Requirements in the Global Economy—Experience, Problems and Prospects

Moderator: Alistair Sutcliffe

Panelists
Kris Gopalakrishnan, CEO, Infosys, Bangalore, India
S. Sivaguru, Head of the Engineering Excellence Group, HCL, India
Brian Nicholson, Manchester Business School, Manchester, UK
Daniela Damien, Dept of Computer Science, University of Victoria, Canada

This panel will examine issues related to the conference theme ‘Requirements in the Global Economy’ contrasting academic studies from Dana Damian and Brian Nicholson with industrial experience from Kris Gopalakrishnan (Infosys) and S. Sivaguru, (HCL). Offshore software development is an increasingly important component of the global economy, and India is one of the market leading software suppliers. However, globalisation has exacerbated many familiar problems in requirements engineering: understanding users’ needs, reconciling conflicting goals between stakeholders, validating requirements (and development systems) to meet users needs, and so on. Distributed requirements engineering where customers and suppliers are separated by distance, time, culture and frequently language needs improved solutions to old problems of enhancing mutual understanding between customers and suppliers, managing the process and fostering long term mutually beneficial relationships.

Dana Damian and Brian Nicholson will review how academic studies of offshore software development and requirement engineering in industry have investigated problems and proposed solutions. Kris Gopalakrishnan and S. Sivaguru will reflect on their experience of managing successful offshore developments in India and how processes and practice might be improved.

S. Gopalakrishnan (Kris to his colleagues) is one of the founders of Infosys Technologies Limited. He plays a key role in defining the company strategy and in using technology and innovation continuously to maintain its leadership of the industry. Since April 2002, Kris has been the Chief Operating Officer. His responsibilities include Customer Services, Technology, Investments and Acquisitions. Kris is also the Chairperson of Infosys Consulting, a wholly owned subsidiary of Infosys Technologies Limited. Kris is currently the Chairman of Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management (IIITM), Kerala, and Vice Chairman of the Information Technology Education Standards Board (BITES) set up by the Government of Karnataka. He is on the board of directors of the National Internet Exchange of India. He is also the Chairman of the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Karnataka Region. He is a member of ACM, IEEE and IEEE Computer Society.

S. Sivaguru, Head of the Engineering Excellence Group in HCL, has been in the international software services industry for over 27 years. He has played multiple roles from developer to development director, across geographies. His experience covers multiple technologies, from mainframes to micros, applications as well as systems software. His professional interests include software productivity, usability, architecture and technology trends. He is a member of the core group of BSPIN - the Bangalore Software Process Improvement Network.

Dr Brian Nicholson is a Senior Lecturer at Manchester Business School. For the last 11 years, he has been involved in teaching, research and consultancy projects in the broad area of managing global outsourcing of software and other business processes. This has involved work in India, China, Costa Rica, Iran, Egypt; Malaysia and Bangladesh. Dr Nicholson’s research at the firm level has resulted in several influential publications in international journals and a book Global IT Outsourcing (Cambridge University Press, 2003). Policy level consultancy studies have been undertaken for the governments of Costa Rica and Iran to stimulate software exports. In the case of Costa Rica, this resulted in production of a national level strategy. His most recent work has been commissioned by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales: “Risk and Control of Offshore Outsourcing of Accounting Services.”
Daniella Damian is an Associate Professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Victoria, BC, Canada. She has research interests in Software Engineering, Human-Computer Interaction and Computer-Supported Cooperative Work, Global software development and process improvement in software engineering. She leads the SEGAL (Software Engineering Global interAction Laboratory) which aims to advance the practice of collaborative software engineering, particularly in global software teams which work across geographical, temporal and organizational boundaries. Current projects are addressing issues of requirements engineering, software quality, knowledge management, human-computer interaction and computer-supported cooperative work.