WI 2015
Guidelines and Policies for Reviewing
Osnabrück University

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1. General Information

This document summarizes the reviewing process for the Wirtschaftsinformatik (WI) 2015 conference. It is based on the processes and experience of previous WI conferences (Alt, Franczyk, & Hrach, 2012; Bernstein & Schwabe, 2010) and other international conferences in computer science and information systems\(^1\) (McLean, Watson, & Case, 2014; Myers & Straub, 2014; Te’eni & Avgerou, 2014) as well as established standards in the domain of Information systems (Association for Information Systems, n.d.). The WI 2015 review process involves five parties (see Figure 1):

- **Conference Chairs (CC)**, Prof. Dr. Thomas and Prof. Dr. Teuteberg, are responsible for the organization of the WI 2015 conference. Amongst other things, they develop a list of tracks, recruit Track Chairs and oversee the entire reviewing process. To assure independence, both are not allowed to submit papers to the conference.

- **Track Chairs (TC)** organize one of the twelve scientific WI 2015 tracks. Two full professors draft the Call for Papers (CfP), organize the team of Program Committee members and oversee the review process in their track. They prepare the final decisions on the submissions for the track meeting. A person may only act as a TC in one track. TCs should not submit papers to their own track, but are free to do so in other tracks.

- **Program Committee members (PC)** are members of the academic community (full/assistant/ junior professors, post-docs or practitioners) who are responsible for a limited number of papers in a specific track. PCs recruit reviewers and assure at least three reviews per submission. A person may act as a PC in a maximum of two tracks. Additionally to their obligations in their own track, TCs may serve as a PC in one further track. PCs may submit a maximum of two submissions to the respective track (as determined by submission date and time). Publications in excess of this number will be desk rejected. However, PCs are free to submit any number of papers to all other tracks.

- **Reviewers** who should be at least advanced PhD students. The most relevant issue here is their domain knowledge in the area of the paper and that they provide substantial feedback to the authors.

- **Authors** who submit papers to the conference and need to remain anonymous for the entire process. The only exception applies to the discussion among the track chairs and the PC members in the track meeting. Unless the author does not act as a CC, TC or PC, there is no maximum number of submissions.

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\(^1\) In particular we appreciate the valuable feedback of the members of the Advisory Board, which in part organized the previous conferences MKWI and WI (in alphabetical order): Rainer Alt, Hans-Ulrich Buhl, Thomas Hess, Dimitris Karagiannis, Dennis Kundisch, Markus Nüttgens, Gerhard Schwabe and Elmar Sinz.
Authors of German and English research papers are invited to submit their work to WI 2015. When preparing the submissions the authors need to consider that:

- All submissions must be made via the reviewing system by **August 3rd August 24th 2014 *new***. Papers must not exceed the limit of 15 pages (including title, abstract, references, appendices as well as space for author details and acknowledgments). Longer papers face desk rejection. There will be no exceptions from these rules.
- All submissions must be formatted using a provided MS Word template document based on Lecture Notes in Computer Science (LNCS) (Springer, 2014) proceedings style in A4. Only documents adhering to this template will be accepted. Authors have to ensure that colored figures will later print adequately in black and white.
- All authors will be informed by the TCs on the result of the reviewing process. Authors of conditionally accepted papers will additionally receive a list of well-specified acceptance conditions. All conditionally accepted papers will have to be resubmitted to the responsible PCs who will make a recommendation of acceptance or rejection based on the acceptance conditions. The final decision will be made during the track and conference meetings.
- All accepted papers need to be submitted in a final version as DOC format. Again, the document needs to comply with the provided LNCS formatting guidelines.

2. Review Process

2.1. Overview

Reviewing for WI 2015 is a serious matter. The reviews determine what is accepted for publication and/or presentation; in the long run this has an impact upon people’s professional advancement, careers and upon progress in the field. The review process for WI 2015 follows accepted international standards with the following features:

- **Originality and Plagiarism:** Scholarly integrity is a core value in our discipline. Scholars submitting papers to this conference thereby attest that they have read the AIS Code of Research Conduct (Association for Information Systems, n.d.). All papers submitted to WI 2015 need to contain original work and must not be published in or submitted to other conferences, workshops, book editors or journals before the
official notification deadline of WI 2015. If the paper contains parts of previous work, these need to be referenced and the WI 2015 paper must provide substantial new research aspects. Any hints to plagiarism (Association for Computing Machinery, 2010) need to be reported and will be investigated. Cases of plagiarism will be discussed in the track meeting and the general conference meeting.

- **Double-blind process:** All reviews will be executed double-blind. Therefore, all authors need to anonymize their papers and should avoid self-citation. Authors name(s) and affiliation(s) should not appear in the body of the paper (including the abstract and acknowledgements). Metadata that might reveal the identity of the authors (e.g., file name, file properties) needs to be omitted in the initial submission.

- **Conflicts of interest:** All reviewers, PCs or TCs should immediately declare material conflict of interests as soon as they become aware of it (reviewers to their PC member, PCs to their TCs, and TCs to the CCs). Typical conflicts of interest are if a reviewer and an author
  a. have a personal relationship,
  b. have dependencies through a teacher/student/advisor or an employment relationship,
  c. belong to the same institution,
  d. are currently or have co-authored papers in the past, or
  e. are currently or have collaborated on research projects in the past.

- **Confidentiality:** Individuals serving as reviewers, PCs or TCs gain privileged access to documents in the review process. It is expected that all participants involved in the review process honor the confidentiality of the submitted papers, the other reviewers’ identities and the review process in its entirety.

