

1st New Ideas in Networked Systems

NINeS 2026, February 10, 2026, Virtual Conference

Edited by

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Preface

Last year, a group of us set out to create a networking conference dedicated to discussing new ideas in networked systems. We took a different, often unorthodox, approach to all aspects of the conference, including how we selected papers. Below, we document the processes we used to review and select papers for the inaugural edition of NINeS. The rest of this volume contains the papers we selected. We very much hope you find them an enlightening and enjoyable read.

Review Process

Our goal as PC chairs was to create a review process that was welcoming of new and interesting ideas, requiring only that authors show that they are plausible and technically sound (rather than demonstrate that the ideas are complete and can be deployed today). To this end, we felt it was important to create a process that allowed reviewers to discuss papers as they read them, rather than discussing papers only after they have arrived at and written down an initial review. Our hope was that this change to when papers are discussed would allow reviewers to correct each other's misconceptions before they could solidify into negative reviews.

We accomplished this goal by requiring reviewers to discuss papers on Slack, rather than on HotCRP. Reviewers (sometimes at our prompting) arrived at decisions about papers in the Slack channel, and did not formally write down reviews during this process. We also assigned a metareviewer to each paper, and the metareviewer was responsible for summarizing the Slack discussion and authors were provided with this summary. Providing a discussion summary allowed us to balance two competing concerns: the need to provide authors an explanation for the decision made about their submissions, and the need to allow reviewers to have candid conversations about papers.

Acknowledgments and Thanks

It takes a village to run a conference, and a very large village to run the first iteration of one. We want to thank everyone who has helped us in the process:

- The authors who submitted papers to NINeS, and trusted us with evaluating and publishing their work.
- The program committee members (who are listed below) who agreed to try out our new approach, and were instrumental in selecting the papers you are now reading.
- Shaddi Hasan, Xenofon Foukas, Chen Qian and Rod Van Meter, who provided us with expert reviews for papers where the PC felt it lacked sufficient expertise.
- The many people who are helping by organizing pods, recording videos, and doing other tasks that allow us to run an engaging and fun decentralized conference.
- Gianni Antichi, Hari Balakrishnan, Nate Foster and Scott Shenker, who are the other members of the steering committee and have carried as much (if not more) of the organizational load as us.
- And the many other people whom we have likely forgotten.

– Panda & Katerina

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