

Simulation Interoperability Standards Organization (SISO)

Guide For: Simulation Interoperability Workshop Paper Evaluation and Review and SIWzie Award

SISO-ADM-007-2005

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**Simulation Interoperability Standards Organization
Conference Committee (CC)**

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1 Introduction

SISO focuses on facilitating simulation interoperability and component reuse across the DoD, other government, academia and industry, and seeks to serve the broad Modeling and Simulation (M&S) community by:

- Providing a forum for the interchange of new ideas, concepts, and technology through the bi-annual [Simulation Interoperability Workshops \(SIW\)](#), [the annual Euro SIW](#) and the [Conference on Behavior Representation in Modeling and Simulation](#).
- Educating M&S practitioners and sponsors regarding implementation through tutorials held at the Workshops and through the publication of an on-line technical magazine titled "Simulation Technology"
- Supporting the development of standards, practices, and guides for use in various applications.

The SISO Conference Committee (CC) organizes the SIW. The Workshop consists of a series of forums and special sessions addressing interoperability issues and proposed solutions; tutorials on state-of-the-art methodologies, tools and techniques; and exhibits displaying the latest technological advances.

A number of sub-committees are stood up to organize specific aspects of the SIW: including the Theme Committee which develops the Workshop theme and performs duties related to the plenary session speakers and special sessions related to the Theme.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Guide for Simulation Interoperability Workshop Paper Evaluation and Review and SIWzie Award is to provide a consistent process for the evaluation and selection of abstracts, papers, and SIWzies.

1.2 Scope

This Guide covers the process for soliciting (call for papers), pre-selecting (abstracts), and selecting papers. It also covers the process for evaluation of papers and subsequent nomination for papers to receive a SIWzie award.

1.3 Objectives

The objective of this Guide is to ensure consistent, relevant, and quality papers are presented at SIW, and that the best papers are recognized through a SIWzie award.

1.4 Intended Audience

This Guide is intended for all those who are involved in the evaluation and selection of abstracts and papers for SIW. This includes all forum chairs, Planning Review Panel (PRP) members, and CC members.

1.5 Timelines

The major milestones for SIW are shown in the table below.

Table 1 SIW Major Milestones

Milestone	Weeks to (-) or after (+) SIW
Location Selection	-52
Theme / Theme Committee Selection	-33
Call For Papers	-25
Abstracts due	-18
Papers Due	-10
Preliminary Agenda Posted	-9
Agenda Finalized	-5
Presentations Due	-2
SIW Held	0
Outbriefs Due	+2
SIWzies Selected	+4
Proceedings Published	+6

2 References

	Document Number	Title
1	SISO-ADM-002-2005	SISO Policies and Procedures (P&P)
2	SISO-ADM-???-????	SIW Paper Author's Template

3 Definitions

Definitions for this document are addressed by the list of acronyms and abbreviations in Section 4.

4 Acronyms and Abbreviations

CC	Conference Committee. The element of SISO responsible for developing and presenting Simulation Interoperability Workshops throughout the year.
CPM	Conference Paper Management.
EXCOM	Executive Committee. The element of SISO responsible for policy and control of the CC and the SAC.
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. The IEEE is a professional society that also has an affiliated standards organization that develops international standards in a manner similar to SISO's. IEEE's relationship to SISO includes that the SAC is also a Sponsor of IEEE standards under the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Computer Society Standards Activity Board (IEEE-CS SAB).
P&P	Policies and Procedures (SISO documentation)
PDG	Product Development Group. The SAC-chartered group tasked to develop a standard. This group is composed of its Chair, and a Drafting Group for each standards product. The PDG provides a balanced representation of the community for a product nomination and development.
PRP	Planning Review Panel.
SAC	Standards Activity Committee. The element of SISO responsible for developing the processes, procedures, and guidelines for standards development.
SDO	Standards Development Organization
SG	Study Group
SISO	Simulation Interoperability Standards Organization. SISO is a public, charitable organization (IRS 503(c)) that encourages the development of interoperable simulations through discussion of technology standards. SISO has three elements: the EXCOM, the CC, and the SAC.
SIW	Simulation Interoperability Workshop.