### 2.2. Desk Reject

After the submission deadline has expired, TCs assess their submitted papers regarding desk rejection (e.g., missing research method, no relevant scientific content, non-compliance with the submission template, exceeding the maximum paper length). Desk rejected papers will not be reviewed, but the authors will be informed about the desk rejection and receive the TCs’ short review. TCs may also suggest papers which do not fit their track to be transferred to another track.

### 2.3. Reviewer Acquisition

For every completed paper the TCs assign one responsible PC member. On average, each PC will receive between three and five submissions (see Figure 1). PCs invite reviewers and assure three reviews per submission. Quality refereeing is essential to ensure the technical credibility of WI 2015. Each manuscript should be stringently reviewed by three qualified people who are actively working in the topics dealt with in the paper. Reviewers should be at least Ph.D. students and be assembled to offer diverse views on relevant topics.
2.4. Reviewing

In total, six weeks are scheduled for the reviewing phase and it is calculated that each reviewer contributes an average of about five reviews. Reviewers are encouraged to plan ample time for their reviews and they are responsible for its quality. For the reviews the following criteria will be implemented in the review system:

- **Overall assessment:**
  2. Strong accept (Paper should be accepted for WI 2015)
  1. Weak accept (Paper needs revisions which are realistic to meet the deadline)
  –1. Weak reject (Paper has potential, but requires major revisions which may be difficult to meet for WI 2015)
  –2. Strong reject (Paper has serious flaws or no merits and should be rejected)

- **Reviewer’s confidence:** 1. expert, 2. high, 3. medium, 4. low, 5. null

- **Originality:** 1. high, 2. good, 3. poor, 4. very poor

- **Technical quality:**
  1. high, 2. good, 3. poor, 4. very poor

- **Presentation and readability:**
  1. high, 2. good, 3. poor, 4. very poor

- **Suitability to foster discussions:**
  1. high, 2. good, 3. poor, 4. very poor

- **Contribution to the field:**
  1. high, 2. good, 3. poor, 4. very poor

- **Comments to the authors:** This mandatory field contains a detailed review on the strengths and weaknesses of the paper. It should justify the scores on a minimum of half a page. The review will be sent to the authors and discussed in the track meeting.

- **Comments to the Editors:** Optional remarks for PC members, which will not be sent to the authors.

- **Best paper candidate:** 1. yes, 2. No

2.5. Rebuttal

After all reviews are collected, the authors are informed of the reviewers’ comments to the authors (cf. 2.4). In response, authors are given a week to write a short rebuttal to the comments. Writing a rebuttal is entirely voluntary. The maximum length of the feedback is a total of 500 words. The purpose is not to argue with reviewers or provide new evidence, rather it creates an opportunity to clarify misunderstandings and point to facts or arguments that may have been overlooked or misread by reviewers. The feedback should help the PC writing the consolidated reviews. PCs will not respond to these feedbacks.

2.6. Consolidated Reviews

PCs write a consolidated review for every paper based upon the three reviews made by the reviewers and the feedback of the author. This contains a recommendation to the TCs whether the paper should be accepted, conditionally accepted, or rejected. If the recommendation is “conditional accept”, the PC provides a comprehensive list of issues that need to be fixed by the authors to get the paper accepted. It is important that only issues are included, for which it is easy and obvious to check, whether they have been successfully solved. Consolidated reviews cannot be delegated to PCs, since they require a certain amount of experience and expertise with the paper as well as its reviews.
2.7. Meetings

There will be two key meetings associated with the WI 2015 review process:

- **Track Meeting:** For each track there will be a Track Meeting. During these meetings the PCs and TCs discuss the papers and generate a final recommendation for the General Conference Meeting. One of the CCs may attend the Track Meeting to ensure quality control across Tracks.

- **General Conference Meeting:** The aim of the General Conference Meeting is to confirm the recommendations of the tracks. Instead of discussing individual papers the focus will be on the overall conference (e.g., acceptance rate) and the evaluation process. All TCs and PCs are invited to participate.

2.8. Notification of Acceptance

After the Track and General Conference Meetings, the reviews as well as the decision whether each respective paper is accepted as-is, conditionally accepted or rejected are sent to the authors by the TCs.

2.9. Conditionally Accepted Papers

Authors of conditionally accepted papers (not papers accepted as-is) will be given roughly three weeks to make adjustments to their papers in accordance to the reviews. Afterwards, the conditionally accepted papers will be screened to verify that all major points of criticism raised in the reviews were addressed. If the authors failed to do so, a paper may still be rejected at this point. To accelerate the process, authors are advised to make the changes transparent by either activating the track changes-mode in Word or marking the changes with yellow highlighting. Authors of papers accepted as-is may skip this step, make changes according to the reviews and directly submit a camera-ready version.

The final notification of acceptance will be issued on December 1st.

2.10. Camera-Ready Submissions

Finally, all accepted papers must be resubmitted in camera-ready form by December 8th. Authors are advised to address criticism raised in the reviews. At this point, authors are asked to de-anonymize their papers.

2.11. Author Registration

It is vital that all accepted papers are presented during the conference in an appropriate manner. Therefore, at least one author of every accepted submission must register for WI 2015 by January 11th 2015 and be prepared to present respective papers in Osnabrück at any time during the conference. Authors who cannot attend at the last minute must appoint someone to hold the presentation in their absence. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in a paper’s withdrawal from the conference proceedings.
2.12. Timeline

PCs, TCs and reviewers have an ethical obligation to complete reviews and review-related actions in a timely fashion. Editors and reviewers should work together to ensure a prompt review cycle. To assure timely processing of the received papers and reviews, the following deadlines and meetings were set.

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*Table 1: Deadlines and Meetings*

3. References


