Preface: 9th Workshop on Natural Language Processing for Requirements Engineering (NLP4RE'26)

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1. Preface

Natural language processing (NLP) has long played an important role in software engineering, including requirements engineering (RE). For more than 30 years, NLP techniques have supported RE activities such as traceability, automated classification, defect detection, and model generation from textual specifications. Over the past decade, large and heterogeneous natural-language sources relevant to RE have grown substantially, including online user feedback, e.g., tweets and app reviews. This growth has further intensified interest in NLP techniques to support requirements development and management.

Recent advances in large language models (LLMs) and AI agents have significantly expanded the capabilities of NLP, particularly through their generative, interactive, and context-aware abilities. These technologies can actively support key RE activities, such as assisting stakeholders in eliciting requirements through interactive dialogue, refining and analysing requirements, and generating requirements artefacts. As a result, they create new opportunities and challenges for the RE community and further increase the relevance of research at the intersection of NLP and RE.

The Natural Language Processing for Requirements Engineering Workshop (NLP4RE) was established in 2018 to foster communication between researchers and practitioners. The 9th edition (NLP4RE'26, https://nlp4re.github.io/2026/) was held in Poznań, Poland, and was co-located with the 32nd International Working Conference on Requirements Engineering: Foundation for Software Quality (REFSQ 2026).

This year, the NLP4RE workshop received nine submissions. Each paper was reviewed by at least three members of the program committee. Based on these reviews, four papers were accepted. The accepted papers comprised one tool paper, one project report, one technical paper, and one vision paper. The topics covered include LLM-based generation of requirements artefacts, such as user stories and goal models, as well as a new reference architecture for NLP4RE tools and a knowledge graph framework for NLP4RE.

NLP4RE'26 also featured a keynote by Krzysztof Jędrzejewski, AI R&D Director at Pearson, titled "(No) Silver Bullets: Engineering AI Systems That Survive Contact with Reality." The keynote provided a practitioner's perspective on building AI and machine learning systems as part of real-world products. It discussed factors influencing production success, including accuracy, latency, privacy, scalability, and cost, and presented case studies illustrating how trade-offs and uncertainty affect system design. The talk also highlighted how interface design can help mitigate the limitations of AI systems.

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2. Program Committee

We warmly thank all the reviewers of our Program Committee (PC), who helped in the selection of the papers by providing timely and accurate reviews. The PC members of NLP4RE'26 are:

- Daniel Berry, University of Waterloo, Canada
- Giovanna Broccia, CNR, Italy
- Sallam Abualhaija, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- Fatma Başak Aydemir, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
- Davide Fucci, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden
- Henning Femmer, Qualicen GmbH, Germany
- Julian Frattini, Chalmers University of Technology and University of Gothenburg, Sweden
- Xavier Franch, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Spain
- Tobias Hey, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Germany
- Frank Houdek, Daimler AG, Germany
- Muhammad Abbas Khan, RISE Research Institute, Sweden
- Vijayanta Jain, University of Maine, USA
- Sylwia Kopczyńska, Poznan University of Technology, Poland
- Tong Li, Beijing University of Technology, China
- Luisa Mich, University of Trento, Italy
- Lloyd Montgomery, University of Hamburg, Germany
- Mohammad Moshirpour, University of California, Irvine, USA
- Nan Niu, University of Cincinnati, USA
- Marc Oriol, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Spain
- Laura Semini, University of Pisa, Italy
- Andreas Vogelsang, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
- Liping Zhao, University of Manchester, UK

3. Steering Committee

The continuity of the workshop is guaranteed by a steering committee, which currently consists of the following people:

- Sallam Abualhaija, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- Fabiano Dalpiaz, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
- Alessio Ferrari, University College Dublin, Ireland & CNR-ISTI, Italy
- Xavier Franch, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Spain