SRECON_ EUROPE MIDDLE EAST AFRICA

usenix
THE ADVANCED
COMPUTING SYSTEMS
ASSOCIATION

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS • 25–27 October, 2022

Sponsored by USENIX, the Advanced Computing Systems Association

Important Dates

- Talk and panel proposals due: **Thursday, June 30, 2022, 23:59 UTC**
- Notification to talk and panel presenters: **Tuesday, August 9, 2022**
- Confirmation of acceptances and deadline for program materials: **Tuesday, August 23, 2022**

Overview

For SREcon this year, we want to raise the question:
"What could SRE be?"

Previous years have explored what the current state of SRE is. This year, we want to explore both the edges and the foundations of what it is we do. As usual, every talk submission is absolutely welcome, but we are particularly interested in receiving forward-looking talk proposals that set out a new vision for any of the areas SRE touches. For example:

- Do you have an idea for how to reinvent graphical displays of monitoring information?
- Have you some insights from cognitive science that could be applied to incident response?
- Is there a larger vision that would help to illuminate how to solve capacity planning for not just your team, but (say) everyone using major cloud platforms?

We are also deeply interested in talks which don't push the boundary, but re-lay the foundations:

- How can we model reliability better?
- Can we start to understand how different reliability profiles affect user service "stickiness"?
- What tradeoffs exist between reliability and feature work in a backlog?
- Are there alternative descriptions of production requirements to the "Dickerson pyramid" (https://sre.google/sre-book/part-III-practices/)?

We should hear more from other communities at SREcon, since we benefit strongly from hearing how others do things: how they model their situations, and apply their techniques. For this SREcon, we explicitly invite speakers from other communities to talk about what it's like elsewhere – for example, machine learning, physical engineering, safety science and/or resilience engineering, psychology, and economics.

A particularly important group we hardly ever hear from is product software engineering. Much of our work supports such teams, yet we hardly ever hear what it's like to work with us, what their experience is of how we're organised, and how we could best work together for the good of the users. Finally, those with experience-based comparisons between SRE, DevOps, and ITIL are also welcome, since it is by understanding our past and current situation that we can best hope to forge a new SRE.

Join us in creating an excellent program for SREcon22 EMEA as the community solidifies best practices for SRE 1.0, and prepares the ground for SRE 2.0!

Since 2016, participants have come from a wide variety of backgrounds: small startups, tech giants with tens of thousands of employees, finance and enterprise sector companies adopting or expanding SRE in their organizations, and academia. New speakers are encouraged to submit talks; many of our best talks have come from people with new perspectives to share and the previous year most certainly has given us all new experiences and stories we can share and learn from.

We welcome and encourage participation from all individuals in any country, including people that are underrepresented in, or excluded from, technology, including but not limited to: people of all colors, women, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities, neurodiverse participants, students, veterans, and others with unique characteristics. Similarly, we welcome participants from diverse professional roles: QA testers, customer experience/support, security teams, DBAs, network administrators, compliance experts, UX designers, health care professionals, scientists, and economists. Regardless of who you are or the job title you hold, if you are a technologist who faces unique challenges and shares our areas of interest, we encourage you to be a part of SREcon22 Europe/Middle East/Africa.

Talks

- Talks
  - 15-minute talks followed by 5 minutes for Q&A
  - 30-minute talks followed by 10 minutes for Q&A
- Panels
  - Discuss a specific topic and engage in a conversation with a small group in front of the attendees. Duration is flexible.

Suggested Topics

For this SREcon, we invite speakers from other communities to talk about what it's like elsewhere.

- **Physical engineering:** What reliability challenges exist in your field and what are the best practices to address them? As per Hillel Wayne's famous Crossover Project, engineering practitioners that move from physical to software engineering often say there's a lot that carries over directly. We would love to hear from you.
- **Safety science and/or resilience engineering:** How can we best accommodate the "socio" component of socio-technical systems? How can we talk about these issues in a way which is likely to be heard, not just to individual contributors, but also to managers and VPs?
- **Psychology:** How do we avoid burnout, and scale in a sustainable way? How do we build cultures of psychological safety? When cultures without safety exist, what are those cultures achieving and for whom?
- **Economics:** Is there a relationship between reliability and economic incentives? Can we understand the economics of the datacenter to inform our work better? What about designing change mechanisms in companies to take advantage of network effects?
- **Artificial intelligence or machine learning:** How can SREs use ML/AI to better operate production services? What are the specifics that SREs need to know for properly supporting ML services? Is there any relationship between the two?

