

Process for Selecting the “Best-Paper Award” for ISCA

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The papers appearing at ISCA represent some of the best research works in our field. The selection for the Best-Paper Award for ISCA must look for papers that significantly excel **in one or more** of the following dimensions: (a) deep technical insight that solves an important problem, (b) likelihood of impacting products emerging from industry, (c) potential for broader impact on the research community, and (d) potential for growing the field by enabling a significant amount of follow-on research in a new topic.

The process for selecting the ISCA Best-Paper award is defined by the executive committees of SIGARCH and TCCA, and the Program-Chair is expected to not deviate from this process.

The selection of the winner of the Best-Paper award is done in two stages, where the first stage identifies 4-5 nominees and the second stage identifies the winner. The overall process is as follows:

- The Program Chair identifies **Top-20 (approximately 25% of all accepted papers)** papers from all the accepted papers based on the highest “post-response” review scores. These papers represent the “**probable candidates**” for the best paper award. The metric used for rank-ordering must perform [correction](#) for variations in reviewer generosity and may, optionally, ignore the lowest score to reduce the impact of one harsh reviewer.
- The Program Chair (or another designated person, in case of papers conflicted with the Program Chair) asks the **PC reviewers** of these “probable candidates” papers if they would like the paper to be a “nominee” for the best-paper award. Ideally, the PC chair should send this survey to the Program Committee at the end of the PC meeting, and keep a short time limit for the response, possibly set on the day of notification of outcome (this prevents the decision from being influenced by knowing the author names via social media after the outcome).
- The Program Chair ranks the probable candidate papers with (a) supporting votes from PC reviewers as the primary metric (b) normalized review scores, as the tie-breaker for papers that have an identical number of supporting votes from the PC reviewers. The PC chair selects the top 4-5 papers from this list, and these papers are officially designated to be the “**ISCA Best-Paper Nominees**”. These papers must be presented in a “Best-Paper Nominee” session to be scheduled on the first day of the conference.
- The Program Chair forms a **Best-Paper Award Committee (BPAC)** consisting of 3-5 people, who are not conflicted with and are not the reviewers of the nominated papers. It is acceptable to have people from outside the PC serve on this committee. It is highly recommended that the BPAC be formed by the camera-ready deadline.

- The members of the BPAC must read the camera-ready version of all nominated papers and begin the deliberation process. The BPAC should arrive at a preliminary decision for the best paper before the start of the conference.
- The BPAC members must attend the best-paper nominee session, and pay particular attention to the question-answers at the end of each presentation. The quality of the presentation and the delivery of the presentation itself should have no impact on the decision of the best-paper award (this is to maintain fairness for presenters who may not be native English speakers and/or presenting their research for the first time). The presentation represents a chance for the wider architecture community to “vet” the paper, and although it is unlikely, the questions could identify show-stopper issues with the paper, which could impact the final selection of the best paper.
- After the best-paper nominee session, BPAC meets and decides the winner of the best paper award. If multiple papers are close to the top, the BPAC can decide to select multiple papers for the Best-Paper Award. The BPAC shares the decision with the Program Chair by the end of the first day of the conference.
- The Program Chair announces the best-paper award during the ISCA Awards lunch, which is typically scheduled during the second day of the conference. The Program Chair may recognize the authors of the winning paper with a “best-paper award” certificate. The information about the winners will be maintained on the website of SIGARCH and TCCA.