5 Call For Papers

The Call For Papers is published 25 weeks prior to the SIW. The Call for Papers includes the Theme, and the call for papers from each forum, PDG, and SG. Input/review is therefore required from the Theme Chair and the chair of each forum, PDG, and SG. There is a posted schedule of deadlines for abstract submission, initial paper submission, submission of final revisions, and submission of PowerPoint presentations. This is included in the Call for Papers and posted in the ``Important dates`` section of the web page for each SIW.

6 Abstract/Paper Evaluation/Review

6.1 Introduction

The selection of papers for presentation is a two-step process:

- The abstract review step is really intended as a quick check to screen out inappropriate submissions and to give the PRPs an estimate of how many papers they are likely to receive for session planning purposes. When the acceptance/rejection of all abstracts has been completed, notices will be sent to the successful authors and information will be provided to them on the process and timeline for submitting the final paper. At this stage, the forum chair or their delegated PRP member can make contact with the author to suggest improvements to the paper content as described in the abstract.
- The paper review step is when the final decision is made on whether a paper will be rejected, accepted for presentation in one or more forum(s), or selected for publishing only.

The major tasks involved in the evaluation and selection of papers are listed below.

Table 2 Tasks Involved in Paper Selection

Task	Days to (-) SIW
Abstract review	
Abstracts due	-126
Post abstracts on private web page for committee review	-123
Update author notification messages	-123
Abstract Evaluations Due	-120
Committee final approval of abstracts	-116
Form strawman sessions based on accepted abstracts	-111
Notify authors of accept/reject status, tentative sessions	-110
Computation: Days from author notification to papers due	42
Paper review and assignment to sessions	
Full papers due in electronic format (.pdf or .doc)	-68

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Post papers on private web page for committee review	-66
Post preliminary agendas for review	-62
Update author notification messages	-62
Paper Evaluations Due	-60
Committee teleconference or email discussion to approve preliminary agenda	-55
Notify authors of presentation status by session	-53
Solicit initial committee nominations for reading list	-53
Computation: Days from papers due to author notification	15

Note the difference between Evaluators and Reviewers. Evaluators rate and comment on abstracts/papers assigned to their Forums, plus any other abstracts/papers they choose to evaluate. Reviewers (Forum Chairs) can, in addition, approve, select publish only, or reject papers.

6.2 Schedule

The CC will maintain a clear set of deadlines for the process, to include:

- Abstract submission
 - Evaluations complete
 - Reviews (accept/reject decisions) complete
- Paper submission
 - Evaluations complete
 - Reviews (accept/reject decisions) complete

These will be hard deadlines: the Conference Paper Management (CPM) System will not allow the submission of inputs beyond the dates shown above. Any extension of these dates will be only by specific request of a Forum Chair, and extensions will be granted only on a day-for-day basis. This will ensure that the dates shown by the CPM database are always the current, real deadlines for inputs.

If a Forum Chair will not be available during this period to enter Reviews (accept/reject decisions), he or she must designate an alternate PRP member (the Vice Chair or another member) who will be authorized within the database to make timely decisions for the PRP.

6.3 Evaluators/Reviewers

The draft list of evaluators/reviewers is distributed shortly after the Call For Papers is published.

All PRP (and CC) members are ``Evaluators``. Evaluators enter ratings and comments on abstracts/papers assigned to their Forums, plus any other abstracts/papers they choose to evaluate. Assigned abstract numbers are highlighted in RED in the abstract list.

Only Forum Chairs are ``Reviewers``. Reviewers have an extra choice in their menu: ``Approve, Publish only

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or Reject Documents`. This choice should be made only after reading comments and ratings by the various evaluators.

6.4 Conference Paper Management System

A CPM System is set up, linked from the SISO website, after the Call For Papers is published. The abstracts are associated with a particular target forum or forums as identified by the Author. This database enables evaluators to evaluate and comment on all abstracts as a whole, and for Evaluators to vote on abstracts for their own Forum. All abstracts will also be sent out to the Evaluators/Reviewers in an Adobe PDF file for easier off-line review. The Authors of selected abstracts then upload their papers into the system for final review and acceptance.

