

# 4th Student Conference on Operational Research

SCOR 2014, May 2–4, 2014, Nottingham, UK

Edited by

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## ■ Preface

We are delighted to present the proceedings of the 4th Student Conference on Operational Research (SCOR 2014). The conference took place from the 2–4 May 2014 at the University of Nottingham (UK) and welcomed PhD students, mainly from European Universities, studying Operational Research, Management Science or a related field. SCOR is a student conference organized by PhD students to showcase their work in a friendly environment while at the same time enabling networking with other researchers in the early stages of their OR careers.

Following the success of previous SCOR conferences, 45 participants attended SCOR 2014, with 20 universities across 9 countries being represented. A number of invited speakers gave exciting plenary talks covering a variety of the latest hot topics in OR. Professor Stewart Robinson, President of the OR Society, gave a talk about how simple models can often deliver insight and good results faster than their more complex counterparts. Delegates took away the important message that the inclusion of every single detail in a model can at some point become detrimental to the modelling process, and that sometimes simple is best! In contrast, we then had a talk from Jacqui Taylor, CEO of Flying Binary and the co-chair of the Analytics Network, a data scientist community supported by the OR Society. Jacqui presented some of her work as a data journalist and gave examples on how Big Data, when presented with tools that allow their exploration, can promote reaction and engagement on important issues. For something a little different at the end of the first day, Piero Vitelli, a freelance trainer at Island 41, gave a fantastic talk on presentation skills. As a new addition to a SCOR conference, the idea behind inviting Piero was to expose delegates to techniques to improve the delivery of their presentations and to provide the opportunity to incorporate some of these techniques when presenting their work at the conference. On the second day, Graham Rand of Lancaster University took us on a journey back to the early days of OR and presented the history of OR arising from the conflicts of war to how its popularity spread in more recent times.

SCOR 2014 consisted of 13 research streams and 40 talks; details about the streams and presentations can be found on the website by downloading the conference booklet <http://www.scor2014.com>. Popular streams included Healthcare, Vehicle Routing problems, Analytics, Heuristics, Optimization, OR in energy, Mathematical Programming, Multicriteria Decision Analysis and Forecasting. Another new addition to the conference this year was a question and answer panel session. Members of the panel consisted of two representatives from industry and two from academia, all of whom had completed a PhD in OR. It was interesting to hear the careers paths of the panel members and delegates were keen to ask about their different experiences.

No conference is complete without an exciting array of social activities! These included dinner on Friday at a local restaurant which was followed by a pub quiz organised by the committee. On Saturday, thanks to the great weather, delegates enjoyed a walk around nearby Wollaton Park. The Hall hosts Nottingham Natural History Museum, but is perhaps more popular for being Bruce Wayne's mansion in the recent Batman movies. Delegates enjoyed a three course meal at the conference dinner, the seating plan of which posed an intriguing optimisation problem for the organising committee; each table should have a balance between UK and European university students, no students of the same university should sit next to each other with the aim of promoting networking, and there should be a balance between students who prefer alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. The seating plan proved an optimal solution as many new friendships were made!

On behalf of the organising committee, we would like to thank our main sponsor, The OR Society, for enabling us to offer affordable fees to participants and finance this conference proceedings, GOAL (Gower Optimal Algorithms Ltd) for sponsoring the best presentation award, and Prospect Recruitment. In addition, we would like to thank the members of the organising committee, without whose extraordinary efforts, this conference could not have happened. Thanks go to our fellow organizing committee members: Gulmira Khussainova , Franklin Djeumou, Elizabeth Rowse, J. Arturo Castillo-Salazar, and Michael Mortenson.

Lastly, we would like to give a special thanks to all authors who submitted a paper for SCOR 2014, the review process was based on the presentation, quality and originality of the research and there were at least two referees assigned to each paper.

Pedro Crespo Del Granado  
Stefan Ravizza  
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## ■ Organisation

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