Checklist: Tasks and Responsibilities PC Chair

By Michaela Greiler

1. **Select qualified PC members to invite**
   For your selection you can use the PC members of the previous years as a basis, but you should add a high enough number of new PC member with the right expertise. Aim at a balanced PC in respect of gender, location (Us, Asia, Africa, Europe..), junior and senior people etc.
2. **Send PC for approval**
   Send this list to the general chairs for approval followed by sending it to the steering committee for approval. Make modifications if needed.
3. **Schedule all major deadlines.**
   1. Deadline for submission (abstract and paper)
   2. Deadline for review and discussion phase
      Remember that some reviewers may be late. So plan a little bit of buffer time.
   3. Deadline for camera-ready version
   4. Deadline (internal) for sending to publisher
4. **Send invitation to PC**
   Search for email addresses of PC members and invite them to the PC. Mention already in the email the workload to expect as well as the deadlines.
5. **Send PC invitation reminder**
   After a while send a reminder to invited PC members who have not responded, and extend the invitation to further PC candidates if not enough accept.
6. **Find keynote speaker**
   This might be optional, but if asked brainstorm about fitting keynote speakers, make a list and discuss the keynote speakers with general chair et al.
7. **Select and invite keynote speaker**
   Have a backup speaker in case the invited cannot attend.
8. **Prepare a Call for Paper (CFP)**
   The one of the previous years can serve as a draft. Here is the SCAM 2016 CFP for example
9. **Announce conference**
   Work with publicity chair to make conference public. You might want to send an email to SEWORLD and also advertise the conference on other conferences. Use personal network. Twitter and/or blog about it.
10. **Prepare/configure submission system**
    Configure for example EasyChair in the desired way.
11. **Watch submissions coming in**
    Are people in need for a deadline extension? Do you want to grant this? If so, communicate this on website and to authors that have already submitted.
12. **Close submission website**
13. **Send bidding email**
    Send an email to the PC that explains them how to bid on papers. Don't forget to include/calculate a minimum number of papers that the PC member should bid on.
14. **Perform desk rejections**
    This might apply to too long submissions, or if only an abstract has been submitted. Also, some papers might not fit the topic or are sheer unreadable/of too low quality.

15. **Assign papers**
    Assign papers to the PC members, while being aware of conflicts of interest. EasyChair can help with a first draft assignment which then can be reworked.
16. **Send assignment email**
    Send email with the list of assigned papers to each PC member.
17. **Split papers, in case of two PC chairs**
    This is optional. First understand the conflict of interests, and then you might split the papers among the PC chairs. For example, odd versus even numbers, except for conflicts. Then, each PC chair leads the discussion for the papers assigned. Obviously, PC chairs can discuss papers with each other, but this will help to give some accountability.
18. **Send review reminder**
    Send a reminder to the PC members about their missing reviews. Close to the deadline you might want to send a second one – only to those that still have missing reviews (EasyChair can help with this).
19. **Email discussion start**
    Let PC know that discussion phase has begun.
20. **Moderate the discussion phase**
    During the discussion phase the PC chairs act as moderators. You will have to trigger discussions, and guide the reviewers to hopefully come to an agreement on the decision of the paper. A good way to start the discussion is to look at the positive elements of a work.
21. **Make decisions**
    First tentative, ask for feedback, then final.
22. **Handle disagreement**
    For a few papers, the reviewers might not come to an agreement, or you also might disagree with the reviewers' assessment. Such cases are a bit tricky, because you must decide whether this paper will be accepted or rejected. In such situations, when I felt torn apart, an advice I got from a mentor of mine helped me. He said: "Remember that the community trusted in your abilities to make the right decision. That's why they asked you to serve as program chair. So, take the feedback of the reviewers seriously, but also do not forget that the final decision is the decision of the program chair(s)."
23. **Send thank you email**
    Send the PC a thank you email to appreciate their hard work.
24. **Send email decision**
    Send an email to authors informing them about the decision, and in case of an acceptance about the next steps needed for the camera-ready version.
25. **Letter of PC Chair(s)**
    Write a letter for the front of the proceedings.
26. **Create program**
    Decide on presentation format (e.g., 20 min presentation, 10 min discussion, 3 presentation per session) and group papers with similar topics together. Incorporate needs of steering committee for meetings and time slots.
27. **Accepted papers to proceedings**
    Send list of accepted papers and the letter of the PC chairs for proceeding creation.
28. **Select the Best Paper**
    Ask PC for feedback and incorporate this into the decision.
29. **Select Best Reviewer**
    Optional: To show gratitude for the work PC member do, it is nice to also select a few PC members that did outstanding work.

30. **Select and invite session chairs**
    Keep the needed expertise of the session chairs in mind, and make sure they will attend the conference
31. **Create and print the awards**
32. **Opening slides**
    Prepare the slides that are used during the opening session. These might contain some information on number of submissions, acceptance rate.
33. **Select papers for journal extension**
34. **Invite authors to journal extension**
35. **Find reviewers for invited papers**
    Think about the reviewers' expertise. An option is to add a reviewer who already reviewed the paper before.