2018 will be an important year for the BPM conference. For the first time since its foundation in 2003, the conference will run a track system. By organizing the paper submission and reviewing process in tracks, we intend to broaden the scope of the conference.

This broadening reflects the interdisciplinary nature of business process management, where theoretical foundations of processes are addressed, methodological and engineering aspects are researched and management concepts and human aspects are investigated. By employing different reviewing criteria in the tracks, the goal is to provide more specific feedback to the authors. Track descriptions and the persons behind the tracks are presented in this newsletter. In an interview, track chair Jan vom Brocke highlights the rationale behind the management track.

For a reality check, we have conducted a survey on submission patterns to our conference in January and February 2018. As will be discussed later in this newsletter, the results of this survey show the dedication of the BPM community, but they also expose some challenges. We discuss whether these can be addressed by introducing tracks to the conference. While we received lots of positive feedback on our plans, the success of the conference will depend on you, the BPM community.

So, send your best papers to the conference, plan your trip to Sydney, combine your stay with a mini-sabbatical in one of our great partner universities, and continue to be an important part of the BPM Community!

Best regards,

Mathias Weske
WELCOME TO BPM 2018 — WELCOME TO SYDNEY!

BPM 2018 is the 16th conference in a series of conferences that provide the leading global forum for researchers and practitioners in all aspects of Business Process Management (BPM). BPM 2018 is organized by the Service Oriented Computing Research Group in the School of Computer Science and Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, UNSW Sydney in collaboration with research groups in the areas of Service Oriented Computing (SOC) and BPM at Macquarie University, University of Wollongong, University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and the University of Sydney. UTS will provide its outstanding and beautifully designed venues to host the events of this year’s edition.

The previous BPM edition held in Barcelona, Spain attracted more than 280 attendees from all over the world. This year’s edition will be held in the City of Sydney, Australia’s leading global city and the destination of choice for international corporations, business leaders, tourists and students. It provides headquarters for almost 40% of the top 500 Australian corporations. Digital, financial and creative businesses are all thriving in Sydney, a destination internationally recognised for its outstanding environmental performance and cultural events, and as a future-focused and innovative business centre.

In addition to its vibrant and dynamic business and cultural environment, Sydney is a university hub that hosts world-class universities such as The University of New South Wales, Macquarie University, University of Technology Sydney and University of Sydney. This hub of universities also has a strong representation in the so-called Group of Eight (Go8), a coalition of world-leading and research intensive universities of Australia, which include among others the Australian National University, University of Melbourne and University of Queensland.

Sydney: Home to one of the most beautiful harbours in the world. Established in 1842, Sydney is the most populous city in Australia and Oceania. The city has been consistently ranked over the years as one of the most liveable cities in the world, along with other Australian cities like Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth (these last three ranked among the top-ten) according The Economist Intelligence Unit. Each year, Sydney attracts millions of international and domestic visitors thanks to its captivating scenery and vibrant musical, theatrical, visual and plenty of other artistic and entertainment events.

The city also features an outstanding combination of urban modernity and nature, with beautiful beaches and zoos, including Bondi Beach and Taronga Zoo, located just minutes away from the Central Business District (CBD).

Read more about the city of Sydney at http://www.sydney.com.

Welcome to Sydney, welcome to BPM 2018!

Organisation Team (Boualem Benatallah, Jian Yang, Carlos Rodriguez and Amin Beheshti)
A MESSAGE BY THE PC CHAIRS

The deadline for submitting research papers to BPM 2018 — March 12th — is approaching quickly. The colleagues on the pictures serve as senior program committee members of Track I, Track II, and Track III, respectively. They will play an instrumental role during the paper reviewing process. They will work hard to conduct the reviewing process based on high-quality and fair scientific standards.

**Track I: Foundations**

Track I invites papers that follow computer science research methods. This includes papers that investigate the underlying principles of BPM systems, computational theories, algorithms, and methods for modeling and analyzing business processes.

Papers in Track I are evaluated according to computer science standards, including sound formalization, convincing argumentation, and, where applicable, proof of concept implementation, which shows that the concepts can be implemented as described. Since papers typically do not have an immediate application in concrete business environments, empirical evaluation does not play a major role in Track I.

You should send your paper to Track I if:

- It provides foundational results about the underlying principles and concepts of BPM systems.
- It advances the state of the art in BPM through the investigation of formal methods and algorithms.
- It contributes to the definition of novel concepts, languages, and architectures for BPM systems.
- It tackles conceptual modeling issues of BPM systems and their environment.
- It investigates novel concepts of BPM systems through the development of proof-of-concept implementations.

