Message from the FAST '21 Program Co-Chairs

Welcome to the 19th USENIX Conference on File and Storage Technologies (FAST '21). This year's conference continues the tradition of bringing together researchers and practitioners from both industry and academia for a program of innovative and rigorous storage-related research. It is, however, the first time that FAST is held online due to the current worldwide travel restrictions. We are pleased to present a diverse set of papers on topics such as cloud storage, key-value stores, consistency, reliability, caching, HPC systems, SSD, and traditional file systems. Submissions to the conference came from authors representing academia, industry, and the open-source community.

FAST '21 received 130 submissions. Of these, we accepted 28 papers, for an acceptance rate of 21%. The Program Committee used a two-round online review process and then held a two-day virtual PC meeting to select the final program. In the first round, each paper was assigned three reviewers. In the second round, 80 papers were assigned at least two more reviews. The Program Committee discussed 35 papers in the PC meeting on December 7–8, 2020, spanning 17 time-zones. We used Eddie Kohler's excellent HotCRP service to manage all stages of the review process, from submission to author notification.

As in the previous years, we included a category of deployed-systems papers, which address experience with the practical design, implementation, analysis, or deployment of large-scale, operational systems. We received 8 deployed-systems submissions and we accepted 3. Unlike previous years, there was no special category for short papers.

We wish to thank the many people who contributed to this conference. First and foremost, we are grateful to all the authors who submitted their work to FAST '21. We would also like to thank the attendees of FAST '21 and the future readers of these papers. Together with the authors, you form the FAST community and make storage research vibrant and exciting. We extend our thanks to the entire USENIX staff, especially Casey Henderson, Jasmine Murcia, and Arnold Gatilao, who have provided outstanding support throughout the planning and organizing of this conference with the highest degree of professionalism and friendliness. Most importantly, their behind-the-scenes work makes this conference actually happen. We would like to thank the Work-in-Progress Session Chairs, Peter Macko and Amy Tai. Our thanks go also to the members of the FAST Steering Committee who provided invaluable advice and feedback, and to our Steering Committee Liaison, Keith Smith, for his guidance and encouragement on many issues, large and small, over the past year.

Finally, we wish to thank our Program Committee for their many hours of hard work reviewing, discussing, and shepherding the submissions. In total, the PC wrote 557 thoughtful and meticulous reviews and 1491 online comments. HotCRP recorded approximately 375,000 words in reviews and comments (excluding HotCRP boilerplate language). The reviewers' evaluations, and their thorough and conscientious deliberations at the PC meeting, contributed significantly to the quality of our decisions. Each paper had a shepherd that reviewed the final submission and provided additional feedback. In many cases, this led to significant improvements in the final quality of the submissions. We look forward to an interesting and enjoyable conference!

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