

CIFREM SEMINARS

THE ROLE OF STIGMERGIC COORDINATION IN SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT: EXAMPLES FROM FLOSS PROJECTS

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3.00 PM – DISA seminar room
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Coordination in software development teams has been a topic of perennial interest in empirical software engineering research. The vast majority of this literature has drawn on a conceptual separation between work and coordination mechanisms, separate from the work itself, which enable groups to achieve coordination. Traditional recommendations and software methods focused on planning: using analysis to predict and manage dependencies. Empirical research has demonstrated the limits of this approach, showing that many important dependencies are emergent and pointing to the persistent importance of explicit discussion to managing these dependencies as they arise. Drawing on work in Computer-Supported Collaborative Work and building from an analogy to collaboration amongst insects (stigmergy), we argue that the work product itself plays an under-appreciated role in helping software developers manage dependencies as they arise.

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