

# IES Periodicals Editorial Policy and Guidelines

March 2016

## 1. Preamble

Quality publishing is very important for disseminating the latest knowledge and technological developments to IES membership and beyond. It is a team effort involving authors, reviewers, editorial staff and readers. IES Publications Committee aims to provide a framework that allows all constituents to participate in the publication process fairly and effectively.

This document outlines guidelines, roles and responsibilities of Author, Reviewer, Associate Editor (AE), Guest Editors (GE) for special sections, Co-Editor-in-Chief (Co-EiC), and Editor-in-Chief (EiC), in the quality publishing process. It also stipulates necessary policies and procedures for IES periodical operations.

## 2. Guidelines for Authors, Reviewers, AEs, Co-EiCs, EiCs and GEs

### *Author*

Authors submit their work to IES periodicals because of the reputations and effective publication processes for dissemination of research results. Authors should be aware that a paper that is worthy going through a proper review process should comprise:

- A succinct abstract limited to 150-200 words;
- A max of 10 Keywords;
- An overview introduction of the paper content;
- Theoretical/conceptual background that can be justified by either mathematical formulation and/or heuristic/statistical analysis;
- Verification via simulations and/or experimental results/measurements;
- Comparative study on the basis of the state-of-the-art methodologies;
- Concluding remarks and prospect of future development;
- Relevant and up-to-date references to the subject.

The following aspects should be considered by all authors:

- Authors should be aware of the Field of Interest (FOI) of the IES which defines the scope of IES periodicals;
- Papers must be within the scope of the IES periodicals;
- The subject of the paper must be in accordance with IES Technical Committees scopes;
- Papers should be addressed to the industrial audience and contain useful procedures and methodologies. Theoretical and academic divagations (theorems and proofs) should be avoided;
- Authors should not focus only on the technical subject, but also on how to present the

subject in an easy-to-understand way. This can be accomplished by synergistic use of the text, graphics, equations, examples, and experiments;

- Presented results should be compared to results obtained with other methodologies.
- The subject of the paper should be broad enough for the interests of general IES membership.

### *Reviewer*

Quality review is the key to maintain the integrity of IES periodicals. The aim of the review process is to ensure that an appropriate and timely publication decision is made. A quality review should include a pinpointed summary of comments that should be installed at the beginning of the review report. Most important of all, recommendation for accept, major/minor revision, or reject should be clearly spelled out. Reasons should be given, which include:

- The technical nature of the paper which can signify the possible contribution to science, engineering and technology, or otherwise if reverse;
- Major points for revision needed to be listed item by item, similarly for minor points;
- Advise the authors to update and include relevant references; reviewer should avoid to propose the inclusion of his own publications or coerce author to cite particular journals;

Authors, prospective authors, and most importantly the readers, have the right to know the caliber and status of the IES reviewers and AEs. Therefore, All IES periodicals will publish the names of all reviewers, AEs, Co-EiCs and EiCs involved in the year's review process in each December issue.

Continuous recruitment of Reviewers is the responsibility of the EiCs, Co-EiCs and AEs, taking into account the inputs from IES Officers, AdCom and IES Technical Committees members.

### *Associate Editor and Guest Editor*

AE and GE are the most important position for the safeguard of review quality. Proper procedures must be strictly followed in order to ensure a paper is properly reviewed. AE and GE should read the paper in the first instance prior to the assignment of reviewers, and ensure that:

- At least 3 experts (4 is strongly recommended) in the field of the paper are secured as reviewers. This can best be obtained using specialized software and databases such as Thomson Reuters (ISI), Scopus, IEEEExplore and Manuscript Central (ScholarOne Manuscripts);
- Only accept detailed enough review reports for assessment, particularly for those rated accept and/or reject by reviewers;
- Reviewers and AEs/GEs shall use proper and polite language and they should not push authors to cite their own papers or cite to particular journals;
- If a paper has already gone one round of "major revision" review and further major revision is deemed necessary in the second round of review, the decision of "reject" is highly recommended and the authors should be advised to make a new submission if desired. This is to avoid a long backlog of submissions.

AE/GE must normally not assign to himself/herself the task of a reviewer. In the exceptional case, if it were required to do so, he/she should not continue to assume the role of AE/GE.

AEs term are subjected to a continued evaluation that helps them improve their performance.