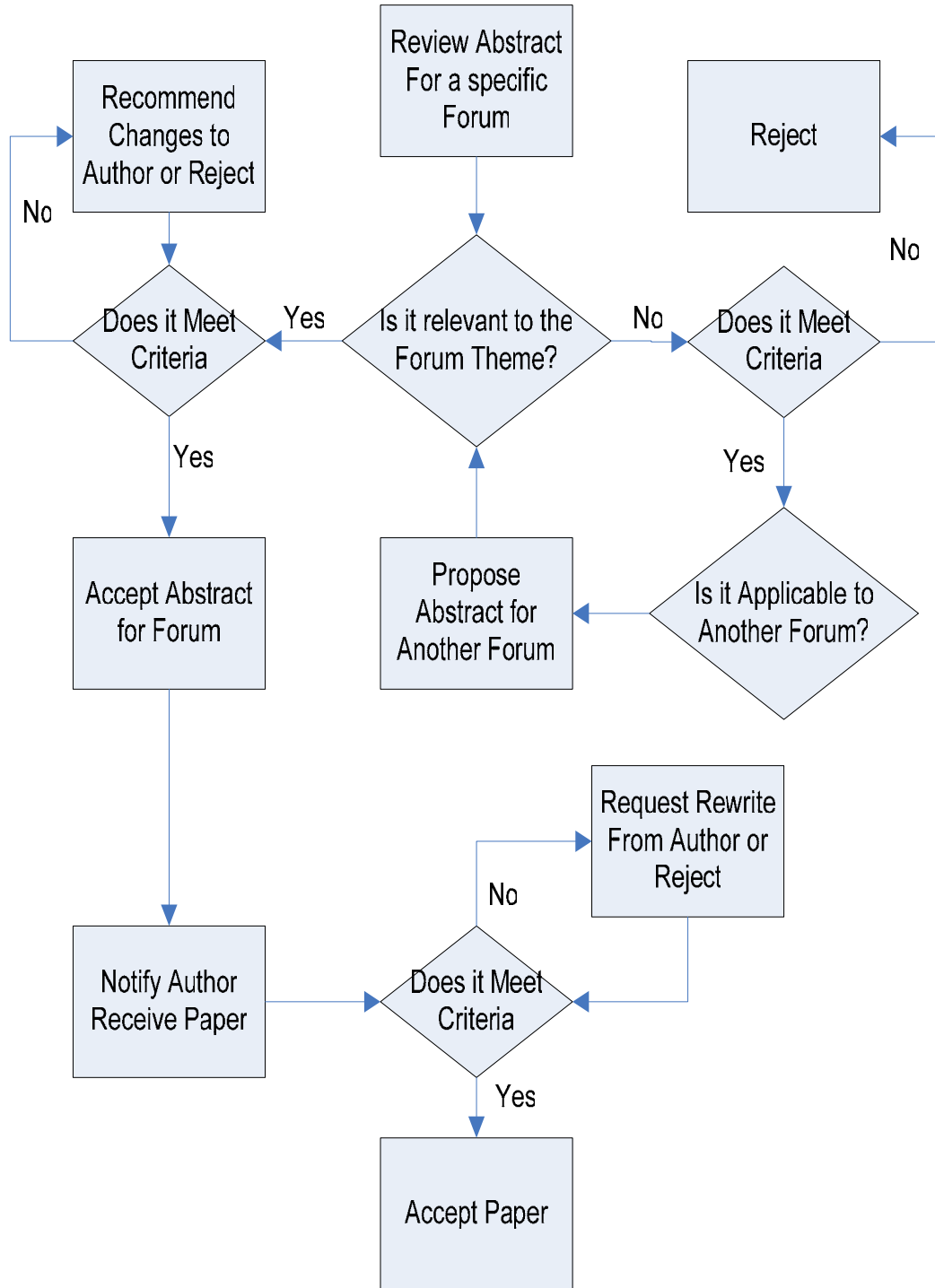
To help explain and de-mystify the CPM system, it is important to remember that it works off a different database from both the reflector subscriptions and SISO membership databases. People can and do change their reflector subscriptions all the time. Often, they intentionally use a different email address from their ``permanent`` SISO membership address. If you go to the ``Reflectors`` page on the SISO web site and click on ``update your email address``, you can globally replace an obsolete email address with a new one for all your subscriptions. However, this will NOT change your main membership email address (used for SISO elections, etc.). To do this, you need to click on the ``SISO membership`` banner in the globe in the upper left corner of the SISO main page, then read and follow the instructions on the SISO Membership page.

