Message from the OSDI '21 Program Co-Chairs

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the 15th USENIX Symposium on Operating Systems Design and Implementation (OSDI '21)!

This is the oddest year ever for an OSDI, thanks to the laudable efforts of several members of our community to move OSDI to an annual rather than bi-annual cadence. We hope this experiment is successful and we can continue having this higher-bandwidth and lower-latency channel for sharing the excellent research done by the OSDI community.

This year's program offers 31 exceptional papers. These papers represent the many strengths of our community and cover a wide range of topics, including systems support for machine learning, memory management, file and storage systems, data management, operating systems, hardware, security, privacy, distributed systems, correctness, and formal verification of systems.

Given the exceptionally high number of submissions received by the previous OSDI, we recruited a large PC of 75 full members including academics, industrial researchers, and industrial practitioners. We also recruited 50 people to serve as an external review committee, providing a larger pool of expertise that we could draw on when needed; we called on 18 of them to provide additional expert reviews. We are grateful to all the committee members for agreeing to serve on relatively short notice after OSDI was added to the 2021 conference calendar in late Summer 2020.

Our program committee received 165 submissions and reviewed them in two rounds. Papers received three reviews in the first round; 110 advanced to round two, where they received an additional three reviews. For a small number of papers, where opinions were divided or where a paper was particularly specialized, we solicited additional expert reviews from our external review committee. In total, the PC and external reviewers wrote more than 770,000 words in more than 850 thoughtful reviews.

The PC conducted extensive discussions to select which papers to accept. This began with a rigorous asynchronous online discussion phase across the full PC, which resulted in 14 acceptances. The 41 papers that didn't reach an accept-or-reject consensus during the asynchronous online phase were discussed during a two-day PC meeting conducted via videoconference. The PC chairs strove to ensure that all papers received full and fair consideration. All discussions reached a consensus agreement, and a PC member wrote a summary of that discussion for the authors. Across all discussion stages, our reviewers wrote over 1,800 comments in HotCRP containing nearly 200,000 words. Ultimately, the PC selected 31 papers for presentation at the conference, resulting in a 19% acceptance rate, similar to prior years. Each of the accepted papers was allocated two additional pages and shepherded by a member of the PC to help the authors address the reviewers' comments in the camera-ready version.

After finalizing the program, we created a separate committee to decide the Jay Lepreau Best Paper Awards composed of PC members with no conflicts with the papers under consideration. PC members nominated papers for these awards. We selected seven papers with at least two nominations for best paper as candidates for the award. After reading the nominated papers and considering the reviews from the full PC, the awards committee chose the Jay Lepreau Best Paper Award recipients.

OSDI '21 featured an artifact-evaluation process organized by Artifact Evaluation Committee Co-Chairs Guyue (Grace) Liu, Manuel Rigger, and Lalith Suresh. Of the 31 papers accepted at OSDI '21, 26 had artifacts submitted by their authors, and all 26 of these earned the "Available" badge. In addition, 23 artifacts earned the "Functional" badge and 20 earned the most challenging "Results Reproduced" badge. For more details, see the Message from the OSDI '21 Artifact Evaluation Committee Co-Chairs.

As PC co-chairs, we stand on the shoulders of so many who did a tremendous amount of hard work to make OSDI '21 a success. First, we thank the authors of all submitted papers for choosing to send their work to OSDI. Thanks also to the program committee for their hard work in reviewing and discussing the submissions and in shepherding the accepted papers. We're also grateful to the external reviewers who provided additional perspectives. We thank the Artifact Evaluation Committee Co-Chairs mentioned in the previous paragraph as well as all the members of the Artifact Evaluation Committee who helped conduct thorough evaluations. We thank Baris Kasikci, Amy Ousterhout, and Malte Schwarzkopf for organizing OSDI/ATC mentoring; Deniz Altınbüken, Dilma Da Silva, Sangeetha Abdu Jyothi, and Aurojit Panda for organizing the joint OSDI/ATC preview session; Reto Achermann, Zsolt István, Adriana Szekeres, and Vasily Tarasov for organizing the joint OSDI/ATC networking session; and Irina Calciu and Geoff Kuenning, the Program Committee Co-Chairs of ATC '21, for coordinating with us efficiently, productively, and enjoyably. We thank the USENIX staff, who have been fundamental in organizing OSDI '21 in an especially difficult year. The logistics of the online PC meeting were facilitated by PhD students Christina Christodoulakis, Eric Munson, and Upamanyu Sharma, whose assistance we greatly appreciate. Finally, OSDI wouldn't be what it is without our attendees—thank you for listening to our speakers, asking challenging and insightful questions, sharing your ideas with others, and networking with one another online!

We hope you will find OSDI '21 interesting, educational, and inspiring!

Angela Demke Brown, *University of Toronto*
Jay Lorch, *Microsoft Research*
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