Charter of the International Working Conference on

Requirements Engineering: Foundation for Software Quality

1. SCIENTIFIC MATTERS

1.1 Goals

The goals of REFSQ are to advance Requirements Engineering (RE) knowledge:

- by providing a forum for researchers and practitioners to expose their work to the RE community
- through active and open discussions that are stimulated by high-quality paper presentations
- by publishing of proceedings in a readily-accessible form by a recognised publisher of computer science

1.2 Name

The full name of the conference series is:

International Working Conference on Requirements Engineering: Foundation for Software Quality

The conference abbreviation is *REFSQ*. Every REFSQ instance is abbreviated as *REFSQ <year, 4 digits>*, for example in REFSQ 2013.

REFSQ instances do not have special, major themes as part of the title of the conference, but the Program Chairs can emphasize one or more specific areas of interest in the text of the call for papers.

1.3 Timing & Location

REFSQ takes place annually in the period March-April at a location within Europe.

1.4 Audience & Format

The audience of REFSQ includes researchers, practitioners, educators and students in Requirements Engineering.

The format of the Working Conference is explicitly designed to stimulate open discussion. Time allocated to the presentation of papers is at least balanced by time for discussion. Formally-assigned roles such as **discussant** and **session chair** are key elements of the REFSQ **scientific programme**.

Research papers, experience reports and technology and knowledge transfer papers shall be elicited from academy, industry and public administration for presentation in the scientific programme. A separate industry programme will comprise invited talks of interest to industry and public administration.

1.5 Success criteria

Criteria for success of a REFSQ instance include:

1. Quality and quantity of submissions;

2. Appropriate programme, including maintenance of REFSQ's normal balance of presentations and discussions;

3. Appropriate mix of researchers and practitioners among the attendees;

4. Appropriate mix of students and faculty among the researcher attendees;

5. Appropriate mix of attendee nationalities;

6. Financial viability.

1.6 Composition of Program Committee

A REFSQ instance Program Committee shall be composed of representatives from academia, industry, and public administration with recognized expertise in the broad area of RE. REFSQ aims to renew approximately 1/3 of the Program Committee members from one instance to the next one.

1.7 Assessment of submissions

All paper submissions, except specially elicited keynote and invited industry programme presentations, will be peer-reviewed by at least 3 members of the Program Committee. Conflict of interest rules as stated in ANNEX B, shall be followed during the assignment and review process.

A physical Program Committee meeting is held to select the submissions to be presented at the coming REFSQ instance. The Program Committee meeting is chaired by the Program Chairs. All members of the Program Committee are invited to attend the Program Committee meeting.

The Program Chairs are not allowed to submit to the REFSQ instance that they are chairing. Members from the same institution as the Program Chairs are allowed to submit as long as conflict of interest rules are respected. For each workshop associated with REFSQ, the workshop organizing team should include at least one program chair who does not submit any paper to the workshop.

2. GOVERNANCE

REFSQ is governed by the **Steering Committee** (SC). The SC delegates program responsibilities to the **Program Chairs** of each REFSQ instance, who work in coordination with the **Industry Program Chairs** for the industry program. The SC delegates local arrangements to the **Local Organisation**. The SC delegates financial and organizational responsibilities to the **Background Organisation**. The Local and Background Organisations may be the same or separate organisations.

2.1 Steering Committee (SC) composition

Mission:
The SC is responsible for ensuring REFSQ's long-term health, by setting strategy, selecting locations, appointing organizers, maintaining oversight of financial and operational matters, ensuring that REFSQ retains its scientific rigour and characteristic features and by securing organizational memory through continuity of experience.

Composition:

1. Program Chairs become members of the SC upon their appointment, and will remain members until 4 years after the REFSQ instance for which they are responsible.

2. The Head of the Background Organization becomes a member of the SC upon his/her appointment, and will remain member until 2 years after the last instance of REFSQ for which he/she is responsible.

