

## Live Studies at REFSQ 2018

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The REFSQ conference has a tradition of a special plenary session for conducting a “*live study*” involving the conference attendees on a voluntary basis. Historically, a live study has been a (controlled) experiment relevant to requirements engineering. An “*online survey*” has also been conducted during the conference days.

For REFSQ 2018, we included a new item -- the possibility of conducting a “*focus group*” study where qualitative research in requirements engineering is carried out by interviewing a group of people about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes on the subject matter of interest. A live study, conducted in a 90-minute session, engages all the conference attendees participating in the study during the session.

The study authors will introduce their study to the participants and conduct the study according to the proposed plan. Preliminary results of their study will be shared with the participants within the allotted session. Summary results or observations will be shared with the conference attendees in a plenary session before the end of the conference.

We received three quality live study proposals of which we accepted two:

- “*Empirical Validation of a Software Requirements Specification Checklist*”, authored by Martin de Laat and Maya Daneva.
- “*Understanding the Soft Skills that Industry Wants from Requirements Engineers: a Focus Group Study*”, authored by Maya Daneva, Chong Wang, Andrea Herrmann, and Nelly Condori-Fernandez.

Three independent reviewers reviewed each of the submitted study proposals. Following this, a sub-committee prioritised the proposals based on various factors and two proposals were selected for conduct at the conference.

### Acknowledgements

I am particularly grateful to the REFSQ 2018’s Programme Co-Chairs: Erik Kamsties and Jennifer Horkoff, for including “Live Studies” in the overall REFSQ 2018 programme. Secondly, they were bold in their support for the idea of including “Focus Group Study” for the first time at REFSQ. This attracted two focus group study proposal submissions of which we accepted one. Of course, there would be no programme without authors. To design a suitable empirical study requires a careful consideration of numerous issues such as: domain issues, research questions, study design

and approach, subject issues, threats, study execution, generalisability of results, and data templates. We recognise this as arduous work, and thus we express to all the authors our sincere appreciation for all the submissions we received. A crucially important element in setting up this programme is the reviewing process. We thank all the members of the Programme Committee for Live Studies for their generous time and expertise in helping to form this programme of quality. Finally, we are much indebted to all the volunteer participants in the two studies. It is their insight into the subject matter that empowers the study authors to form conclusions on their investigative questions. Collectively, we thank all the aforementioned for their part in contributing to the empirical body of knowledge. Let the studies begin!

### **Live Study Programme Committee**

Nazim Madhavji (Chair) – University of Western Ontario, Canada

Dan Berry – University of Waterloo, Canada

Maya Daneva - University of Twente, Netherlands

Xavier Franch, Polytechnic University of Catalonia, Spain

Erik Knauss, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Andriy Miranskyy, Ryerson University, Canada

Krzysztof Wnuk, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden