

Report from the Editor in Chief of the Constraints Journal

Year 2015

I started my term as Editor in Chief of the Constraint Journal on the 1st of January 2015. The purpose of this short report is to provide some news about the journal to the Editorial and Advisory board members and to the constraint programming community.

Editors, Advisory and Editorial Board members

The first action I have done has been the replacement of some members of the Editorial Board whose term finished at the end of 2014.

The new members are

- **David Cohen**, University of London, UK
- **Alan Frisch**, University of York, UK
- **Michele Lombardi**, Università di Bologna, Italy
- **Bart Selman**, Cornell University, USA
- **Makoto Yokoo**, Kyushu University, Japan

The previous Editor in Chief, Gilles Pesant has been nominated as a member of the Advisory Board. Let me thank Gilles who has helped me a lot in the first months of the year to understand the situation of the Journal and to manage papers that were submitted before my term started. Another very important help came from Melissa Fearon from Springer who is constantly in contact with me and helps planning future activities and solving problematic issues.

The Constraints journal has also four Editors

- APPLICATIONS EDITOR
 - **Helmut Simonis**, INSIGHT, Ireland
- LETTERS EDITOR
 - **Christian Schulte**, Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
- SURVEYS EDITOR
 - **Thomas Schiex**, INRA Toulouse, France
- MEDIA EDITOR
 - **Pierre Schaus**, UC Louvain, Belgium

The media editor is a new position that helps in advertising the journal inside and outside the constraint community.

Journal Advertising

The advertising of the journal relies on social networks (Constraints is now on Twitter, please follow us!!! @cp_constraints). In addition, we will have video abstracts linked to each paper. This is a hard process to start but we think it could be worth trying. Video abstracts are short presentations, (2 min max) summarising the content of the paper. We have started inviting the authors of the CPAIOR fast track papers to submit a video abstract.

Review time

I have worked hard to shorten the review time and obtain the first review in 6 weeks. I personally solicit Coordinating Editors every month.

IN the following table, I reported the journal turnaround time. Notice that the average number of days for a first decision is around one month which is a quite good figure I think.

Submission to Editor Assignment Average number of days between the date the manuscript was received and the first Editor was assigned.	0.7
Submission to Reviewer Invitation Average number of days between the date the manuscript was received and the first Reviewer was invited.	13
Submission to First Decision Average number of days between the date the manuscript was received and the first decision.	33.8

I have had some problems with automatic reminders that now have been minimized and, more importantly, do not send email on behalf of anyone.

PhD Thesis abstract

The main aim of this initiative is to highlight recent work by PhD students in the area of Constraints.

Therefore, in conjunction with the PhD Thesis Archive, the Constraints Journal publishes one page abstracts of PhD thesis. This year we collected 22 abstracts from students who graduated in 2012-2015. The next years we expect a lower number of abstracts as we will cover only one year. PhD abstracts will not be indexed as far as citations are concerned. Guido Tack and Christopher Mears are the guest editors of this initiative.

Fast track journal papers at CP and CPAIOR

I have noticed that many papers that in the past have appeared at CP and CPAIOR and then extended and published on the Constraints journal receive few citations as people tend to cite the first version of a paper. Therefore citations are split between the two papers (conference and journal version) and this does not help increasing the impact factor of the journal. Second, my personal opinion is that the 30% of added content (which is quite often less than the 30% indeed) is not so interesting to justify the paper to be published. In fact, journal papers have in addition to the conference paper few more experiments.

For this reason, I have proposed the Program Chairs of CP and CPAIOR 2015 to select a set of papers to be directly submitted to the Journal fast track.

The process is as follows:

- The best regular submissions to the conference are selected by the Program Chair
- Authors are **invited** to extend the paper and submit it to the Constraints Journal addressing all comments from reviewers
- **If they accept** we ensure one or two very fast round of review
- Papers are published on line at the conference starting day
- Stay open access for 20 days, accessible to everyone.
- One page abstract appears in the conference proceedings, but not indexed as citations are concerned.

Two possible drawbacks have been foreseen by the community: the first is that the proceedings have less citations. I personally think that conference are never considered good on the basis of citations, but rather on submissions and acceptance rate. The second drawback is that conference papers are in general less mature than journal papers. I agree on that, but I also think that I prefer to have a fresh result and a great idea published in timely manner, than a more mature paper that has already appeared on the conference proceedings and is well known for the community.

In 2016 both CPAIOR and CP have chosen this formula, and also in 2016 the program chair have agreed to have fast track papers. We will see in few years if this formula is a winning one.

As a concluding remark, I would like to thank all editors, members of the advisory and editorial board and all the reviewers for their invaluable help with the journal.

Michela Milano

Constraints Journal EIC