## Message from the ISMAR 2018 Science and Technology Program Chairs and *TVCG* Guest Editors

David Chu, Google, US Joseph L. Gabbard, Virginia Tech, US Jens Grubert, Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Germany Holger Regenbrecht, University of Otago, New Zealand

In this special issue of *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics (TVCG)*, we are pleased to present the *TVCG* papers from the 17th IEEE International Symposium on Mixed and Augmented Reality (ISMAR 2018), held October 16–20 in Munich, Germany. ISMAR continues the 20-year long tradition of IWAR, ISMR, and ISAR, and is undoubtedly the premier conference for mixed and augmented reality in the world.

There are 15 papers in this special issue, which were selected from 119 reviewed submissions, for an acceptance rate of 12.6%.

As program chairs we were aiming for the highest possible reviewing standards and conducted a decision process that aimed for final decisions in a fair, rigorous, and transparent way. We continued with the successful changes made in 2017 and we did not modify the procedure in any significant way.

All 119 submitted papers were reviewed by the Science and Technology Program Committee (PC), which was comprised of 18 internationally renowned experts from the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, and Europe. The program chairs also voted on paper decisions, so the PC had 22 voting members in total.

There was a single paper submission category, papers from 4 to 10 pages in length, plus as many pages of references as needed. All submissions underwent a review process that encompassed four reviewing cycles, overseen by a coordinator from the PC. After PC members had declared their conflicts and provided their preferences, the program chairs assigned coordinators. For every PC member, as well as the program chairs, for every paper where they had a conflict of interest, both the reviewer assignments and reviewer names were hidden. In addition, it was possible to submit papers for either single-blind or double-blind reviewing; in the case of double-blind reviewing, the external reviewers were not aware of the identity of the authors.

Before the reviewing began, we followed a desk rejection process consistent with the policies of *TVCG*. sufficient to warrant final acceptance. Based on this input, the program chairs made final acceptance decisions. The

During the first review cycle, each submission received at least three external reviews, from experts identified by the coordinator. After the reviewing period and under the guidance of the coordinator, the reviewers of each submission, anonymously discussed the merits of each submission and attempted to reach a consensus decision.

In the second review cycle, the program chairs assigned an additional reviewer from the PC followed by a second discussion phase, during which the PC members and the external reviewers attempted to reach a consensus decision.

The entire PC then convened for a two-day meeting, to address all submissions, with a focus on discussing submissions with no clear consensus, and for each one to come to a final decision. This meeting was held at NAIST in Nara, Japan for the Asia-Pacific region; Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, USA for the Americas region; and Coburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany for the European region. The entire PC met simultaneously over a three-way video link. Before this meeting, every paper flagged for discussion was read by at least three meeting participants: the coordinator, the PC member who did the second cycle review, and one of the program chairs. During the meeting, after conflicted participants had left the rooms, the coordinator summarized the paper and the online discussion for the rest of the committee, and led the joint discussion. The discussion included enumerating were deemed modifications necessary that for conditionally accepted papers to ultimately be accepted for publication. The final decision for each paper was determined by a majority vote of all remaining members of the PC., The resulting set of papers recommended for conditional acceptance into TVCG was next approved by the TVCG board. All conditionally accepted submissions were then subject to a final reviewing cycle, whereby the program chairs assigned a shepherd from the PC, either the paper's original coordinator or the secondary reviewer from the PC, to oversee the refinement process. The shepherd then checked whether the changes made were final acceptance of the TVCG papers was further approved by the TVCG board. All, but one of the 16 conditionallyaccepted TVCG papers were ultimately accepted.

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Many individuals have contributed a great deal of time and energy towards making the technical program of ISMAR 2018 a success. We would like to thank the authors of all submitted papers and the members of the program committee. In total we've had over 200 reviewers and we would like to thank all of them for their many hours of hard work. We also wish to acknowledge James Stewart for his outstanding and timely support with the new PCS review system, which we have used for the first time this year. The program chairs would also like to thank the Publications Chair Veronica Teichrieb for collecting materials and assisting in the production of this special issue. We warmly thank the members of the ISMAR Steering Committee for their continuing active support. We also thank Dieter Schmalstieg, the *TVCG* liaison for ISMAR, for support and advice with the *TVCG* papers, the General Chairs, Ulrich Eck and Otmar Hilliges for their strong support throughout the entire process and all of our ISMAR community members.