## *Co-Editor-in-Chief*

The major task of a Co-EiC is to ensure the timeliness and quality of the papers to be reviewed and selected to publish in their responsible technical areas. A six month period from the start of submission to the final publication should be upheld as close as possible. Steps to follow are:

- Maintain a good habit which requires regular ScholarOne Manuscripts (S1M) system checking at a frequency not exceeding three consecutive days
- Determine whether the paper is worthy for review. If not, straight 'reject' without review is recommendable. The reasons for a straight 'reject' are limited to:
  - paper out of the periodical scope;
  - paper not readable due to poor text and figures;
  - plagiarism (paper have to be checked by the plagiarism tools for similarities with previously published papers or similarities to papers that are not properly cited);
  - paper not meets a minimum criterion for technical substance established for the periodical (if paper not meet only this criterion the Editor shall consult with at least two members of the editorial board for concurrence and it require the general agreement of the Editor and those consulted).
- Assign an appropriate AE as soon as possible;
- Check and follow up with the AE to maintain a short review time;
- Check proper and polite language of AE;
- Check if AE did comply with IES-PSPB publication rules;
- Provide a precise judgment to the authors on basis of the AE and Reviewers' recommendations;
- Identify AEs that are not working properly and timely (e.g. late decisions, not enough reviews, assigning author's collaborators or his personal staff as reviewers) and inform the EiC.

Co-EiCs should ensure that their handlings adhere to the IES policies and guidelines, demonstrate leadership in managing an effective quality review process, timely publication of the periodical, and assist in identifying emerging areas and encouraging leaders in academia and industry to organize special sections in IES periodicals.

## *Editor-in-Chief*

EiCs hold the ultimate responsibility to maintain the quality of IES periodicals. Apart from the administrative and the previously mentioned duties for the co-EiCs, the EiC has a number of other responsibilities, such as:

- Continue to improve the periodical reputation, by ensuring sufficient paper counts for publication to avoid the long delay;
- Manage the selection of Special Section applications;
- Communicate with Co-EiCs regarding any information from TAB and/or the IES Vice-President for Publications (VPP);
- Ensure the timeliness of paper publications;
- Introduce and train new AEs and monitor the performance of existing AEs;
- Direct supervision and training of GEs;
- Check proper and polite language of GEs;
- Check if GEs did not push authors to cite their own papers or papers from any particular journal;

- Report to the VPP about the status and progress of the periodical operations.

EiCs should ensure that their handlings adhere to the IES periodicals editorial policies and guidelines, demonstrate leadership in managing effective quality review process, timely publication of the periodical, and assist in identifying emerging areas and encouraging scientific leaders in academia and industry to organize special sections of the periodical.

### **3. Appointment and Training of AE, Co-EiC and EiC**

#### *Associate Editor*

Associate Editors are very important appointments to maintain the quality of IES periodicals. The minimum requirements of qualifications and experience for an AE include:

- Has a substantial professional standing and experience (e.g. associate professorship or higher in recognized universities and industries);
- Have being an active IEEE IES member;
- Has demonstrated an excellent publication record in IEEE transactions, in particular, IES periodicals such as Transactions on Industrial Electronics (TIE) and Transactions on Industrial Informatics (TII);
- Has a proven editorial experience (e.g. guest editorship, associate editorship in other scientific journals, conference special session organizers).

The nomination of an AE should follow the following steps:

1. The AE nomination form along with cv should be filled properly and sent to journal Co-EiC/EiC;
2. The EiC acknowledges the reception of the form and sends his/her recommendation to the VPP after consulting with CoEic;
3. Upon the receipt of the nomination from the EiC, the VPP in consultation with the VP for Technical Activities makes the final decision.
4. The EiC will communicate the final decision officially to the nominee within one month upon receipt of the form.

The AE nomination form contains the following data:

1. Name (first and last);
2. Title;
3. Affiliation;
4. Contact information;
5. Previous editorial experience;
6. Short (half page) résumé, including IEEE-IES membership and actual/past editorial experiences in other reputable journals;
7. List of keywords which describe your area of expertise;
8. List of journal papers published (a minimum of 5 Transactions in the last 3 years should have been published by the candidate for eligibility of AE from academia).

The nominator should also attach the following:

- The review record of the periodical of the AE nominee;
- A clear indication of the need of the AE position;

- A statement about how the new AE will impact on the geographical distribution of the editorial board.

Whenever a new AE is appointed, the Co-EiC or EiC who has nominated him/her should be his/her mentor for the first two years. The Co-EiC should provide the new AE appropriate guidance and advice, including:

- Become familiar with IEEE PSPB guidelines
- Method for selecting reviewers;
- Ways to assess the review reports from reviewers;
- Making appropriate recommendation for Co-EiC to take action once enough review reports are received.

An adequate training period should be not less than 6 months.

The term of AE should be 3 years, with the first year as probation period. It can be renewed providing that he/she is an active performing AE.

The Co-EiC or EiC should remove an AE whose sustained performance is demonstrably unsatisfactory. Such decisions must be approved by the VPP and VP for Technical Activities.

