

REFSQ 2026: Joint Proceedings of Workshops, Doctoral Symposium, Posters & Tools Track, and Education and Training Track—Preface^{*}

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Abstract

This document is the preface of the Joint Proceedings of Workshops, Doctoral Symposium, Posters & Tools Track, and Education and Training Track of the 31st International Working Conference on Requirement Engineering: Foundation for Software Quality (REFSQ 2026), held in Poznan, Poland, in March from the 23rd to 26th, 2026

1. Preface

The 32nd International Working Conference on Requirement Engineering: Foundation for Software Quality (REFSQ 2026) took place from the 23rd to the 26th of March 2026. The conference was held as a live, in-person event in Poznan, Poland. REFSQ Working Conferences aim to provide a forum for discussing new and innovative ideas and approaches to successful Requirements Engineering (RE) and for exchange between researchers and practitioners. The REFSQ working conference is the leading European conference series on requirements engineering. It is the goal of REFSQ to foster the creation of a strong European RE community across industry and academia. Since 1994, Requirements Engineering has continued to be a dominant factor influencing the quality of software, systems, and services. REFSQ seeks contributions that report on novel ideas and techniques that enhance the quality of RE's products and processes, as well as reflections on current research. Interaction is a traditional and distinctive feature of REFSQ, aimed at promoting active and fruitful discussion among participants. In addition to the high-quality scientific program, REFSQ also features a highly interactive Industry Track, Education and Training Track, Workshops, Posters and Tool, and a Doctoral Symposium.

2. Special Theme: Trustworthy and Ethical Systems via Requirements Engineering

These days, we face many challenges in information systems and software engineering, motivated by continuous and rapid developments in AI. In our view, this evolution is unstoppable, and we must make the world ready for it. However, as usual, technology evolves before the methods are crafted to develop them. The Requirements Engineering community is, however, very attentive and keeps up with the trends and needs of this society. REFSQ is one of the conferences responsible for that, and this year, we

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want to continue this tradition by proposing the Trustworthy and Ethical Systems via Requirements Engineering special theme. We cannot expect novel systems to lead to trustworthy and ethical results if we do not endow requirements engineers, system designers, and developers with proper approaches focusing on trust and ethics since the early stages of the development cycle. Thus, we hereby solicit contributions in this direction, emphasizing the following aspects:

- Correctness and ethics should go hand in hand with Requirements, elicitation, analysis, negotiation, monitoring, and assessment. Trust is paramount to creating a society that relies on machines for crucial processes and aspects of people's lives.
- Providing people with trustworthy, ethical, and ready information about novel technology to let them choose if and how to use it is at the essence of a safe and happy world.

3. Workshops

The five workshops at REFSQ 2026 were carefully selected based on their quality, relevance, and potential to attract attendants. The selection process was led by our co-chairs Isabel Sofia Brito and Tiago Prince Sales. This resulted in the following workshops:

- CreaRE: 13th International Workshop on Creativity in Requirements Engineering (<https://create.iese.de>), organized by Maya Daneva, Andrea Herrmann, and Patrick Menig. This workshop explores methods like Design Thinking and the integration of AI with human teams to foster creativity and innovation in Requirements Engineering.
- NLP4RE: 9th Workshop on Natural Language Processing for Requirements Engineering (<https://nlp4re.github.io/2026/>), organized by Jacek Dąbrowski, Fabiano Dalpiaz, Farnaz Fotrousi, and Quim Motger. This workshop explores the application of NLP technologies, including large language models (LLMs) and agentic AI, to support and enhance requirements engineering practices.
- PURE: 1st International Workshop on Participatory User-Centric RE (<https://sites.google.com/view/pure26>), organized by Hannah Deters, Jakob Droste, Anne Hess, and Elisa Schmid. This workshop aims to explore the integration of user participation with requirements engineering. The focus is on prioritizing human needs and empathy within the RE process, ensuring that the solutions developed truly resonate with and serve the users effectively.
- RE-OpenS: 1st Interactive Workshop on the Promotion of Open Science in Requirements Engineering (<https://re-opens.github.io/ws-2026/>), organised by Oliver Karras, Lena John, Tobias Hey, and Katharina Großer. This workshop introduces researchers to REFSQ's Open Science Initiative and empowers them to apply open science best practices, infrastructures, services, and tools in their work.
- RE4AI: 7th International Workshop on Requirements Engineering for Artificial Intelligence (<https://sites.google.com/view/re4ai/home>), organized by Jennifer Horkoff, Anna Perini, and Angelo Susi. This workshop aims to raise awareness of RE's role in AI development, facilitate research dissemination, foster collaboration between AI practitioners and RE experts and inspire new ideas.

4. Further Tracks

These proceedings also contain the content of the following tracks:

- Doctoral Symposium: The goals of the Doctoral Symposium, organized by Gunter Mussbacher and Kurt Schneider, are to provide PhD students with an opportunity to learn about the field of RE and to get a feeling of what their colleagues are working on, to provide PhD students with a supportive and safe environment where to present their plans and results, to provide all participant students with feedback from a panel of senior researchers in RE, and to facilitate interaction between students and with established researchers in RE.

- Posters and Tools: The Posters and Tools Track, organized by Elda Paja and Jose Luis de La Vara, is a forum to present posters and demonstrate tools covering any aspect of RE. This track gives researchers and practitioners the opportunity to present their most recent work and to obtain early feedback from the conference participants.
- Education and Training Track: The Education and Training Track (organized by Jennifer Horkoff and Emilio Insfran) provided a forum for educators and practitioners to share experiences, teaching approaches, and lessons learned in requirements engineering education. This year, we had six paper presentations and one paperless presentation. The track highlighted the importance of connecting classroom learning with both the theoretical foundations and the realities of professional practice, while exploring practical ways to better prepare future requirements engineers.

Furthermore, REFSQ 2026 also offered a Journal Early Feedback track, organized by Irit Hadar and Nelly Condori-Fernández. In keeping with REFSQ's tradition as a working conference, this track explicitly excludes already published work. Instead, it welcomes manuscripts that are nearly ready for submission or have just been rejected. Accepted contributions will be presented and discussed at the conference, allowing authors to gather feedback from the REFSQ community and, where relevant, to engage in discussion about reviewers' comments they have received. This track is designed to benefit both authors and the broader community. Authors will receive valuable input to help strengthen their manuscripts, while participants will gain early insights into cutting-edge research and play an active role in shaping its development. However, as the core objective of this track was to provide authors with feedback to their work, the submitted papers will not be included in these proceedings.

5. Acknowledgements

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