The Evaluator/Reviewer database is updated at the beginning of each new workshop cycle. We TRY to synch Evaluator/Reviewer login data with the membership database at this time, but sometimes we miss a change. Once the abstract/paper review process has begun, we generally avoid making further changes to the login data. However, if an address is obsolete and no longer working, we obviously need to make an update. That is why we send messages to the SIW-PRP and SISO-COMMITTEES reflectors asking everyone to let us know if they did not receive their Evaluator/Reviewer login information.

There are database settings that cut-off abstract and paper submissions, PRP evaluations, and Forum Chair accept/reject reviews on specified dates. The cut-off dates may be extended to permit uploading and evaluation of late and/or ``invited`` papers. These do not alter the overall schedule.

6.5 Evaluation Criteria

Figure 1 Paper Evaluation Process



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Two gating criteria should be considered by a PRP member when evaluating an abstract.

First, is the abstract relevant for the particular forum, i.e does it respond to the stated theme for the particular forum; and if so, does it appear to meet the first three sub-criteria defined below. If the answer to both is yes, the abstract should be selected by the Forum Chair for further consideration and the Author will be informed that their abstract has been accepted, and sent the instructions and deadline for submittal of their final paper.

PRP Chairs have the final say on whether a paper is selected or rejected for presentation in their forum. However, to maintain the quality and consistency of papers, a set of formal evaluation criteria has been established to score and help select papers. This same set of evaluation criteria shall also be used for the nomination and selection of papers to be awarded a SIWzie.

The criteria should be used to rank candidate papers and select those to be presented in the available time. Lower ranking, but good, papers may be selected for publication only.

If the Forum Chair feels that a paper has merit but scores low on one or more of the evaluation criteria, they are encouraged to provide feedback to the Author on how the paper can be improved, and request that the paper be resubmitted.

Table 3 Paper Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Max Points
Importance of the topic for simulation interoperability	10
Level of innovation and creativity	5
Applicability for standards development & reuse	10
International focus (applicable to other nations)	5
Recognition of and familiarity with prior work in the subject area	5
Technical quality & accuracy of the work reported	10
Clarity and Readability of the Writing	5
TOTAL	50

6.5.1 Importance of the Topic for Simulation Interoperability

The following questions and points are used in determining a paper's importance for simulation interoperability:

1. Does this topic address areas of interest in M&S and particularly does it address the interoperability of models and simulations?
2. Does this paper have the potential to add to the M&S interoperability Body of Knowledge?
3. Does this paper have relevance to the theme of the upcoming SIW?
4. Is this paper consistent with the vision and mission statement of SISO as described below?
 - SISO is dedicated to the promotion of modeling and simulation interoperability and reuse for the benefit of diverse M&S communities, including developers, procurers, and users, world-wide.
 - SISO's mission is to provide an open forum that promotes the interoperability and reuse of models and simulations through the exchange of ideas, the examination of technologies, and the development of standards.

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POINTS:

- 10 - Significant contribution to simulation interoperability body of knowledge.
- 8 - Contributes to simulation interoperability and on point to current theme.
- 6 - Contributes to simulation interoperability or on point to current theme.
- 4 - Addresses simulation interoperability.
- 2 - Peripheral relevance to simulation interoperability.
- 0 - No relevance to SISO vision and mission.

6.5.2 Level of Innovation and Creativity

The following questions and points are used in determining a paper's level of innovation and creativity:

1. Does the work in this paper solve or propose solutions for difficult simulation interoperability problems in an innovative and creative fashion?
2. Does the paper describe a novel application of interoperability standards to solve a problem outside of core DoD M&S areas?

