

Message from the General Chairs
COMSNETS 2026

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the **18th International Conference on COMmunication Systems & NETworkS (COMSNETS 2026)**, being held in **Bengaluru, India, January 6–10, 2026**. Over the last seventeen years, COMSNETS has grown into a premier global forum for networking and communications research, bringing together a community that spans academia, industry, startups, and policymakers. Each year, the conference feels both like a reunion of familiar faces and a discovery of new ones—an energetic gathering where ideas get challenged, refined, and launched into the world.

This year's keynotes capture the breadth and momentum of our field with a focus on the network, from the theoretical to the practical. **Stefano Salsano (University of Rome Tor Vergata)** will speak on *Networking for AI*, focusing on AI fabrics and how technologies like SRv6 can reshape GPU-scale data center interconnects. **Alexandre Proutiere (KTH Royal Institute of Technology)** will discuss *Statistical and Computational Trade-offs in Network Optimization*, highlighting algorithms that are both provably optimal and practical. **Ranjita Bhagwan (Google)** will address *Observability in Google's Autonomous Network*, describing the challenges of operating one of the world's largest networks and the data-driven approaches enabling autonomy at scale. The conference also features a banquet talk from **Shivkumar Kalyanaram**; Known worldwide for being a visionary, this banquet talk will shed some light on his thoughts on the AI future for Science and Engineering and how the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) will transform the research and innovation landscape in India.

COMSNETS 2026 offers a rich, carefully curated program designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of interests in communications, networking, sensing, distributed systems, and emerging intersections with AI/ML and cyber-physical technologies. The main conference features peer-reviewed technical papers as its backbone, complemented by these keynote addresses and invited talks from distinguished leaders whose work is shaping the future of our fields. As in prior editions, we have also organized panels to spotlight timely questions at the boundary of technology, deployment, and policy, with space for healthy debate among panelists and attendees.

A hallmark of COMSNETS is that the experience extends well beyond the podium sessions. COMSNETS 2026 will include:

- focused workshops on emerging areas,
- demos and exhibits showcasing working systems and prototypes,
- poster sessions highlighting new and in-progress research,

- graduate and undergraduate forums to support early researchers,
- mentoring and community events aimed at broadening participation and strengthening professional networks,
- industry-academia engagement opportunities that connect research with practice.

We also continue to value the informal moments that make COMSNETS feel like a true community gathering—hallway conversations, chai breaks, and social events that renew old collaborations and spark new ones.

Organizing COMSNETS continues to be a labor of love. What makes this conference special is not only the papers and talks, but the people behind them: a distributed organizing team that works across institutions, countries, and time zones to build a week that is technically deep and allowing time for networking. Many of the individuals acknowledged below have also done double and triple duty and have gone over and beyond typically professional service. We are deeply grateful to the Steering Committee especially Uday Desai, Giridhar Mandyam and Rajeev Shorey for their sustained vision and guidance, and to the many members of the Organizing Committee whose dedication makes the conference possible. We would like to acknowledge the leadership of our Technical Program Co-Chairs Parimal Parag, Abhinav Kumar, and Giovanni Giambene, who shaped a strong and forward-looking technical program; I+ART Co-Chairs Dhananjay Gore and Anurag Kumar for strengthening industry-academia connections.

We also thank Poster Co-Chairs Dheryta Jaisinghani, Shantanu Pal, and Rohit Verma, Demos & Exhibits Co-Chairs Kaustubh Dhondge, Alok Ranjan, and Meera Radhakrishnan, and Panel Co-Chairs Kalapriya Kannan, Nadeem Akhtar, and Prasant Misra for building lively, high-engagement tracks that are central to the COMSNETS experience. Our gratitude extends to Publication Co-Chairs Amitalok J. Budkuley and Mainack Mondal, who ensure that the papers are published in the IEEE system in a timely manner. The conference finances have been efficiently handled by Chandrika Sridhar and Raj Sharma, student travel grants have been overseen by Co-Chairs Bhuvana Krishnaswamy and Tarun Mangla. The graduate forum has been co-chaired by Pragma Kar, Debasree Das and Tanya Sreedhar, while the undergraduate forum has been co-chaired by Kaushik Chowhan and Ojaswa Varshney. The webchairs, Kaushik Chowhan, Indrajeet Ghosh and Bhumil Rangholiya, have been busy all year round in ensuring timely updated and relevant website for the conference. We also thank the IT co-chairs, Raj Sharma and Harsh Vardhan. This year also features the launch of our own home developed COMSNETS App developed by Ojaswa Varshney. The large number of attendees (as of the time of writing this note the total is expected to be the largest for COMSNETS ever) is possible due to the publicity of

the social media co-chairs, Garvit Chugh, Meenu Dey and Sugandh Pargal and the publicity chairs, Abhishek Kumar, Gaurav Shinde, Pranay Agarwal, Shikar Verma and Farheen Fauziya. Registration has been handled by Chandrika Sridhar and Sushma Srinivasan. We also acknowledge the many other volunteers whose behind-the-scenes work enables everything you see this week.

Most importantly, we thank the authors for entrusting COMSNETS with your best work, and the attendees—you are the heart of the conference. Your participation is what keeps COMSNETS intellectually vibrant and forward-looking. Whether this is your first COMSNETS or your eighteenth, welcome—we are delighted you are here, and we look forward to meeting you during the conference.

Sincerely,

Ranveer Chandra (Microsoft), Carla Fabiana Chiasserini (Politecnico di Torino), and Dinesh Rajan (SMU)

General Chairs, COMSNETS 2026