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Preface

This volume contains the proceedings of the 18th FST&TCS conference (Foundations of Software Technology and Theoretical Computer Science), organized under the auspices of the Indian Association for Research in Computing Science (<http://www.imsc.ernet.in/iarcs>).

This year's conference attracted 93 submissions from as many as 22 countries. Each submission was reviewed by at least three independent referees. The Programme Committee met on August 1 and 2, 1998, at Chennai and selected 28 papers for inclusion in the conference programme. We thank the Programme Committee members and the reviewers for their sincere efforts.

We are fortunate to have six invited speakers this year, providing for a very attractive programme: Rajeev Alur, Ken McMillan, Neil Immerman, John Reif, Erik Meineche Schmidt and Umesh Vazirani. The conference has two *theme sessions*: Model Checking (with invited talks by Alur and McMillan, and 4 contributed papers), and Quantum Computation (with invited talks by Schmidt and Vazirani). Moreover, the conference is preceded by a two-day workshop (December 14–15, 1998) on Molecular Computing (organized by Kamala Krithivasan), and a two-day school (December 15–16, 1998) on Finite Model Theory (organized by Anuj Dawar and Anil Seth). The Molecular Computation Workshop includes talks by Natasha Jonoska, Kamala Krithivasan, Georghé Paun, John Reif, Yasubumi Sakakibara, Rani Siromoney and K. G. Subramanian. The speakers at the Finite Model Theory school include Anuj Dawar, Martin Grohe, Neil Immerman, Anil Seth, Wolfgang Thomas, Moshe Vardi and Victor Vianu. Interestingly, Immerman's conference talk relates Finite Model Theory and Model Checking, whereas Reif's conference talk is on comparing the Molecular and Quantum models of computation. We thank all the invited speakers for agreeing to talk at the conference, as well as for providing abstracts and articles for the Proceedings.

The Institute of Mathematical Sciences and the Spic Mathematical Institute, both at Chennai, have co-hosted the conference. We thank these Institutes, as well as the others who extended financial support, agencies of the Government of India and private software companies in India.

We thank members of the Organizing committee for making it happen. Special thanks go to the staff of our Institute and Alfred Hoffmann of Springer Verlag for help with the Proceedings.

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