Preface – ICCBR Doctoral Consortium 2026

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Pierre-Alexandre Murena	Antonio Sánchez-Ruiz	Nirmalie Wiratunga

The eighteenth ICCBR Doctoral Consortium (DC) took place August 12 and 16, 2026 in Bremen, Germany. Since ICCBR 2009, the DC has been an integral part of the annual Case-Based Reasoning conference, inviting Ph.D. candidates to submit their research statements for discussion with senior community members. Ph.D. candidates apply to the program by submitting summaries of their doctoral research, including the problems they are addressing, their proposed research plans, and progress made to date.

We received and accepted six submissions from three countries. Updated versions of the research summaries are included in this volume. In these, Mahmoud Ajami applies CBR to improve anomaly detection explainability, Erwan Diebold aims at applying CBR to music emotion recognition from multivariate time series, Lasal Jayawardena integrates CBR principles to LLM pipelines, Marc Krüger focuses on the utility of CBR approaches for cybersecurity incident retrieval, Cyprien Pankowski studies automatic classification of cetacean vocalizations using a neuro-symbolic approach that combines neural networks with expert symbolic knowledge (including CBR), and Tolga Tel investigates the use of CBR methods to improve RAG, especially for the adaptation of business process explanations.

The DC activities commenced on Wednesday, August 12th, with a two-hour session in which mentees and mentors met to discuss the research statements and make final preparations for the Sunday presentations. On Sunday, the first session was dedicated to carreer reflections, with a talk from Pierre-Alexandre Murena and a panel of senior CBR community members, to discuss carreer questions with the PhD students. After this, the six contributions were presented orally, followed by a discussion led by their respective mentors.

We would like to express our gratitude to the AI Journal for supporting the DC. With assistance from the ICCBR 2026 organizers, we received funding that enabled us to help defray expenses for DC participants. Additionally, we extend our appreciation to the PC members who provided detailed and valuable feedback on the research statements. We would like to thank the students, mentors, and program committee members for their hard work and dedication in making the DC a resounding success.

Mirjam Minor and Jean Lieber

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Mentee-Mentor Pairings

Mentee	Mentor
Mahmoud Ajami (Hamburg University of Technology, Germany)	David Leake (Indiana University, USA)
Erwan Diebold (Université de Lorraine, France)	Ralph Bergmann (University of Trier, Germany)
Lasal Jayawardena (Robert Gordon University, UK)	Pierre-Alexandre Murena (Hamburg University of Technology, Germany)
Marc Krüger (Stiftung Universität Hildesheim, Germany)	Kyle Martin (The Robert Gordon University, UK)
Cyprien Pankowski (Université de La Réunion, France)	Antonio A. Sánchez-Ruiz (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain)
Tolga Tel (Goethe University, Germany)	Nirmalie Wiratunga (The Robert Gordon University, UK)