**Track II: Engineering**

The focus is on the investigation of artifacts and systems in business environments, following the design science approach. Papers in this track are expected to have a strong empirical evaluation that critically tests criteria like usefulness or added value of the proposed artifact. This track covers business process intelligence, including process mining techniques, and the use of process models for enactment, model-driven
engineering, as well as interaction with services and deployment architectures like the Cloud. It also covers BPM systems in particular domains, such as digital health, smart mobility, or Internet of Things.

Empirical evaluations are important to show the merits of the artifact introduced. A self-critical discussion of threats to validity is expected. Formalization of problems and solutions should be used where they add clarity or are beneficial in other ways.

You should send your paper to Track II if:

- It has a significant technical contribution.
- Its results are empirically evaluated.
- It reports on a system that you designed, with a maturity of at least a prototype, i.e., it can be evaluated in an application context.
- It follows the design science approach.

**Track III: Management**

Papers that aim at advancing our understanding of how BPM can deliver business value, for instance how it builds organizational capabilities to improve, innovate or transform the respective business. Papers that study the application and impact of BPM methods and tools in use contexts based on empirical observation are highly welcome.

Areas of interest include a wide range of capability areas that are relevant for BPM, such as strategic alignment, governance, methods, information technology, and human aspects including people and culture. We seek contributions that advance our understanding on how organizations can develop such capabilities in order to achieve specific objectives in given organizational contexts. Papers may use various strategies of inquiry, including case study research, action research, focus group research, big data analytics research, neuroscience research, econometric research, literature review research, survey research or design science research. Papers will be evaluated according to management and information systems standards.

You should send your paper to Track III if:

- It makes a contribution to an organizational challenge.
- It builds on and draws from real-world organizational endeavors in BPM.
- It extends the BPM body of knowledge to better contribute to strategy delivery.
- It advances our understanding and methodology of BPM to support digital innovation.
- It contributes to solving grand societal challenges through BPM.

University of Technology Sydney will host BPM 2018
WORKSHOPS AT BPM 2018

Let me tell you a curiousness about the workshops co-located with the BPM conference series: most of us know that the conference typically hosts an impressive set of workshops that provide authors with additional opportunities to disseminate and discuss their research, especially early results and work-in-progress papers. Well, if you didn’t, now you do. But did you know that the proceedings of the co-located workshops together print from 2 up to 3 times the number of papers that are published in the proceedings of the main conference? Yes, it’s true, the proceedings of the BPM workshops actually provide a much more complete picture of the BPM community than those of the main conference! I’m sure you don’t want to miss out on the opportunity to take part of this community. In line with this premise, the 2018 workshop program of BPM offers a menu that provides a selection of topics and opportunities able to stimulate the taste of all of you (see the side-box for the details and workshop websites). We are proud to host again some of the traditional workshops organized in conjunction with the conference, such as BPI (at its 14th edition!), BPMs2 (11th edition), DeHiMoP (6th edition) and REBPM (5th edition). The three workshops respectively focus on business process intelligence, social and human aspects in business process management, and requirements engineering. But there is also a significant number of new workshops.


14th International Workshop on Business Process Intelligence (BPI) organized by Boudewijn van Dongen, Jan Claes, Jochen De Weerdt and Andrea Burattin – https://www.win.tue.nl/bpi/

6th Declarative/Decision/Hybrid Mining and Modelling for Business Processes (DeHiMoP) organized by Claudio Di Cicco, Jan Vankhieren, Tijl Schaus, Dennis Schunckelaar and Soren Debois – https://ai.wu.ac.at/dehimp2018/

11th Workshop on Social and Human Aspects of Business Process Management (BPMs2) organized by Rainer Schmidt and Selmin Nurcan – www.bpm2.org/


5th International Workshop on Interrelations between Requirements Engineering and Business Process Management (REBPM) organized by Banu Aysoyalmaz, Rüdiger Weißbach, Onur Demiroz and Fedir Rabhi – https://www.rebpm.org/events/bpm2018/


International Workshop on Artificial Intelligence for Business Process Management (A4BPM) organized by Richard Hull, Riccardo De Maselli, Krzysztof Kluzo, Fabrizio Maria Maggi and Chiara Di Francescomarino – https://ai4bpm.unibz.it

[4 workshops host their first edition this year] and workshops that are at their 2nd or 3rd edition. While these latter provide room for topics like the Internet of Things [BP-Meet-IoT], process querying [PQ], and data quality in business processes [QD-PA], the workshops organized for the first time inject a set of topics that are partly new to the community: fog/edge/cloud/crowd computing (CCBPM); data science for healthcare (PODS4H); multi-level modeling (MLPM); and artificial intelligence and cognitive computing (A4BPM).

