

**The ACM CSCW Conference, the leading international conference on computer-supported cooperative work and social computing, institutes a new reviewing process to improve quality and increase participation.**

For the past 25 years, the ACM CSCW Conference has been the premier venue for presenting research in the design and use of technologies that affect groups, organizations, and communities. Its proceedings series is among the most highly cited and downloaded in the ACM Digital Library.

The 2012 CSCW conference introduced an innovation in the review process that gave authors the opportunity to improve the quality of their submissions significantly, leading to a unique conference-journal hybrid process.

Since 1998 the median (and modal) acceptance rate has been 20% (most 1986-1996 data are missing). CSCW 2012 introduced a true revision cycle. Authors whose work might clear the bar were given five weeks to revise. Revisions were then thoroughly reviewed, yielding 8 reviews for most accepted papers.

Most reviewer and author reports were enthusiastic. Reviewers could focus on constructive advice rather than identifying grounds for rejection or acceptance. Authors whose papers made it to the second round appreciated the exchange and all revised, many extensively. The consensus was that this approach, which most resembles a journal special issue, produced an exceptional conference. Conference attendance almost doubled, exceeding 650, and the energy level was high.

When authors use 5 weeks to improve literature reviews, clarify their frameworks, conduct additional analyses, explore design implications, and in some cases even collect additional data, many more papers become outstanding research contributions. This is a challenge to conferences that use acceptance rate as a signifier of merit. In the past, CSCW usually accepted 20%-25% of submissions 'as is,' requiring no revision. CSCW 2012 rejected 45% in the first round, required the others to revise, and then rejected 27% of the revisions. In the end, 39.5% of the original submissions led to accepted papers. The CSCW 2012 conference survey showed that attendees liked the new process and thought that quality of the program was maintained.

We strongly believe that over time, citation counts and other measures of impact will demonstrate that the review process adopted by CSCW 2012 represents a significant advance. At least one other ACM conference is adopting the process, and others are considering it. CSCW deserves a place high in your set of prized conferences.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Grudin, Microsoft Research

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