Preface of the Proceedings of FRAME 2026: Methodology First - Rethinking Research Assessment in RecSys Workshop

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The *Methodology First - Rethinking Research Assessment in RecSys Workshop (FRAME'26)* was held on September 28, 2026, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. The workshop aimed to foster discussion on more rigorous and transparent research assessment practices in recommender systems, with particular attention to experimental methodology and the development of shared evaluation practices.

FRAME'26 featured two submission tracks: *Research Papers* and *Experimental Methodologies*. Topics of interest included rigorous evaluation methodologies for recommender systems; task definition and problem assumptions; dataset selection and preprocessing; data partitioning and leakage prevention; baseline selection; evaluation metrics; hyperparameter optimization and model selection; statistical testing and uncertainty estimation; ablation, sensitivity, and robustness analyses; fair comparison of algorithms in terms of computational and optimization budgets; reproducibility; methodological standards and best practices; evaluation protocols for established and emerging recommendation tasks; and the identification of missing datasets, frameworks, simulation tools, and other resources needed to support rigorous experimental research.

There were 15 papers submitted for peer review: 8 to the Experimental Methodologies Track and 7 to the Research Papers Track. Of these, 9 papers were accepted for inclusion in these proceedings: 7 from the Experimental Methodologies Track and 2 from the Research Papers Track.

Submissions to the two tracks followed different review procedures. Research Papers were evaluated through a double-blind, two-stage, methodology-first and results-agnostic review process. In the first stage, reviewers assessed the technical and theoretical soundness of the proposed work and the rigor and appropriateness of its experimental methodology without considering the experimental results. Papers passing this stage were subsequently evaluated considering the complete manuscript, including the results, their interpretation, and the reproducibility of the work.

Experimental Methodologies submissions followed a single-blind review process, focusing on clarity, relevance, methodological insight, discussion value, and their potential to contribute to improved research practices in the community.

Each submission received at least 2 reviews. We gratefully acknowledge the members of the Program Committee:

- Alejandro Bellogin, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid
- Michael Benigni, Politecnico di Milano

FRAME'26: Methodology First - Rethinking Research Assessment in RecSys Workshop, September 28, 2026, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

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CEUR Workshop Proceedings ceur-ws.org ISSN 1613-0073
published 2026-11-26

CEUR-WS.org/Vol-4341/preface.pdf

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- Claudio Pomo, Politecnico di Bari
- David Rohde, Criteo
- Tobias Vente, University of Siegen
- Alexey Vasilev, SB AI Lab
- Eva Zangerle, University of Innsbruck

We thank all authors for their contributions, the Program Committee members for their careful reviews, and all workshop participants for contributing to the discussions and the success of the first edition of FRAME.