3. Two members of the SC are elected as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, by a vote of the SC members. The SC Chair and SC Vice-Chair serve for 3 years. The SC chair will remain as SC member until the maximum of: one year after the end of his/her chair mandate AND the regular appointment period.

4. The SC can appoint additional members as considered necessary.

5. The SC can vote to terminate an inactive member's membership.

6. The REFSQ SC can include two Industry Representatives. The mandate will be for 3 years. The Industry Representatives are proposed by the SC chairs, and elected by a majority vote at a SC meeting. Industry Representatives should have demonstrated a dedication to REFSQ and commit to attend the conference and one SC meeting per year during their mandate.

Meetings:

Two physical SC meetings are held annually; one at the IEEE International Requirements Engineering Conference and one at REFSQ itself. Additional ad-hoc virtual meetings and electronic discussions may take place as needed throughout the year. SC members are expected to engage fully in SC discussions and to attend all meetings of the SC. Reasonable constraints on SC members' ability to travel are recognised, but attendance of one meeting per year is the minimum that is acceptable.

2.2 Voting Procedures

Voting can take place at physical meetings and electronically. At physical meetings voting is eligible if at least 50% of the SC members are present. An electronic voting result is eligible if the response rate is at least 50%. All decisions based on votes, except special decisions as defined in this charter, requires single majority of at least 50% of the participating votes. Special decisions require qualified majority of at least 2/3 of all SC members. If the voting result is a tie, then the chair's vote determines the result.

Special decision requiring explicit voting and qualified majority:
- The decision to stop the REFSQ series.
- Major changes to the governance section of the REFSQ charter.

2.3 REFSQ instance roles

1. The Programme Chairs are two RE experts responsible for appointing the programme committee; eliciting and selecting submissions; managing the review and selection of submissions, including chairing of the Program Committee meeting; defining the REFSQ scientific programme; approving the industry programme; and for chairing the working conference and for editing the proceedings;

2. The Industry Programme Chair(s) is responsible for establishing and maintaining relations with industry; eliciting presentations for the industry programme. If considered convenient, this role may also be occupied by more than one person.

3. The Background Organization is responsible for financial management; sponsorship; maintaining relationships with the publisher of the proceedings; maintenance of the REFSQ website; collecting, analysing and archiving REFSQ data; and archiving of REFSQ material.

4. The Local Organization is responsible for negotiating a favourable venue at the selected location and for designing the social programme.

2.4 REFSQ instance process

1. The SC appoints Program Chairs who take full responsibility of the scientific part of the corresponding REFSQ instance. The appointment of the Program Chairs should be two instances of REFSQ in advance, i.e. the invitation of the Program Chairs for REFSQ n should be finalized in an SC meeting at REFSQ n-2 at the latest. The SC-Chair and Vice-Chair collect suggestions for candidates prior to that SC meeting.

2. The Industry Programme Chair(s) is proposed by the Programme Chairs and appointed by the SC Chairs.

3. The Program Chairs appoint the other REFSQ chairs and the Program Committee. Nominationsshould be completed as soon as possible, especially in the case of Industry Chairs, and no later than 6 months after the Program Chairs' appointment.

4. The SC appoints the Head of the Background Organization at the same moment that the allocation of REFSQ is decided.

2.5 Background Organization Appointment & Finance

Appointment:

The SC appoints the Background Organization for a fixed number of instances of REFSQ. Hence, if the Background Organization has been appointed until REFSQ n, the decision of whether to extend the

Background Organization's appointment by one or more years should be made at the SC meeting at REFSQ n-2 at the latest. The SC appoints the Local Organization.

Financial Aspects:

If the Local and Background Organization are the same, then registrations and payments are handled by the Background Organization which also takes the financial risk and receives the surplus if there is any. The registration fee is approved by the SC chairs. The organization(s) running REFSQ provide(s) an intermediate financial report to the SC at the conference itself and a final report 6 month after the conference.

