there is another paper with the following properties:

1. the paper is more than 4 pages long, when formatted in the VLDB/SIGMOD format.
 2. the paper and the VLDB (SIGMOD) submission have at least one author in common;
 3. the main technical content of the paper substantially overlaps that of the VLDB (SIGMOD) submission; and
 4. the paper is published or under consideration for publication in a refereed journal or proceedings (electronic or printed) that is generally available (e.g., not limited to conference attendees). If the call for papers of the venue in which this paper appeared does not explicitly mention how the proceedings will be disseminated, then it is the responsibility of the authors to find out and confirm whether or not the proceedings are formal.
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What is to be done?

- The community has to take a stand on workshop proceedings.
- The CRA Best Practices Memo has served us well – it should **not** be revised to give workshop proceedings the same status as conference proceedings.
- **A Proposal:**
 - Conferences to adopt a strict duplicate-submission policy.
 - Only papers from workshops with ***informal proceedings*** are eligible for submission to a conference.
- Let workshops be workshops again!