Dear Colleagues,

We are writing to express our deepest concern and dismay about the new ICSE policy of limiting authors to at most 3 submissions at ICSE 2017. We urge you to reconsider this policy.

We understand the problem that the organizers are facing the challenge of finding qualified reviewers as the submission volume keeps on increasing. We also understand that there seems to be an imbalance between the number of submissions per author and the review load that a person may accept to handle. However, we believe that the policy of limiting submissions is not a good solution to this problem. We see several deep disadvantages to this approach, which outweigh any potential benefits and negatively affect hundreds of people:

1. The software engineering community has always been a welcoming place for new entrants, from related areas (e.g., security, databases, languages, cognitive science), from research communities in emerging nations, and from industry. Many of these new entrants (although full of energy and ideas) benefit, and indeed require, collaboration/mentoring with established researchers within the field. These relationships would be inhibited by this policy, since the senior people would have less motivation to participate in such relationships. For example, a junior professor in a teaching institution may need to rely on large-scale collaboration to jumpstart her career or maintain research profile. In such cases, collaboration with a large lab from industry or academia may serve as important nurseries for these new researchers. As another example, a professor who is currently supporting more than 3 PhD students under this scenario may be discouraged from starting a new joint research effort with another research lab. She will have to make a Hobson's choice to prioritize submissions co-authored with her students and external collaborators, leading to undesirable and unhealthy situations for students and collaborators. Increasing participation at all levels regardless of their organization size and resource constraints are an important part of the community. This is exactly the kind of non-openness that we should actively avoid as an important sub-community of ACM.

2. People sometimes go through a more intense phase of their careers (some early, some late), and produce work at higher volumes, *without compromising quality.* Why disadvantage such people, while they are enjoying their *annus mirabilis*? While we acknowledge that there have been extreme cases in which a single author has co-authored seven or more submissions, all of which have been rejected, we do not agree that such scenarios should require policy setting. Many of us who are participating in this petition are not necessarily large-volume submitters. We fundamentally believe and are concerned that putting an artificial limit on individuals' productivity could affect the entire community's overall productivity and creativity. Why penalize researchers who strive to be productive? And more importantly why penalize our field by limiting access to important findings/results at our top research venue?

Mindful of the seriousness of the problem, and the impact of potential solutions, we would like to suggest that the decision to limit the number of submissions per author at ICSE 2017 be deferred, and a decision be taken after engaging the broader community in an open and transparent discussion. Perhaps such a discussion could be hosted at the next ACM SIGSOFT /IEEE TCSE town hall meeting to be held at ICSE and could explore underlying problems and solutions. Some of the issues/approaches that could be discussed:

1. Strive for larger committees. A quick search indicates over several hundred authors with at least 4 ICSE/FSE papers between 2010-2015. Surely at least 100-150 of these authors would be qualified to review ICSE papers.

2. According to numbers from ICSE 2015, this new policy would have only saved one review per PC/PB member. Some *accepted* papers might not have been submitted because of the policy. At the same time the old policy of not restricting submissions in fact potentially enabled 100 additional authors to submit to ICSE because their only submission was co-authored with a person with 4+ submissions.

3. Conferences such as SIGKDD, SIGGRAPH, and CHI from other fields manage larger volumes than ICSE, and have no such limitations. How do they achieve it? Can we learn from them?

4. We certainly acknowledge that the SE community should promote the culture where people should not just increase the number of co-authored submissions with the hope that large quantity will yield a better chance of acceptance. However, we believe that the 3-limit policy is not a constructive solution to resolve the submission volume, review workload, and quality imbalance problem. There are other gentler alternatives to address this problem.

Co-written by, and Signed:

Earl Barr, University College London (UCL), UK
Christian Bird, Microsoft Research, USA
Prem Devanbu, UC Davis, USA
Massimiliano Di Penta, University of Sannio, Italy
Ahmed E. Hassan, Queen's University, Canada
Jane Cleland-Huang, DePaul University, USA
Sung Kim, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, China
Miryung Kim, University of California (Los Angeles), USA
David Lo, Singapore Management University, Singapore
Andrian Marcus, The University of Texas at Dallas, USA
Nachiappan Nagappan, Microsoft Research, USA
Tien Nguyen, Iowa State University, USA
Denys Poshyvanyk, College of William and Mary, USA

Zhendong Su, UC Davis, USA
Tao Xie, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA
Thomas Zimmermann, Microsoft Research, USA

