Preface: REFSQ 2024 Doctoral Symposium

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1. Introduction

REFSQ 2024 will host its renowned Doctoral Symposium (DS) for PhD students whose research relates to the field of Requirements Engineering (RE). The goals of the DS are:

- to provide PhD students with an opportunity to learn about the field and to get an understanding of what their colleagues are working on;
- to provide PhD students with a supportive and safe environment in which to present their plans and results;
- to provide all participating PhD students with feedback from a panel of senior researchers in RE;
- to facilitate interaction between students and established researchers in RE.

2. Submissions and Reviewing

We received one submission, which was peer-reviewed by three members of an international panel of experts. The reviewing process focused on relevance and suitability for the doctoral symposium. The review process led to one accepted contribution.

3. Program

The low submission rate for the event required us to rethink the program to still provide value for the student whose paper was accepted. One option we discussed was inviting the student to present her paper at one of the workshops, running parallel to the doctoral symposium. We decided against that as the paper's topic did not align well with any of the REFSQ'24 workshops.

We decided therefore to have a typical session in which the student presents her paper, followed by an in-depth discussion with the members of the panel. In addition, the student

prepares a poster that allows her to discuss her work with the participants of the conference. Furthermore, the organizers of the doctoral symposium prepare two seminars to which interested doctoral students are invited.

3.1. Session 1: A Model-driven Requirements Engineering Method for Human-centered Digitalisation of Agriculture

The paper, authored by Chiara Mannari, presents a research plan to investigate to what extent Model-driven requirements engineering techniques can support the information exchange within interdisciplinary teams involved in digital transformation processes in agriculture.

3.2. Session 2: Seminar on Personal Task Management in Academia

Researchers and teachers are bombarded with information and tasks. Keeping control of information overload and activities in collaborative, knowledge-intensive work is a cornerstone for work satisfaction, maintaining drive and a healthy work-life balance. This seminar aims to introduce the well-known Getting Things Done (GTD) approach, accompanied by practical examples of how to implement and continue to use the method. The seminar covers the key principles of GTD and presents how they can be integrated into the daily life of a researcher and teacher.

Seminar leader: Michael Unterkalmsteiner

3.3. Session 3: Design Science and Theory Building

For more than a decade, the REFSQ community has been acknowledging the difference between 'method'-focused research (in which methods, techniques, tools – and generally, artefacts, are designed) and evaluation-focused research (in which the fit of proposed artefacts is evaluated in context). Among those researchers developing RE artefacts (i.e. methods/tools/techniques), many have been organizing their research process drawing upon the Design Science Research paradigm. From the perspective of this paradigm, a research project includes three steps: problem analysis, solution design, and solution evaluation. In each of these steps, RE researchers face the choice of using theories. This seminar is about the role of theories and theory-building in research projects that employ Design Science. Participants will learn how the concept of theories could be applied in each of the three steps. Examples will be provided on the application of theories to exploratory research contexts, to RE method design contexts (i.e. design theories), and confirmatory research contexts. Special attention will be paid to validity threats, particularly on the generalizability of results and theories in Design-Science-inspired research.

Seminar leader: Maya Daneva

4. Programme Committee

- Maya Daneva, University of Twente (Doctoral Symposium Chair)
- Michael Unterkalmsteiner, Blekinge Institute of Technology (Doctoral Symposium Chair)
- Jean-Michel Bruel, Université de Toulouse, France (PC Member)

- Ruzanna Chitchyan, University of Bristol (PC Member)
- Fabiano Dalpiaz, Utrecht University (PC Member)
- Henning Femmer, FH Südwestfalen / Qualicen (PC Member)
- Martin Glinz / University of Zurich (PC Member)
- Nelly Condori-Fernandez, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela (PC Member)
- Barbara Paech, Heidelberg University (PC Member)
- Jolita Ralyté, University of Geneva (PC Member)

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