Systems Engineering/Principles Track

With the popularity of the Core Principles track at previous SREcon conferences, we have decided to continue this component at SREcon22. Systems Engineering track talks should focus on aspects of foundational technologies that are important to understand when supporting and scaling infrastructure.

For this track, we are looking for a number of topics, such as:

- **Performance** (e.g., CPU affinity, bottlenecks)
- **Databases** (e.g., how is data stored on disk in MySQL, PostgreSQL, etc.?)
- **Observability** (e.g., monitoring overview, events vs. metrics, whitebox vs. blackbox, visualizations, debugging, etc.)
- **Distributed Systems** (e.g., consistency and consensus, Hadoop, MapReduce, Containers)
- **Network** (e.g., SD WAN, HTTP routing and load balancing, DNS)
- **Firmware** (e.g., Open Source Firmware, UEFI)
- **Security** (e.g., TPMs, Hardware Security Modules, transport encryption, filesystem encryption, data management)

Panel Discussions

- Have you worked at an organization that dealt with unexpected scale during the pandemic (e.g., organizations that focused on food delivery, streaming, medical services, media, COVID-19 response work)? Create a discussion forum across different SRE teams in your organization to talk about the problems you faced and ways in which you dealt with them.
- Compare and contrast how SRE is practiced across different types of systems or technical domains. What are the nuances you have discovered or experienced? Invite key stakeholders from these systems to participate in a discussion.
- Tell us about a challenging incident that you have experienced and resolved. Bring some of your team members onto this panel and tell us the story about what happened and how the team coordinated, reacted to, and solved the problem.

Speaker Information

To see the details of what we want to know about your proposal to speak, we encourage you to click through into the talks submission system.

If you are a new presenter or would just like some extra help, please reach out. We can provide support via practice sessions, review of your pre-recorded videos, and a helpful guide on how to record your presentation to get the best results possible.

Both presenters and organizers may withdraw or decline proposals for any reason, even after initial acceptance. Speakers must submit their own proposals; third-party submissions, even if authorized, will be rejected.

SREcon22 Europe/Middle East/Africa is scheduled to be held in Amsterdam. We will consider talks from remote-only presenters but strongly encourage in-person participation at the conference. Since health restrictions are likely to change between the time of this CFP and the actual conference, we will adjust the requirements as the situation evolves.

If you have questions about this Call for Participation, feel free to drop us a message at srecon22emea_chairs@ usenix.org.

Background (Overarching goals of the world-wide SREcon conferences)

SREcon is a gathering of engineers who care deeply about site reliability, systems engineering, and working with complex distributed systems at scale. Our purpose is to be inclusive as we bring together ideas representative of our diverse community, whether its members are focusing on a global scale, launching new products and ideas for a small business, or pivoting their approach to unite software and systems engineering. SREcon challenges both those new to the profession as well as those who have been involved in SRE or related endeavors for years. The conference culture is built upon respectful collaboration amongst all participants in the community through critical thought, deep technical insights, continuous improvement, and innovation.

For more information on the themes and programs of past conferences, see the list of past conferences (https://www.usenix.org/srecon#past).

Conference Organizers

Program Co-Chairs

Daria Barteneva, Microsoft
Niall Murphy, RelyAbility

Program Committee

TBA

Steering Committee

Kurt Andersen, Blameless
Narayan Desai, Google
Sabrina Farmer, Google
Liz Fong-Jones, Honeycomb
Casey Henderson, USENIX Association
Xiao Li, JPMorgan Chase
John Looney, Facebook Inc.
Laura Nolan, Slack
Mike Rembetsy, Bloomberg
Emil Stolarsky
Avleen Vig, Facebook Inc.
Fernanda Weiden