POINTS:

- 5 - Solves a difficult simulation interoperability problem.
- 4 - Contributes to solution of an interoperability problem.
- 3 - Credible proposal for solving an interoperability problem.
- 2 - Lucid discussion of an interoperability problem and a potential solution.
- 1 - Minor contribution to solution of an interoperability problem.
- 0 - No problem-solving contribution.

6.5.3 Applicability for Standards Development and Reuse

The following questions and points are used in determining a paper's applicability for standards development and reuse:

1. Does this paper have direct relevance to a Product Development Group or Study Group, or have potential to lead to the establishment of a PDG or SG?
2. Does this paper have direct relevance to an existing interoperability standard, or propose development of a new standard?
3. Does this paper describe the application of an existing standard to solve a new interoperability problem?

POINTS:

- 10 - Significant broad contribution to multiple simulation standards.
- 8 - Credible proposal for new standards effort(s).
- 6 - Major contribution to an ongoing standards effort.
- 4 - Minor contribution to an ongoing standards effort.
- 2 - Peripheral interest for standards.
- 0 - No use for standards development.

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6.5.4 Multi-national Focus

The following questions and points are used in determining a paper's international focus:

1. SISO is an international organization that wishes to encourage international participation in SIW.
2. Does this paper describe an international program using interoperability standards?
3. Does this paper describe efforts of foreign governments or organizations in M&S and the development of interoperability standards?
4. Does this paper encourage or describe international cooperation in M&S and in the development of standards?

POINTS:

- 5 - Widespread international interest and applicability.
- 4 - Credibly proposes a new broad international program.
- 3 - Describes a broad international program.
- 2 - Describes or proposes a program of limited international scope.
- 1 - Multinational applicability.
- 0 - Applicable within only one nation.

6.5.5 Recognition of and Familiarity With Prior Work in the Subject Area

The following questions and points are used in determining a paper's recognition of and familiarity with prior work in the subject area:

1. Does this paper show an understanding of and properly reference prior work in this area?
2. Is this paper an expansion on existing prior work in this area, or simply a reiteration?

POINTS:

- 5 - Thorough well referenced review and extends prior work.
- 4 - Thorough well referenced review.
- 3 - References well chosen and discussed.
- 2 - References adequate for paper's purpose.
- 1 - Minimal references to prior work.
- 0 - Ignores prior work.

6.5.6 Technical Quality & Accuracy of the Work Reported

The following questions and points are used in determining a paper's technical quality and accuracy of the work reported:

1. Does the paper describe technically challenging work?
2. Are the contents of the paper technically accurate?

POINTS:

- 10 - Presents a convincing technical breakthrough.
- 8 - Significant, credible and convincing technical content.
- 6 - Presents new and convincing information.
- 4 - Technically accurate.

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2 - Technically questionable.

0 – Technically inaccurate.

6.5.7 Clarity and Readability of the Writing

The following questions and points are used in determining a paper's clarity and readability of the writing:

1. Does the paper follow the SISO Paper Preparation Guide?
2. Does the paper put across its message in a concise, clear, consistent, comprehensive, comprehensible, well laid out, and descriptive manner?
3. Is the paper enjoyable to read?
4. Does the paper make good use of examples, diagrams, and pictures, without the excessive use of jargon and acronyms?
5. Is the paper accessible to readers with different levels of expertise on the paper's topic?

POINTS:

5 - Concise and clear for any simulationist. A joyful read.

4 - Easy reading, well presented.

3 - Comprehensible and conforms to preparation instructions.

2 - Assumes specialized knowledge

1 - Confusing, requires careful study.

0 - Difficult to comprehend.

6.6 Evaluation Process

6.6.1 PRP or CC Member

As an evaluator, enter your comments using the "Conduct My Evaluations" link. All evaluators' comments can be seen by all other evaluators.

6.6.2 Forum Chair

If you are a Forum Chair, you should conduct two separate sessions:

First, as an evaluator, enter your comments using the "Conduct My Evaluations" link. All evaluators' comments can be seen by all the other evaluators.

