Reviewing for 2019 Conference:

The reviewing panel has thirty members and works as ten teams of three. There is also a reserve panel of three in case any member of the reviewing panel has to step down unexpectedly during the reviewing process. The reviewing panel for the 2019 conference had vacancies for six new members. Because expressions of interest in the available places were slow, three of the six new members were taken from the reserve panel. This emptied that panel. Just two persons were then found to serve on the reserve panel for 2019. In the event it turned out that only one was needed. Finding sufficient new members for the reviewing panel from year to year is an unpredictable business, but things have worked out successfully each year. Over the three-year term of office of the outgoing Programme Chair there have been fourteen replacements in the reviewing panel. This is a reasonably good turnover, bearing in mind that the panel needs a balance of more experienced members and new members.

During Summer of 2018 an amended document, “Procedures and Advice for Reviewing Panel”, was drafted by the Programme Chair in consultation with the Conference committee. This was approved by the Executive Committee on 14/11/18 and was ready for the reviewing process for the 2019 conference. The new steps introduced worked well and there were far fewer queries arising during the reviewing process than in the previous year. Representatives of the reviewing panel met on 22nd January and final decisions were made on the 2019 submissions. The following are the figures for the 2019 conference and the breakdown by category. The figures in brackets are the corresponding ones for 2018.

Submissions received: 123 (119 in 2018)
Submissions accepted: 63, or 51% (66, or 55% in 2018)

Breakdown of the 2019 figures
Papers accepted: 36 (42 in 2018) Paper declined: 46 (35 in 2018)
Workshops accepted: 5 (9 in 2018) Workshops declined: 7 (16 in 2018)
Posters accepted: 11 (11 in 2018) Posters declined: 0 (0 in 2018)

Issue for Consideration – Word Count: This caused problems again this year, though eventually only two submissions – which considerably exceeded the word count – were declined for word count reasons. Following a review of the word count question at the February 2019 meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, agreement was reached that stricter wording was needed, removing ambiguities that can still arise from interpretations of the current Call for Papers. The Programme Chair agreed to draft some new wording for the Call for Papers and the Frequently Asked Questions and to bring the new drafts before the next scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee on 29th March 2019 – i.e. the day before the AGM. A short verbal report on the outcome will be presented to the AGM.