Typical workshop paper submissions are up to 12 pages long in Springer’s LNCS format, but be sure to check out the workshops’ calls for papers for possible workshop-specific requirements and/or length restrictions. Note that the proceedings of the workshops are so-called post-workshop proceedings, that is, proceedings that are published only after the workshops. This formula allows everyone to add valuable feedback they get during the workshop to the final versions of their papers and to enhance quality. So, don’t miss the chance to meet your community!

Florian Daniel
(on behalf of the BPM 2018 Workshop chairs)
BPM SUBMISSION PATTERNS SURVEY

To learn more about paper submission patterns at the BPM conference, the BPM Steering Committee has conducted a survey involving the BPM community in January and February 2018.

In a first round, we invited the program committee members of BPM 2017 to respond to the survey. By their responses we intended to get an inside view about BPM submission patterns and also about the reviewing process at BPM. The program committee members are the most respected experts in the field and no academic conference can be successful, if PC members do not submit to it. All paper submissions are input to the peer reviewing process that academic research and scientific progress is based on.

While submissions by PC members are essential, fresh and novel ideas in core BPM and in related fields also come from the broader BPM community. To also get feedback from that community, in a second round we invited all members of the BPM mailing list to respond as well. It is not a sharp distinction because many of the colleagues who served on the program committee of BPM conferences in recent years are also on that mailing list. This is because about one third of the program committee is exchanged every year.

In the first round, we invited 123 PC members, and we received 71 answers; in the second round the feedback ratio was much lower: of the 1443 requests we sent out, we got 98 responses. Basically all participants answered the complete survey, which contained six questions. Average answering time was less than two minutes.

Before we come to the main results of the survey, I want to share an observation, which is related to the day on which the survey was answered. Many colleagues answered immediately on the day the invitation was sent—and received. In the diagram above we can also see that a reminder that I sent on February 5th resulted in a significant number of additional responses.

Since we were interested in submission patterns, we asked about the concrete number of papers submitted to BPM 2017. More than half of the PC members submitted papers to the conference, almost one out of five sent even more than two papers. This is a decent ratio and shows the identification of the program committee members with our conference. At the same time, there is room for improvement, since almost half of the PC members did not submit a paper, as shown in the diagram below.

The submission behavior reported by the broader BPM community is amazingly similar to that of the PC members. The only significant difference relates to the submission of more than two papers and, affected by this, the higher number of colleagues, who did not submit a paper. This result might be explained by the lower response rate of the community, with the tendency that only those colleagues have answered, who have particularly strong ties to the BPM conference.

The role of the BPM conference for survey participants was addressed in the second question. The results show the important role that the conference plays. Almost two thirds of the PC members stress the importance of BPM, and
the ratio is only a bit smaller for the broader BPM community. It is very positive to see that the wide majority of the BPM community finds the conference so important that they actually submit papers to BPM, almost 94 percent!

The reviewing process is probably the most crucial aspect in the organization of a scientific conference. Therefore, we asked about the satisfaction with the reviewing process at BPM. While all of us are sometimes disappointed with specific reviews we receive, the results are quite positive indeed. Only six percent of the PC members are disappointed or very disappointed with the reviewing process. We might have expected such a low value, because, after all the PC members play a crucial role during reviewing. However, the results of the broader BPM community is seven percent, very similar indeed!

The next question asks for more detailed feedback about the reviewing process. The main result of this question relates to the paper acceptance requirements. Almost one in two colleagues of the BPM community says that these requirements are too high, and that BPM tends to ask for “journal papers”. The corresponding value of the PC members are only slightly lower. In discussions we heard that some colleagues were complaining about their research being marked as out-of-scope during the reviewing process. But the survey shows that only one in ten states this problem, both for the PC members and for the community.

We also asked for specific topics that were regarded being out of scope. Among the few topics being mentioned, management and other business aspects was the most prominent one, followed by engineering aspects.

To summarize, in general the survey results shows a healthy and committed BPM community; most colleagues submit regularly to the conference and for most colleagues BPM is an important conference. But we also see potential for improvement, related to paper evaluation criteria and to the scope of the conference.

The new track structure, in which there are separate evaluation criteria and separate reviewing processes for submissions in the areas of foundations, engineering, and management, respectively, might be a step towards reducing these problems. Since each track has different evaluation criteria, each track has a specific evaluation focus. As a result, BPM will—hopefully—no longer ask for “journal papers”. While rather few out-of-scope rejects have been reported, the focus of the conference has been regarded as rather narrow; the track system might also be a step towards broadening. And it will hopefully encourage additional authors to send their best papers to BPM.