Total Signatures: 185

Additional Signatures:
(If you would like to add your name, please enter your information at https://goo.gl/RfMy2I and it will be added to the letter shortly)

Eirini Kalliamvakou, University of Victoria, Canada
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Abram Hindle, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
Qi Xuan, Zhejiang University of Technology, Hangzhou, China
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Lucas Layman, Fraunhofer Center for Experimental Software Engineering, USA
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Yves Le Traon, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg
Thomas LaToza, George Mason University, USA
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Yang Liu, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
Julia Lawall, Inria/LIP6, France

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Jim Herbsleb, Carnegie Mellon University, USA
Yun Yang, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia
He Jiang, School of Software, Dalian University of Technology, China
Norbert Siegmund, University of Passau, Germany
Janet Siegmund, University of Passau, Germany
Aiko Fallas Yamashita, Oslo and Akershus University, Norway
Ming Li, Nanjing University, China
Gautam Shroff, Chief Scientist, TCS, India
John Grundy, Deakin University, Australia
Ashish Sureka, ABB Corporate Research Center, India
Michael R. Lyu, Chinese University of Hong Kong, China
Gabriele Bavota, Free University of Bozen, Italy
Huaimin Wang, National University of Defence Technology, China
Yue Yu, National University of Defence Technology, China
Na Meng, Virginia Tech, USA
Meiyappan Nagappan, Rochester Institute of Technology, USA
Romain ROUVOY, University of Lille / Inria, France
Lingming Zhang, The University of Texas at Dallas, USA
Maria Christakis, Microsoft Research, USA
Valentin Wüstholz, University of Texas at Austin, USA
Cor-Paul Bezemer, Queen's University, Canada
Yasutaka Kamei, Kyushu University, Japan
Shane McIntosh, McGill University, Canada
Daniel German, University of Victoria, Canada
Hadi Hemmati, University of Manitoba, Canada
Zhen Ming (Jack) Jiang, York University, Canada
Cindy Rubio Gonzalez, UC Davis, USA.
Charles Sutton, University of Edinburgh, UK.
Gang Yin, National University of Defence Technology, China
Zhi Jin, Peking University, China
Preethu Rose Anish, Tata Consultancy Services, India
Zhenchang Xing, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
Linzhang Wang, Nanjing University, China

Smita S Ghaisas, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd., India
Shinpei Hayashi, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan
Martin Pinzger, Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt, Austria
Janet Burge, Wesleyan University, USA
Andy Zaidman, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands
Joshua Sunshine, Carnegie Mellon University, USA
William Cohen, Carnegie Mellon University, USA
Paolo Tonella, FBK-Irst, Italy
Jacques Klein, Interdisciplinary Centre for Security, Reliability and Trust, Luxembourg
Waqar Ahmad, Carnegie Mellon University, USA
Brad A. Myers, Carnegie Mellon University, USA - *"Many other conferences have found better ways to address the stated problem."*
Dong Qiu, Research & Development Competence Center, Huawei Technologies, China
Jonas Eckhardt, Technische Universität München, Germany
Georgios Gousios, Radboud University Nijmegen, NL
Giuseppe Scanniello, University of Basilicata, Italy
Mukul Prasad, Fujitsu Laboratories of America, USA
Guowei Yang. Texas State University, USA
Barbara Russo, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy - *"One option can be having a continuous submission session as for the VLDB conference series"*
Vincent Hellendoorn, UC Davis, USA
Bogdan Vasilescu, University of California, Davis, USA
Ali Mesbah, UBC, Canada
Kim Herzig, Microsoft, USA
Graham Neubig, Nara Institute of Science and Technology, Japan - "*I have not ever submitted to ICSE, but I am a researcher in natural language processing and currently in collaboration with researchers in software engineering. I think this policy has the potential to make it much more difficult for me to work with SE researchers and get a foothold in the field."*
Jaroslav Fowkes, University of Edinburgh, UK
Xin Peng, Fudan University, China
Michael L. Collard, The University of Akron, USA
Laura Moreno, The University of Texas at Dallas, USA
Dongsun Kim, Interdisciplinary Centre for Security, Reliability and Trust, Luxembourg
Rui Abreu, PARC, USA
Chu-Pan Wong, Carnegie Mellon University, U.S.
Frederica Sarro, University College, London.
Nicholas A. Kraft, ABB Corporate Research, USA
Carmine Gravino, University of Salerno, Italy
Andrea De Lucia, University of Salerno, Italy
Ravi Khadka, Utrecht University/ Accenture, NL - "*Collaboration is key and capping submission is discouraging collaboration in SE research."*
Giuseppe Destefanis, Brunel University London, UK