If the Local Organisation is separate from the Background Organisation, then the Background Organisation and the Local Organization have to agree on financial aspects concerning the risk and the potential surplus before submitting a proposal to the SC Chair and Vice-Chair.

REFSQ aims to fund the activities of the Background and Local Organizations from registrations.

2.6 Location decision

The SC Chairs solicit bids for future REFSQ locations, including local and/or background organizations. The SC Chairs present the elicited proposal(s) to the SC. The decision is made by an explicit vote by the SC.

The REFSQ location decision should be at least two instances of REFSQ in advance in order to allow fixing the contracts with hotels etc. Consequently, the SC must take a decision about the location of REFSQ n and n+1, at the SC meeting at REFSQ n-2 at the latest.

3. Organizational Memory

To help maintain REFSQ's organizational memory and continuity across REFSQ instances, the Program Chairs, the SC Chairs and the Background Organization are responsible for collecting and archiving at least the following:

Data:

1. Submission and acceptance data (Program Chairs)

2. Attendee names, contact details and affiliations (Background Organisation);

3. Programme committee names, contact details and affiliations (Program Chairs);

4. Sponsor details (Background Organisation);

5. Financial data (Background Organisation);

Other Material:

1. Accepted papers and presentations (Program Chairs);

2. REFSQ web pages (Background Organisation);

3. Calls for papers (Program Chairs);

4. Calls for participation (Background Organisation).

ANNEX A: Current state of the REFSQ conference

This annex is updated as changes occur.

1. Current Background and Local Organization

The current Background Organization as well as Local Organization is Paluno at Univ. Duisburg-Essen in Essen, Germany.

2. Current Proceedings Editor

REFSQ proceedings are currently edited by Springer Verlag in the LNCS series.

3. Current SC membership

Expiration takes effect on the SC Meeting at REFSQ at the below stated expiry year.

Chairs:

Björn Regnell (Program Chair 2012 and SC Chair 2013-2017, expires 2017)

Kurt Schneider (Program Chair 2015 and SC Vice-Chair 2016-2020, expires 2020)

Members:

Maya Daneva (Program Chair 2016, expires 2020)

Oscar Pastor (Program Chair 2016, expires 2020)

Samuel Fricker (Program Chair 2015, expires 2019)

Paul Grünbacher (Program Chair 2017, expires 2021)

Anna Perini (Program Chair 2017, expires 2021)

Eric Knauss (Head of Local Organization 2016, expires 2018)

Richard Berntsson Svensson (Head of Local Organization 2016, expires 2018)

Rainer Grau (Industry Representative, expires 2018)

Camille Salinesi (Program Chair 2014, expires 2018)

Inge van de Weerd (Program Chair 2014, expires 2018)

Jörg Dörr (Program Chair 2013, expires 2017)

Andreas L. Opdahl (Program Chair 2013, expires 2017)

Klaus Pohl (Head of Background Organization 2010-2016, expires 2017)

Daniela Damian (Program Chair 2012, expires 2016)

ANNEX B: Rules of conflict of interest

- A reviewer is considered to have a conflict of interest on a paper that has an author or co-author in any of the following categories:

  a) yourself,

  b) your past and current graduate students,

  c) your graduate advisors,

  d) members of your research group within the last 5 years,

  e) a co-author of a paper submitted for publication within the last 5 years,

  f) an employee of the same organization (academic department, research lab unit, etc.) within the last 5 years,

  g) someone with whom you have had a significant funding or financial relationship within the last 5 years,

  h) a member of your family or anyone you consider a close personal friend, or

  i) someone whose work you cannot evaluate objectively.

- Reviewers are not allowed to see the reviews of papers on which they have conflicts.

- Conference submissions under review and discussions by the Program Board and Program Committee are considered to be confidential.

- The Program Chairs will be able to view all reviews for all papers, but an alternate chair is assigned for any papers on which both chairs have a conflict of interest. For those papers, the alternate chair will select the reviewers and will chair the discussion at the Program Board meeting in the Program Chairs' absence.