Finally, we asked about the plans to submit a paper to BPM 2018. More than one in two PC members plans to submit a paper, and also one in three colleagues from the BPM community will do so. That’s excellent news, we are looking forward to receiving your papers!

Mathias Weske (thanks to Luise Pufahl for setting up the survey)
In the field of information systems, a basket of journals has been defined, the "AIS Senior Scholars’ Basket of Journals", a list of eight top journals that is supposed to guide tenure and promotion cases; you will find them at https://aisnet.org/?SeniorScholarBasket. According to this list, the top information-systems journals are (in alphabetical order): European Journal of Information Systems, Information Systems Journal, Information Systems Research, Journal of the AIS, Journal of Management Information Systems, Journal of Strategic Information Systems, and MIS Quarterly. The AIS conference-paper policy applies to all of these journals—three of which are also part of the Financial Times ranking of top business journals.

How does this affect our conference and how does the track system help here?

The new track addresses researchers who have not yet been engaged with the conference, researchers with distinct backgrounds and expertise who can advance BPM research from an organizational viewpoint. Therefore, the new track is not taking away from other tracks but supposed to bring new perspectives and fresh ideas into the BPM community. As we expect submissions from researchers with different backgrounds, the review process will be organized in a way that takes into ac-
count diverse research cultures. Several experienced researchers, with both management and technical expertise, are part of the program committee.

Following the AIS policy, we have further organized a Special Issue on “Business Process Management and Digital Innovation” in the European Journal of Information Systems (EJIS), one of the information-systems basket journals. (EJIS is ranked A* in ABDC, ranked 3 in ABS, ranked A in VHB, and has an ISI impact factor of 2.819.) The best papers submitted to the management track will be recommended for submission and fast-track publication in the EJIS’ Special Issue. As EJIS is one of our top journals, this not only provides an attractive opportunity for BPM researchers but is also a great leap for the whole BPM field.

BPM is a very competitive conference, and only excellent papers have the chance of being accepted. Do you think the management track can attract the highest quality papers? After all, in some sense we are competing with the basket journals.

I agree, this is one of the biggest challenges in organizing conferences. However, as the management track is affiliated with a special issue that will be published by one of the basket journals, this is more of a collaboration than a competition. Still, for many management researchers, the BPM conference is an unknown venue. They may not be familiar with the conference, or they may think the conference’s scope is too technical. Therefore, the major challenge, I think, is to call management (and information systems) researchers’ attention to the conference. We have a great program committee whose members help to promote the track and the conference, and we have received highly appreciative feedback so far. Still, we need to be realistic—it will take some time to make the conference a home for management researchers. Therefore, we highly appreciate all help we can get, so please consider this a call for support in spreading the word and contributing.

With the track system, we invite different sub-communities, but we also separate them in tracks. Can you think of methods in the conference organization that lead to exchange of ideas between the sub-communities?

It is the intent of the conference organizers and all colleagues involved to account for the interdisciplinary nature of BPM and to foster exchange between colleagues from different disciplines. The conference program includes keynotes, panels, and several social occasions where researchers from various disciplines can meet, so the venue will provide enough room for the exchange of thoughts and ideas across disciplines. As we all know, a conference is far more than the composition of its tracks; it creates a unique environment that researchers will use for networking, knowledge exchange, and idea generation. Sydney will provide a beautiful and inspiring setting for this.

Thanks, Jan, and all best for your track and for our conference!

(Mathias Weske)

COMBINE YOUR TRIP WITH A MINI-SABBATICAL

BPM 2018 organizers have initiated a program for Mini-Sabbaticals. The program is offered as an opportunity to extend your stay in Australia in order to build your research contacts network, collaborate, and potentially also arrange future sabbatical visits.

The extended BPM community in Australia is large and offers a diverse set of strengths, often supported by world-class facilities and large groups of staff and students. The duration of the visit is up to you and so are the activities you wish to undertake such as guest presentations, working with PhD students, developing joint papers etc.

There is no financial support for the mini-sabbatical program. An invitation letter can be provided for visa or approval purposes. A number of universities are contributing to this initiative, as shown by the logos. Further details including contact information can be found at bpm2018.web.cse.unsw.edu.au/mini_sabbaticals.html.