### *Co-Editor-in-Chief and Editor-in-Chief*

Co-EiC/EiC has administrative authority. The term in office of Co-EiC/EiC is defined in the IES Publications Committee's Operations Manual.

## **4. Special Sections and Guest Editors**

Special Sections are intended as a means to target emerging areas in the Field of Interest FOI of IES. A Special Section (SS) proposal should include:

- Special Section Call for Papers;
- Rationale (1-2 pages) with indication of the names of the coordinating GE;
- List of related papers published recently in the IEEE periodicals targeted;
- Biographical information for all proposed GEs;
- The title of the proposed state of the art (SoA) paper authored by GEs (optional).

The EiC after consulting the editorial board of the Transactions, makes the decision about the acceptance of the SS. If approved, the EiC will assist the GEs in managing the solicitation and review process of the SS submissions. GEs can appeal the decision to the VPP.

## **5. Conflict-of-Interest Policy**

In order to maintain high ethical standards for IES periodicals and to avoid conflict of interest situations, the following policy concerning the review of submitted papers authored or coauthored by EiCs and Co-EiCs should be followed.

### *EiC Authored/Co-Authored Paper*

- The EiC authored or coauthored papers should be sent to the VPP. The VPP will act as EiC for this paper. The journal administrator should be informed as to avoid disclosing any information to EiC authored or coauthored papers.
- VPP invites a well-known expert as a special AE for these papers. The special AE will remain anonymous during the review process and send his/her final report to the VPP;
- The special AE will follow the regular policy applied to all IES periodicals to review the papers;
- The special AE's decision will be communicated to the authors by the VPP and this decision will be final and no appeal will be entertained;
- The VPP will report the number of papers handled in this way for each calendar year to the Publications Committee.

### *Co-EiC Authored/Co-Authored Paper*

- The Co-EiC authored or coauthored papers should be sent to the EiC of the IES periodical concerned;
- The EiC invites a well-known expert as a special AE for these papers. The special AE will remain anonymous during the review process and send his/her final report to the EiC;
- The special AE will follow the regular policy applied to all IES periodicals to review the papers;
- The special AE's decision will be communicated to the authors by the EiC which is final and no appeal will be entertained;
- The EiC will report the number of papers handled in this way for each calendar year to the VPP who will report it to the Publications Committee.

### *GE Authored/Co-Authored Paper*

- The EiC should assign the papers authored/co-authored by the GE(s) to the same SS they are responsible for to another AE to handle;
- The appointed AE should not have any liaison with the SS GE(s) concerned;
- The final publication result will be conveyed to the GEs by the EiC.

### *AE*

AE are responsible for avoiding potential conflict of interest situations when they select reviewers. See more detailed information found in "IEEE PSPB Operations Manual", Section 2.6.2 – Conflict Of Interest. <http://www.ieee.org/documents/opsmanual.pdf>.

### *Reviewer*

As reviewer you are responsible for avoiding potential conflict of interest situations while reviewing a submission. If this occur, do decline the invitation of review. See more detailed info found in "IEEE PSPB Operations Manual", Section 2.6.2 – Conflict Of Interest. <http://www.ieee.org/documents/opsmanual.pdf>.

## **6. Paper Reviews for IES Periodicals**

The IES adopts a double-blind policy for paper reviews. Each paper requires at least four reviewers. Each recommendation made by the AE should be supported by a minimum of three meaningful reviews (four reviews are expected). Finally the EiC or Co-EiC makes the final decision as to the paper's acceptance for publication in IES periodicals.

AEs are not allowed to contact authors directly. Names of the AE should not be known to the authors.

Authors have the natural right to appeal the decision. Authors should address their appeal to the EiC. In case any other IES Officer is approached for the disputes/appeals, it must be directed to the EiC who is responsible for handling these appeals/disputes. He/she can ask for advice from the VPP if necessary.

When there is an appeal, the EiC can take the following path to address the appeal. The EiC should review the quality and appropriateness of the appeal and if it falls into one of the following categories, an appropriate action should be taken accordingly:

- Paper review procedure and any handling problem: This may be addressed at the EiC Level;
- Fundamental differences with one reviewer's comments: EiC may request the AE or Co-EiC to address this issue and add his/her comments, if necessary, to the comments and response to the authors;
- Fundamental differences with more than one or all reviewers' comments: EiC may ask for the additional review or take respective AE's or Co-EiC's comments and make his/her final decision;
- A combination of all the categories above or any other different matters: the EiC is empowered to resolve the dispute in the appeal in a manner that is fair upholding the integrity of the IES periodicals.