Later, review the evaluations that have been entered by you and others, using "View Evaluation Results by Paper Number" or "View Evaluation Results by Track/Forum".

Only then should you use the "Approve or Reject Documents" link to enter decisions on behalf of the PRP. In the past, we have had some confusion as a result of Forum Chairs entering evaluations, but not returning to finalize the "Approve/Reject" decisions.

6.6.3 Entering Information for the Correct Forum

In order for the CPM System to properly register your evaluations, you MUST click the FORUM link in the line that says (for example):

Conduct My Evaluations (For ANL, RDE, TRAIN Track/Forums you are assigned to)

Click the link in this line to set the Forum for which your ratings and comments will appear in the evaluation list.

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If you are evaluating papers for more than one Forum, GO BACK to this link as appropriate and click another Forum so that your evaluations will be tracked properly.

In the past, we have had some confusion with evaluators entering comments without making clear which Forum the comments applied.

6.6.4 Detailed Instructions

Detailed instructions for the CPM System can be found in Appendix A.

6.7 Feedback to Authors

We strongly encourage Forum Chairs (or their designees) to contact authors directly with any comments, guidance, etc., the PRP wants to impart regarding changes desired in the final version. Contact information for all authors, including hyperlinks to their email addresses, are included in the abstract file for each paper. Simply tell the authors that your Forum is very interested in presenting their paper, but that you would like to see such-and-such addressed in the final version.

Once Forum Chairs have entered their accept/reject decisions, the CC begins notifying the authors of their paper presentation status. Typically, at least 90% of the papers are resolved at this point. The cut-off dates are then extended to allow us to continue evaluating/reviewing the remaining papers.

6.8 Accepted Papers

It is possible that papers may be accepted by the Forum Chairs for presentation in multiple tracks. Ideally, papers should only be presented once. A joint session should be coordinated if two tracks wish to present the same paper. If this is not possible, the paper may be presented twice. The forum chairs must coordinate amongst themselves to keep the number of presentations for each paper down to a maximum of two. If no mutual decision can be reached, the Conference Committee will decide which track is most appropriate for the paper in question.

7 SIWzies

SIWzies are awarded each SIW to the best papers. Papers are nominated by the various Forum Chairs and are reviewed by the CC.

7.1 Nomination

The Forum Chairs use the SIWzie criteria below to nominate a paper or papers from the session. PRPs will generally be limited to at most one SIWzie nomination; however, a second nomination can be submitted by the Forum Chair if substantive written justification is provided. If no papers meet the criteria, then no papers will be nominated. The intent is to keep the number of nominated papers down to a level (approximately 20) that can be reasonably reviewed by the CC.

The deadline for nomination of SIWzies is the same as the deadline for receipt of outbriefs. No papers will be considered after that date.

7.2 Criteria

The criteria to be used for nominating and selecting SIWzies are the same as those for paper selection shown in Table 3.

7.3 Review & Selection

All CC members are responsible for reviewing the nominated papers.

Nominated papers are put on the SISO website and made accessible to all CC members.

Ideally, a maximum of ten papers will be selected for SIWzie award. However, additional papers may be selected if there is a close grouping at the cut-off point.

7.4 Announcement & Certificates

The list of SIWzies is published on the ADMIN Reflector.

Certificates are handed out during the plenary session of the next SIW.

7.5 Recommended Reading List

Papers nominated for SIWzie award will form the Recommended Reading List.

Appendix A Detailed CPM Systems Instructions

The process is essentially the same for the Abstracts phase and the Papers phase.

