

FOCI '19: 9th USENIX Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet

August 13, 2019 • Santa Clara, CA, USA



Sponsored by USENIX, the Advanced Computing Systems Association

The 9th USENIX Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet (FOCI '19) will be co-located with the 28th USENIX Security Symposium and will take place August 13 at the Hyatt Regency Santa Clara in Santa Clara, CA, USA.

Important Dates

- Paper submissions due: **Thursday, May 23, 2019 (no extensions)**
- Notification to authors: **Thursday, June 20, 2019**
- Final papers due: **Thursday, July 18, 2019**

Conference Organizers

Program Co-Chairs

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Overview

The 9th USENIX Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet (FOCI '19) will bring together researchers and practitioners from technology, law, and policy who are working on means to study, detect, or circumvent practices that inhibit free and open communications on the Internet.

Topics

We encourage submission of original, interesting work on a wide variety of censorship-related topics. This includes direct censorship mechanisms—both technical and legal—as well as indirect methods of censorship on otherwise open platforms through coordinated harassment campaigns and online astroturfing that may be used to drown out and/or chill free expression. A more detailed (but not exhaustive) list of potential topics of interest includes:

- Measurement, detection, and analysis (including metrics) of Internet censorship and censorship circumvention tools
- Techniques to detect, circumvent, or analyze the impact of mass surveillance or its effects
- Studies of how online harassment, fake news, and/or astroturfing drown out and/or chill free expression



- Usability, deployment, and performance studies for censorship-resistant systems
- Legal, economic, policy, social, and/or ethical considerations in the design and deployment of censorship or censorship-resistant tools
- Analyses of private corporations' role in enabling surveillance and censorship
- The potential impact of various regulatory approaches (e.g. the GDPR and/or California's "bot law") on speech and expression online
- Legal, economic, policy, social, and ethical analyses of issues related to Internet censorship, surveillance, or surveillance/censorship circumvention practices and tools
- Understanding censoring adversaries and attack capabilities, including theoretical modeling/analysis and surveillance tools
- Deployment of circumvention mechanisms in real-world platforms, such as Tor
- Effects of censorship or surveillance on individuals, society, business, or political processes
- Extraterritorial effects of domestic and regional legislation on global populations seeking free and secure communications

We emphasize that this workshop seeks to draw submissions from a range of disciplines. As such, non-technical work that examines the wider implications of censorship, surveillance, and their effects will be considered favorably.

What to Submit

FOCI will favor interesting and new ideas and early results that lead to well-founded position papers. We envision that work presented at FOCI will ultimately be published at relevant, high-quality conferences. Papers will be selected primarily based on originality, with additional consideration given to their potential to generate discussion at the workshop. Papers in the technical track will also be evaluated based on technical merit. FOCI is a single-track event, but we invite two distinct types of paper submission: technically-focused position papers or works-in-progress; and papers focused on policy, law, regulation, economics, or related fields of social science and study.

Submission Guidelines

Technical Track: Submitted papers must be no longer than six 8.5" x 11" pages (excluding references and appendices), based on the standard USENIX format. Please note, however, that reviewers are not required to read appendices, and papers should be able to stand on their own without them. All Technical Track papers should be in the standard USENIX format. Specifically, regarding page limits, your paper should be typeset in two-column format in 10-point type on 12-point (single-spaced) leading, with a text block no more than 7" wide by 9" deep, on U.S. letter-size (8.5" x 11") paper.

Law/Social Science Track: Submitted papers must be no longer than 15 8.5" x 11" pages based on the standard USENIX format or if preferable, 15 single-spaced pages using normal 8.5" x 11" format pages. Shorter papers are encouraged where possible, though organizers will be more flexible on page count with this track, granting exceptions on a case-by-case basis. References will not count towards the page limit. Law/Social Science Track papers are not required to be in the standard USENIX format but can be. Papers must still fit on U.S. letter-size (8.5" x 11") paper. This track aims to encourage submissions from fields such as law, economics, and public policy, where longer articles are traditional.

Technically focused papers submitted to any track may be desk-rejected if they exceed the page limit for technical papers.

Papers must be submitted via the submission form linked from the Call for Papers web page. Papers must be properly anonymized; no author names or affiliations may appear on the title page, and authors should avoid revealing their identities in the text. When referring to your previous work, do so in the third person, as though it were written by someone else. Only blind the reference itself in the (unusual) case that a third-person reference is infeasible.

Papers accompanied by nondisclosure agreement forms will not be considered. Accepted submissions will be treated as confidential prior to publication on the USENIX FOCI '19 website; rejected submissions will be permanently treated as confidential.

Simultaneous submission of the same work to multiple venues, submission of previously published work, or plagiarism constitutes dishonesty or fraud. USENIX, like other scientific and technical conferences and journals, prohibits these practices and may take action against authors who have committed them. See the USENIX Conference Submissions Policy (www.usenix.org/submissionpolicy) for details. Note, however, that we expect that many working papers accepted for FOCI '19 will eventually be extended as full papers suitable for formal academic publication and presentation at future conferences, and such papers are eligible for submission to FOCI.

Papers that do not comply with the submission requirements, including length and anonymity, may be rejected without review.

Please do not hesitate to contact the program co-chairs at foci19chairs@usenix.org if you have any questions about the submission process or other aspects of FOCI '19.

Accepted Papers

All accepted papers will be available online to registered attendees before the workshop. If your paper should not be published prior to the event, please notify production@usenix.org. The papers will be available online to everyone beginning on the day of the workshop, August 13, 2019.

Papers accepted to the technical track will receive one extra page to address reviewer comments. Any references or appendices (which do not count toward the page limit) included in the camera-ready version of the paper will appear in the online version of the paper.

Accepted papers will typically be published without anonymization of the authors, but anonymization is allowed to protect the authors' safety when needed. An author of each accepted paper is expected to present the paper at the workshop and to register for it, but exceptions can be made for safety or financial hardship.

Call for Short Talks

We invite informal short talks on any of the topics listed above. We are interested in discussions of preliminary or ongoing work as well as updates on previously completed work. We also welcome announcements about related events or projects as well as informal or less serious presentations. See the Call for Short Talks (www.usenix.org/foci19/cfp-short-talks) for more information.

Questions?

Contact your program co-chairs, foci19chairs@usenix.org, or the USENIX office, submissionpolicy@usenix.org.