

Rachel Greenstadt, Damon McCoy, and Carmela Troncoso

Editors' Introduction

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It is our great pleasure to introduce the fourth issue of the fourth volume of PoPETs, an open access journal that publishes articles accepted to the annual Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS).

Since 2015 PoPETS/PETS follows the hybrid conference-journal model started by PVLDB, and now adopted by many other conferences in the field such as FSE, CHES or the IEEE Security and Privacy Symposium. This model, that brings journal-style reviewing to conferences, has improved the quality of the published articles, and has improved the authors' experience regarding the review process. PoPETS double-blind peer review process is similar to that of top-tier computer security conferences, including phases for bidding, individual reviews, author rebuttals, discussion among reviewers, and consensus recommendation. By having four issues per year, to which articles can be re-submitted once previous reviews have been addressed, PoPETS provides a more predictable path to acceptance for authors while maintaining a high quality rigorous peer-review process. Recognizing the need to increase the free, public availability of scientific publications, PoPETs is published under the open-access Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs license.

Articles submitted to this issue were reviewed by 94 members of the Editorial Board and 67 External Reviewers. The submitted articles, reviews, and discussion were available to all members of the editorial board that did not have a conflict of interest with the authors of the article. To identify conflicts of interest, the editorial board membership was published before submissions were opened and authors were asked to indicate members with whom any of the authors had a conflict of interest. In addition, editorial board members were asked to list the authors and institutions with which they have conflicts of interest. Finally, the editorial board chairs

also checked for missed conflicts. Editorial board members were welcome to submit articles, while the chairs were precluded from doing so.

There were 77 submissions to this issue of PoPETs. Four of the 64 submissions had been invited to resubmit after major revision in a previous issue, which were re-assigned to the editorial board members that had reviewed the previous version. Additionally, nine articles that had been rejected from a previous issue were re-submitted to the journal, and were re-assigned to the same reviewers whenever possible. For all these resubmissions the authors provided a summary of changes between the prior and current version that explained how review concerns had been addressed.

In a first reviewing phase most of the submissions received four individual reviews (in a few cases, articles received three or more than four reviews). Most articles had an external review drawn from a pool of young experts proposed by the community¹. Further external experts were invited to review certain articles where necessary. The reviews were sent to authors, who were given the opportunity to submit a rebuttal. After the rebuttal period there was a discussion among the reviewers, other members of the editorial board and the chairs to reach a consensus decision for each paper. One of the reviewers was then selected to write a meta-review that summarized the conclusion of the discussion and the justification for the decision.

Of the 77 submissions, four were accepted with minor changes and eight were conditionally accepted subject to minor revisions. For the latter, a reviewer was assigned as a shepherd to ensure that the important points from the meta-review were addressed in the camera-ready version. For one article we assigned two shepherds, to introduce a junior reviewer to the shepherding process. Eleven articles were ultimately accepted and are published in this issue.

The authors of 41 other articles were invited to resubmit to a future issue of PoPETs. Thirteen of them received a Major Revisions decisions and, if submitted to one of the next PoPETs two submission deadlines, will be reviewed by the same editorial board members who will judge if the major issues pointed in the meta-review are addressed. The remaining 28 received an encourag-

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¹ <https://bit.ly/2gxVDd8>

ing meta-review that pointed revisions needed that were deemed too serious or too abstract to be addressed in short time. Eighteen papers were rejected due to them requiring a major rewriting that effectively results in a new paper, or due to not being considered sufficiently close to the topics listed in the call for papers. Finally, five papers were rejected without revision due to being out of scope or not being compliant with the call for papers.

The 11 accepted articles in Issue 4 of this 2018 volume, and the 24 articles published in Issues 1, 2, and 3, formed the program for PETS 2018, which was held from July 24–27, 2018 in Barcelona, Spain. For all four 2018 issues combined, there were 218 submissions (of which 19 were major revisions and 31 were resubmitted reject-and-resubmit), 35 accepted papers (of which 13 were major revisions and 8 were resubmitted reject-and-resubmit), and 28 papers were given a Major Revision decision.

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We would like also like to thank all the PETS and HotPETS authors, especially those who presented their work that was selected for the program, as well as the rump session presenters, keynote speakers, and panelists.

Finally, we are happy to introduce Kostas Chatzikokolakis as the new Co-Editor-in-Chief for the current and next volumes, starting in this issue. Carmela Troncoso will continue to serve as Co-Editor-in-Chief for this the 2019 volume. We thank Rachel Greenstadt and Damon McCoy for their service as Co-Editor-in-Chief for Volumes 2017 and 2018.

Sincerely,

Rachel Greenstadt, Damon McCoy, and Carmela Troncoso

Program Co-Chairs of PETS 2018 and Co-Editors-in-Chief of PoPETS volume 2018.

We would like to thank ETICAS for organizing the Privacy Enhancing Technology Symposium where the papers of Volume 2018 were presented. We would also like