- When you enter your email address and password, you will see a screen that is customized for you specifically but looks (more or less) like this:

=====

[Table of Contents](#) | [Logout](#)

Abstracts

- [View All Submitted Abstracts](#) (For all Track/Forums)
- Conduct My Evaluations between 05/01/2005 and 06/03/2005 (For [SNE/SENS](#), [ENVIRONMENT](#), [VWS](#) Track/Forums you are assigned to)
- [View Evaluation Results After Evaluation Period](#) (For Track/Forums you are assigned to)
 - [View Evaluation Results by Question](#) (For Track/Forums you are assigned to)
 - [View Evaluation Results by Abstract Number](#) (For Track/Forums you are assigned to)
 - [View Evaluation Results by Track/Forum](#) (For Track/Forums you are assigned to)
- [View Abstracts That Were Approved](#)

Papers

- [View All Submitted Papers](#) (For all Track/Forums)
- Conduct My Evaluations between 07/10/2005 and 07/20/2005 (For [SNE/SENS](#), [ENVIRONMENT](#), [VWS](#) Track/Forums you are assigned to)
 - [View Evaluation Results by Question](#) (For Track/Forums you are assigned to)
 - [View Evaluation Results by Paper Number](#) (For Track/Forums you are assigned to)
 - [View Evaluation Results by Track/Forum](#) (For Track/Forums you are assigned to)
- [View Papers That Were Approved](#)

=====

The entries under ``Abstracts`` allow you to go back and look at comments that were entered during that phase -- but you cannot change any information retroactively once the Abstract phase is complete.

The most useful way to view comments entered during the abstract phase is to select ``View Evaluation Results by Abstract Number`` or ``View Evaluation Results by Track/Forum`` and then click on the notebook icon to the right of the abstract you are interested in. This will show you all ratings and comments for that abstract in one display instead of having to read one individual's comments at a time.

Now let's look at the ``Papers`` section line by line:

``View All Submitted Papers (For all Track/Forums)``

This link allows you to read any abstract or download any paper, regardless of whether or not the abstract was accepted for your Forum.

``Conduct My Evaluations``

Here's where you click one of the Forum names to enter your evaluations for that Forum.

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You will see a complete list of all papers. The papers for which the abstracts were approved for your (currently selected) Forum will be highlighted in red. Click any paper title to see the abstract, to download the paper (by clicking the file name below the abstract), and to enter your ratings and comments (in the frame on the right side of the screen).

Please evaluate all of the papers that are highlighted in red. You may also enter an evaluation of any other paper you think is relevant to your Forum.

To enter evaluations for another Forum you are assigned to, go back to the table of contents and select a different Forum name from your list of Forums.

``Approve or Reject Documents``

This choice will be seen only by Forum Chairs. It leads the Forum Chair to a screen for entering final accept/reject decisions. Forum Chairs should not enter these decisions until the Evaluators have entered their evaluations and the Forum Chair has reviewed them. The Forum Chair should enter his/her own evaluations using the ``Conduct My Evaluations`` screen (see above).

``View Evaluation Results by Question``

This screen shows all evaluations for papers targeted to all Forums for which you are an evaluator, without indicating which Forum they were being evaluated for, so this may not be a very useful screen. However, it does let you see all evaluations and comments in one place.

``View Evaluation Results by Paper Number``

This shows all evaluations by all evaluators for papers targeted to all Forums for which you are an evaluator. The fraction link to the right of each paper (e.g., 6/18) shows how many of the assigned evaluators have entered evaluations for that paper. By clicking on this link, you can see each one. Clicking the notebook icon shows a consolidated list of all evaluations and comments for that paper.

``View Evaluation Results by Track/Forum``

This is an alternate way to move between lists of papers for the Forums for which you are an evaluator. Using this screen avoids the need to go back to the Table of Contents to indicate which Forum you wish to view.

NOTE: These three ``View`` screens are all ``read only``. To enter evaluations, you must select a Forum under the ``Conduct My Evaluations`` link.

``View Papers That Were Approved``

Papers will appear on this screen only after the Forum Chair has made an accept/reject decision AND this decision has been confirmed by the administrator (me). This confirmation step is a safety measure; once a paper has been confirmed as accepted, it moves on to the next phase of the CPM system (the Presentations phase). It is tricky (but not impossible) to ``unaccept`` a paper - hence the extra step of administrator confirmation.

NOTE: If your browser becomes unresponsive during the review process, check to see whether you have left any pop-up windows open. If so, close all pop-up windows other than the one corresponding to the paper you are currently evaluating.