If the EiC's final decision is not accepted by the author(s), they can always address their complaints to the IES VPP, who will evaluate the complaints, and can constitute an adhoc committee to help make the independent decision. If the author(s) still not accept the decision of IES VPP or adhoc committee he/she can appeal to IES president and ultimately can appeal to IEEE Vice President, Publication Services and Products Board.

## **7. Best Practices**

Over the many years of operations, many good practices have been formed within IES which should be followed as guides of best practices. Following are some aspects of them.

### *Periodical Management*

- EiC should observe the page counts at all time so that a long backlog of "accept" papers is avoided;
- Co-EiC should assign a paper to an appropriate AE within 7 days from the paper appearing in the SIM;
- AE should secure at least three reviewers within 7-10 days;
- The first round of review should not be more than three months;

- The 2nd round of review should not be more than one month;
- For a paper that has “Major Revision” for more than two rounds of review, reject should be considered but a new submission is permitted should that be the wish of the authors;
- Post IES conference paper without substantial improvement (over 40% of) over its original paper should be rejected;
- The team of GEs for a SS must comprise one of Co-EiCs or AEs, and any GE other than the Co-EiC has no authority to accept any paper in the SS;
- EiC should provide regular comprehensive reports about the status of the periodical to IES Publications Committee and IES AdCom. Regular interactions between the IES President, President-Elect, Treasurer and VPP should be maintained;
- The VPP’s role is administrative to support an EiC in his/her operation. It is recommended that the VPP role in the editorial board of each IES periodical be frozen during its mandate and he/she is not a GE of any IES periodical’s SS;
- It is recommended that only VPP can form ad-hoc committees related to specific issue of each IES periodical or of all of them.

### *Periodical Review Criteria*

#### **(1) Quality of the research, the results and the application prospects reported in the manuscript**

- Are there new research results in the manuscript?
- How significant is the contribution?
- Does the contribution have a potential to stimulate further research in the area addressed?
- Does the contribution offer prospects for implementation?
- Is the manuscript well written? (English is only part of the issue).
- Is there a critical evaluation of the related work to establish novelty?
- Is the manuscript technically correct?
- Are the results properly validated by analytical/simulations/prototyping methods?

The reputation of the journal, and ultimately its success, depends on the quality of research presented in the published papers. A journal with a high “reputation” will ultimately help the authors to attain higher visibility within the research community and, as a result, a larger number of citations. It is imperative the authors establish a claim to significant novelty by a critical evaluation of the most recent articles related to their claim, and provide an adequate bibliography. Of course, poorly written and out of scope papers are not acceptable.

#### **(2) Estimate the interest of readers**

- Is the described subject of current interest to the journal readers? (consider that this includes an industrial audience focused more on practical solutions and applicability)
- Is the title interesting and adequate?
- Is the abstract attracting attention?
- Is the length of manuscript adequate?
- Is the manuscript clearly written?

In the age of electronic publications it is not easy to be noticed (IES alone receives over 15,000 conference and journal papers per year). Therefore, very careful wording should be used in the title and in the abstract. Without a proper title and abstract a great paper might never be downloaded from IEEE Xplore and read. Often manuscripts receive negative reviews because reviewers are not able to understand the manuscript. This is the authors' (not the reviewers') fault. If reviewers have difficulties, then other readers will face the same problems and there will be no reason to publish the manuscript. Is the length of the manuscript adequate? Manuscripts should



be written on the proper level. They should be easy to understand by qualified professionals working in industry, but at the same time, please avoid describing well known facts (use proper references instead). **Authors must do everything possible to ensure the paper will be noticed and read.**

**(3) Is the manuscript up-to-date and within the scope of IES periodical concerned?**

- Are authors aware of recently published papers from journals and conference proceedings?
- Is the manuscript within the scope of the journal?

It is important that the authors show they have a good knowledge of the state-of-the-art in the subject area. Reviewers should ensure that authors refer to the most recent papers that are relevant to the research. Citations of textbooks and web pages should be used only rarely. If there is doubt about the scope of the manuscript the editor may recommend resubmission of the manuscript to another journal with a more closely related scope.

**Notes:**

- [1] First prepared by Kim Man, July 21, 2011. The document includes, with modifications, the document approved in Oporto, October 2009: "IES Policy on Review Dispute and Conflict of Interest."
- [2] Reviewed and enlarged by Marco Liserre, September 5, 2011.
- [3] Further revised and expanded by Xinghuo Yu with inputs from Bogdan Wilamowski, October 12, 2012.
- [4] Approved by IES Publications Committee at the Montreal AdCom meeting, October 30, 2012.
- [5] Reviewed and enlarged by Mariusz Malinowski, Leopoldo Franquelo and Kamal Al-Haddad, March 30, 2016.