Message from the MTD 2014 Chair

Welcome to the Sixth International Workshop on Managing Technical Debt (MTD 2014), co-located with the 30th International Conference on Software Maintenance and Evolution in Victoria, British Columbia. This is the first year that we are holding this workshop co-located with ICSME.

Technical debt is a metaphor that software developers and managers increasingly use to communicate key tradeoffs related to release and quality issues. The Managing Technical Debt workshop series has, since 2010, brought together practitioners and researchers to discuss and define issues related to technical debt and how they can be studied. Workshop participants have reiterated the usefulness of the metaphor each year, shared emerging practices used in software development organizations, and emphasized the need for more research and better means for sharing emerging practices and results.

Technical debt is by-and-large an issue of software evolution: technical debt increasingly overburdens software maintenance and evolution, and—when ignored—is often aggravated by rapid evolution. Technical debt research benefits from decades of ongoing work in maintenance-related areas, such as software aging and decay, software metrics, prediction and estimation, release planning, and architecture.

Industry’s increasing interest in concrete practices, and the emergence of organization-specific practices, can be seen as indications that industry needs clearly defined approaches for managing technical debt, to deal with issues such as evolution, strategic resource management, and bridging the stakeholder communication gap.

By holding this workshop together with the ICSME, our goal was to bring together leading software maintenance researchers and practitioners for the purpose of exploring practical problems to provide opportunities for research that can provide effective practices. To support this goal, submissions were sought describing innovative and significant original research, industrial experience, and future trends. The papers were selected after a peer review by at least three members of the program committee. For this workshop we accepted 9 papers: 4 full research/experience and 5 short position papers. The accepted papers cover topics such as: models for measuring and optimizing technical debt, software maintenance, release engineering, database applications, static analysis, tool support, and empirical studies.

We thank our program committee for their thorough reviews of the submissions, which enabled the selection of papers contributing to a strong program. Your attendance here today shapes the future directions of the research needed to quantify technical debt, produce repeatable results, and understand the relationship to software development.

Carolyn Seaman
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MTD 2014 Workshop Chair