

# 20th International Symposium on Empirical Software Engineering and Measurement

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Edited by

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## ■ Preface

For two decades now, the International Symposium on Empirical Software Engineering and Measurement (ESEM) has been the premier venue for publishing and discussing original work in empirical software engineering and measurement. Traditionally, the conference forms part of the Empirical Software Engineering International Week (ESEIW) that features several events, such as tutorials, a doctoral school, the industry day, and the annual meeting of the International Software Engineering Research Network. The conference's 20th edition, held in Munich, Germany, on October 8–9, 2026, is a milestone in more than one sense. It marks two decades of a symposium that has shaped how our community gathers, reports, and scrutinizes empirical evidence, and it is the edition in which ESEM's long-standing commitment to open science becomes the default.

Beginning with this edition, ESEM is transitioning to the Leibniz International Proceedings in Informatics (LIPIcs) to further align with its open science principles and ensure free and unrestricted access to all conference papers, regardless of authors' affiliations. This step builds on more than a decade of open science trials pioneered by the ESEM community, which also culminated in the SIGSOFT open science policies. With this edition, ESEM goes one step further: it is open by default, fostering a mandatory open science policy. Every submission had to include a dedicated Data Availability section describing the availability of the research artifacts associated with the paper. Artifacts had to be disclosed using a permanent identifier or a stable repository link, or a reasonable justification had to be provided when non-disclosure agreements or other legal or ethical restrictions prevented full disclosure. This was not a formality: submissions omitting the section were desk-rejected, and those with insufficient disclosure were rejected during review. Through these policies, we strengthen transparency, reproducibility, and replicability in software engineering research. This year's ESEM edition also drew an unprecedented response with a record number of contributions. Across its six tracks, we received 484 submissions, of which 127 were accepted.

- Technical Track: **51** out of **268** submissions (19%)
- Emerging Results, Vision, and Reflection: **28** out of **119** submissions (24%)
- Software Engineering in Practice: **16** out of **57** submissions (28%)

In addition, the Registered Reports Track (**18** submissions), IDoESE Doctoral Symposium (**7** submissions), and the Journal First track (**15** submissions) admitted eligible contributions following their respective nomination and mentoring processes. A volume of this size rests on a great deal of careful and largely invisible work. Our first thanks go to the authors, who entrusted their work to ESEM, and to the program committee members and external reviewers across all tracks, who spent their time providing substantive, constructive assessments. Without their contributions, this volume would simply not exist. We are equally grateful to our fellow track chairs, who meticulously organized and directed the paper selection process and track programs. Our thanks also go to the LIPIcs editorial office for guiding us through this transition, and to the entire organizing committee, whose efforts made this edition possible. Finally, we thank everyone who takes part in ESEM 2026 in Munich, especially our student volunteers. The discussions at the event are what truly make ESEM a community.

**Daniel Mendez** and **Stefan Wagner**, General Co-Chairs

**Robert Feldt** and **Maria Paasivaara**, Technical Track Co-Chairs

**Marvin Muñoz Barón**, Proceedings Chair

20th International Symposium on Empirical Software Engineering and Measurement (ESEM 2026).  
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