Giuseppe De Ruvo, University of Auckland, New Zealand - *"Only got a NIER in 2013, but willing to contribute to the community with my new colleagues and topics."*

Sergio Di Martino, University of Naples "Federico II", Italy

Dale fletter, Cal st univ, sacramento, Usa

Jeehoon Yoo, HKUST, Hong Kong

Venkatesh-Prasad Ranganath, Kansas State University, USA

Chanchal Roy, University of Saskatchewan, Canada - *"There should be no limit on the number of submissions. ICSE should be double blind reviewing as the ASE started!"*

Mehrdad Afshari, University of California, Davis,

Le Bui Tien Duy, PhD Student at School of Information Systems, Singapore Management University, Singapore

Sonia Haiduc, Florida State University, USA

Wing Lam, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

Monika Gupta, IIIT Delhi, India

Weiyi Shang, Concordia University, Canada

Emad Shihab, Concordia University, Canada

DongGyun Han, University College London

Chengnian Sun, UC Davis, USA

Jesús García Galán, University of Limerick, Ireland

Jon Whittle, Lancaster University, UK - *"Lack of reviewers is cited as a key issue in defending the new policy -- but I'm sure every signatory here would be willing to review papers (140 people at last count). (PS. I've never submitted 3 or more papers to ICSE but see that this policy doesn't achieve what it sets out to)"*

Zubair Malik, Carnegie Mellon University, USA - *"I do not expect to submit much but I know people who work hard enough that they should be allowed to submit more than 3. Triage ... like US Open or something ... people who can submit because we all know they deserve to and the rest can get someone among the very best to confirm that they are not abusing the system. If you are short of reviewers I am willing to help."*

Parashar Prem, Sheridan College, Canada - *"I think the restriction would block the good work of some authors to come and publish at this platform"*

Shaukat Ali, Simula Research Laboratory, Norway

Sandro Schulze, Technische Universität Hamburg, Germany

Gabriel Ferreira, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

Javier Escobar, Florida State University, USA

Shehnila Zardari, NED University , Pakistan

Scott D. Fleming, University of Memphis,

Omer Tripp, IBM Research, USA

Caitlin Sadowski, Google, USA

Harry Xu, UC Irvine, USA

Peng Liu, IBM,

Jonathan I. Maletic, Kent State University, USA

Robert Dyer, Bowling Green State University, USA

Chen luo, Rice University, United States

Mehran Hassani , Concordia University , Canada

Marco Pistoia, IBM T. J. Watson Research Center, USA

Kathryn S McKinley, Microsoft Research, USA

Hao Zhong, SJTU,

Dr. Gregory V. Wilson, Software Carpentry Foundation, Canada

Guilherme Horta Travassos, COPPE at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Patanamon Thongtanunam, Nara Institute of Science and Technology, Japan - *"Since the submissions of supervisors are limited, there are likely cases that many students lose their chances to submit a paper to this venue, which may impact on their future career."*

Wei Yang, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, USA - *"I think the policy could cause vicious in-group competition because our advisers have to ask some students not to submit because of the limitation."*

Semih Okur, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,

YoungSeok Yoon, Google,

Chakkrit (Kla) Tantithamthavorn, Nara Institute of Science and Technology, Japan

Sridhar Chimalakonda, International Institute of Information Technology - Hyderabad, India - *"Let good quality research be in!"*

Bobby R. Bruce, University College London, United Kingdom

Justyna Petke, University College London,

Ravindra Naik, TCS Research,

Matthias Book, University of Iceland,

Gustavo Pinto, Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Pará,

Michaela Greiler, Microsoft,

William Griswold, UC San Diego, USA

Jan Vitek, Northeastern, USA

Igor Steinmacher, Utfpr, Brazil

Marco Aurelio Gerosa, University of São Paulo, Brazil

Igor Wiese, Federal University of Technology – Paraná - UTFPR, Brazil

Joseph Hejderup, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands

Raimondas Lencevicius, Nuance, USA

Brittany Johnson, NC State University,

Carlos Gavidia, University College London,

Jose Antonio Pow-Sang, Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru, Peru

(If you would like to add your name, please enter your information at https://goo.gl/RfMy2I and it will be added to the letter shortly)