All of these institutions are excited about welcoming you to Australia. If you are interested in collaborating with any of the researchers at these universities then please reach out to them directly; more information can be found at bpm2018.sabbaticals@cse.unsw.edu.au.
to create "higher level" process models (e.g., various classes of Petri nets, BPMN, or UML activity diagrams). Process mining makes it possible to analyze event data, thereby focusing on behavior rather than correlations and simplistic performance indicators. For example, event logs can be used to automatically learn end-to-end process models based on recorded event data. Next to the automated discovery of the real underlying process, there are process mining techniques to analyze bottlenecks, to uncover hidden inefficiencies, to check compliance, to explain deviations, to predict performance, and to guide users towards "better" processes.

Region theory makes it possible to synthesize a process model from a behavioral description. Applying the theory of regions guarantees the behavioral description and the language of the synthesized model to be equivalent. In recent years, various forms of region-based ideas (language-based and state-based variants) have been applied in the context of process mining. Here, there is only example behavior and classical techniques need to be improved. Hence, there are many theoretical challenges with a high practical relevance. ATAED 2017 solicits papers related to process mining and region theory. However, the scope is not limited to this. The program committee invites submission of full papers (up to 15 pages) and of short papers (up to 5 pages). Selected paper will be invited for a special issue of the ToPNoC journal. The deadline for submission is April 6th.

Wil van der Aalst

CONTRIBUTE TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE ON BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT AND INNOVATION

Contribute to special issue on Business Process Management and Digital Innovation to be published in European Journal of Information Systems

One traditional focus of BPM research is the role of information technology in enacting, managing and innovating business processes. This focus has led to the rise of workflow management systems, BPM suites, process mining technology and other key technological innovations.

This special issue will explore how digital technology and innovation enables, constrains, transforms or otherwise upends the design, enactment, management, and analysis of operational business processes. We will also look at how technology, techniques and theory from the management of business processes can assist an understanding of innovation and change processes. Recent innovations in process organization studies and routine dynamics also provide a rich set of ideas for theorizing processual phenomena from the ground up.

What can I contribute? We envisage (but in no way limit) attention to at least four broad themes:

- The nature of business process management in the digital age: how do digital innovations transform business process management methods, tools, systems, architectures, skill set, capabilities, organizational culture?
- New digitally enabled management and innovation forms for business processes: how does digitalization affect business processes on an individual, process, organization or ecosystem level?
- Methodological and empirical opportunities of studying business processes in the digital age: what affordances does the digital age provide for collecting, analyzing and theorizing about and with process trace data?
- Digital technologies, platforms and ecosystems for business process management: How do digital technologies change certainty, boundaries, relationality or specificity of business processes?

Important dates
- Initial Submission: 01 Oct 2018
- First round feedback: 10 Jan 2019
- Revised papers due: 31 Mar 2019
- Second round: 30 Jun 2019
- Final revision due: 31 Aug 2019
- Publication: End 2019

Details: https://tinyurl.com/ejis-bpm

Jan Mendling
EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNITY

The second edition of the popular textbook *Fundamentals of BPM* by Dumas, La Rosa, Mendling & Reijers is now available. In addition to numerous refinements, the new edition includes two new chapters, several substantially extended chapters, and a total of 230 exercises. Major enhancements include a thorough coverage of the process redesign orbit, a holistic approach to BPM as an enterprise capability, an overview of recent standards like DMN and CMMN, and an updated introduction to process monitoring methods covering recent advances in process mining. For more information, check: http://tiny.cc/fbpm2

The “Events Meet Processes” workshop is a cross-disciplinary event to gather the Event Processing (EP) and the Business Process Management (BPM) communities together. Due to the increasing overlap of application scenarios between the two types of systems, we seek to identify opportunities for ground-breaking research and impact in the industry by integrating the two technologies together. This workshop is a follow-up to the successful Dagstuhl Seminar held in 2016 (see report [1]).

Topics of interest include unified models for events and processes, the interactions of event streams with process models, the use of event processing kernels to execute BPM workflows, the use of complex events to materialize context-aware process execution, and the structured integration of BPM and EP technologies with compliance requirements.

The first edition of the workshop was co-located with DEBS, PLDI, and ECOOP 2017 in Barcelona, Spain. The program consisted of a series of exciting talks by researchers of both communities. The talks engaged the audience in the application of integrated EP-BPM platforms in the context of popular topics such as fraud detection (machine learning), sensor networks, blockchains, and IoT. More details about last year’s edition can be found here [2].

This year, the second edition of the “Events Meet Processes” will be co-located with DEBS 2018 in Hamilton, New Zealand. If you are interested in participating, please send a short abstract to the organizers. More details can be found here [3].


The BPM Guidelines document describes in detail the procedures and entities involved in the organization of BPM conferences. It can be found at the Steering Committee page. As this is an evolving document, we are looking forward to your feedback on these guidelines.