

The conference culture

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Conferences

Computer science started the culture of "conference publications".

- ▶ This has become the norm in theoretical computer science (TCS) and areas in other disciplines that intersect with TCS.
- ▶ Typically 10 page submissions.
- ▶ An international programme committee (PC) gets 2 to 3 reviews for each submission within 4 to 5 weeks.
- ▶ PC discussion for about a week, and then selection.
- ▶ Authors get a month to revise and prepare final version.
- ▶ Published proceedings available at the time of the conference.

Rationale

Are conferences **fast** counterparts of journals ?

- ▶ Is there any difference between "conference publications" and journal articles ? Should there be any ?
- ▶ Rejection ratio and prestige.
- ▶ PC discussion, and lack of consultation with authors.
- ▶ Conference culture in the new century.
- ▶ Workshops, conferences, colloquia, symposia ...

Process problems

Many problems with the process, largely accepted by the community.

- ▶ The biggest problem: bias and cliques.
- ▶ Conflicts of interest, ethical dilemmas.
- ▶ Grounds for rejection, tone of reviews.
- ▶ Authors' reactions, and resubmissions.

Opportunities

Despite the problems, conferences are a source of opportunity for young researchers.

- ▶ Listen to inspiring invited talks.
- ▶ Network with other researchers, perhaps interested in very similar problems.
- ▶ Selection boosts confidence, interaction based on respect.
- ▶ Quality of presentation entirely overshadows all else, gets people to read your work.