

Guidelines for Guest Editors

IEEE Vehicular Technology Magazine

Thank you for your interest in organizing a special issue (SI) in *IEEE Vehicular Technology Magazine (VTM)*. As you know, *VTM* is a highly reputed technical publication with an impact factor of 6.038 (2018). *VTM* is ranked first in Journal Citation Reports for Transportation Science and Technology and sixth for Telecommunications Engineering. We therefore appreciate all of your efforts to maintain the high-quality work and editorial standards that have taken *VTM* to this position.

This document provides essential guidelines to organize and run a special issue in *VTM*. Guest Editors (GEs) must be aware of these guidelines as well as the manuscript submission guidelines available online (www.ieeevtm.org). These guidelines must be respected at all times, and exceptions can only be considered after approval from the EiC. Organizing an SI requires a reasonable amount of hard work, but following these procedures will help you, and will help ensure that submitted papers are handled in a professional and timely manner. The document is based on the experience of the editorial board. However, it should be viewed as a working document and as such, any comments, criticisms or suggested changes in the document or in the suggested procedures themselves are always welcome. If you have any questions or suggestions, please get in touch with *VTM*'s editor-in-chief (EiC), Prof. Javier Gozalvez (Universidad Miguel Hernandez de Elche, Spain) at j.gozalvez@umh.es.

Publicity

Once an SI has been accepted and the call for papers (CFP) has been finalized, the EiC will be in charge of advertising the CFP: on the magazine's website; in the printed magazine (if possible); in VTS Mobile World, the Society's e-newsletter; and in VTS's social media accounts. Advertising the CFP outside these venues (e.g. in mailing lists, specialized websites, professional networks, etc.) is the responsibility and obligation of the GEs, who must specify in their proposal their plans for publicizing the SI. The GEs must publicize the SI based on an open CFP, and not on personal or group invitations only. However, GEs should publicize the SI among leading researchers in the topic of the SI, and should encourage them to submit a paper to the SI.

Submissions

All papers must be submitted through the Manuscript Central (MC) website (<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/vtm-ieee>). All submitted papers must comply with manuscript submission guidelines available online (www.ieeevtm.org). Since *VTM* is a magazine, papers must be written in tutorial style, comprehensible to the non-specialists. This does not imply that

submitted papers must be always be tutorials or survey papers. Papers with novel (technical and research) contributions are welcome as long as they are written in tutorial style. Tutorial, surveys and research overview papers are also welcome as long as they respect the submission guidelines.

A manuscript can be directly rejected by the EiC if:

- The manuscript does not comply with the submission guidelines.
- The manuscript is out of scope of the SI. If it is the case, but could be considered as an open-call submission, the EiC will contact the authors to suggest this option.
- The manuscript has been previously published (entirely or a large part of it).
- The manuscript has been submitted to another publication at the same time.
- The manuscript is better suited for the transactions or a conference.

All submitted papers undergo a plagiarism detection process. The GEs are encouraged to use the plagiarism detection tool and check the plagiarism reports. If the GEs (or the reviewers) detect a case of plagiarism, self-plagiarism or double submission, they must notify the EiC.

The magazine does not welcome extended versions of conference papers due to the papers' length restrictions. If a paper includes results previously published by the authors, the authors must cite the previous work in the paper and they must clearly explain in the submission letter how the paper submitted to VTM differs with respect to their previous work.

Submission deadlines must be respected and are not subject to change in principle. A request for a short extension can only be approved in special circumstances. Requests for short extensions must be requested to the EiC.

GEs are not allowed to submit papers to the SI they are organizing. However, they are requested to author a guest editorial that presents the SI and the papers published within the special issue.

GEs should declare any possible conflicts of interest with any of the submitted papers. A conflict of interest exists in any of the following circumstance:

- A GE has (or had in the last five years) joint work/projects/publications with any of the authors of a paper in the last five years.
- A GE has (or had in the last five years) any contract or financial interest with any of the authors' affiliation companies or institutions.
- If the authors are affiliated with the same company or university as a GE.
- A GE supervised the Ph.D. of an author of the paper.

In the case of a possible conflict of interest with a paper from any GE, the GE should notify the EiC, and the paper will be handled by the *VTM* editorial board. If there are any doubts about any possible conflicts of interest, please contact the EiC.

Reviewing process

All papers must go through the same peer-review process. Manuscript management, reviewing, and communications with authors and reviewers should be done through MC. An account in MC will be created for the SI, and GEs will be given access to this account for managing the papers submitted to the SI.

After a paper is received, the EiC will check that the paper complies with VTM submission guidelines and that it fits the SI. He will then assign the paper to the GEs.

It is the responsibility of the GEs to ensure that the review process is of high quality and conducted within the established deadlines. The GEs must select and invite the reviewers through MC. Three reviews are generally requested to make an editorial recommendation on the paper. As some reviewers might not respond to the review invitation, it is recommended that you invite more reviewers initially (e.g. 6 reviewers). Some reviewers might also not complete the review process in time, so it is recommended that you try to secure 4 reviewers for each paper.

It is important that highest quality review standards are met. As a result, only qualified reviewers should be invited to review papers. Invited reviewers must be experts (or have proven and solid experience) in the topic of the paper. Reviewers without solid expertise on the topic of the paper or potential conflict of interest with the authors (e.g. from the same institution or with joint publications with the authors) must not be invited. GEs are suggested to use IEEE Xplore or any other relevant database to locate qualified reviewers that have published on the topic of the paper to be reviewed. Authors of a paper submitted to the SI must not review other papers submitted to the SI since there is a clear conflict of interest. Identifying qualified reviewers will require some time and work. However, a careful selection of the right referees (i.e., those who are technically competent to review the paper and who are likely to provide a thoughtful and thorough review in a timely manner) can decrease the overall time needed for the review process by obviating the need for you to go out later and request additional reviews. Please note that authors cannot suggest reviewers when submitting their papers to VTM.

Once you have an identified reviewer, you can locate her/him in MC. To do so, go to 'assign reviewers' and use the 'quick search' function. If the reviewer is not already a user of MC, you can add the reviewer to the tool by using the 'Create Reviewer Account' and then clicking the 'create and add' button after entering first name, last name, and email address.

Once a reviewer has been added to a paper, you need to press the 'Invite' button next to the added reviewer for the review invitation to be sent. The reviewer will receive automatic reminders from MC. However, if the reviewer has not accepted a review invitation within a week, it is very unlikely that the reviewer will finally accept the review invitation. The GEs should hence invite additional reviewers if 3-4 reviewers have not been secured within a week. In fact, it is recommended that the GEs regularly check the status of the paper until all necessary reviewers have been secured.

If the reviewer agrees to review the paper by clicking the 'Agreed' link given in the reviewer invitation email, the tool then sends a second email to the reviewer, giving more information on how to perform the review. It also makes the paper available to the reviewer (in the reviewer center). Reviewers will get automatic email reminders once they have accepted a review invitation. However, the GEs should regularly check the status of the review process to invite additional reviewers if necessary. A review without detailed comments is not very useful. In this case, the GEs should email the reviewer to ask for more elaborated and in-depth reviews. You can email the reviewers by clicking on their name. This opens an email box with the reference to the paper.

Reviewers have a deadline to submit their reviews. If the deadline is not met, the review will be shown as 'overdue'. You can grant an extension (within the SI deadlines) to the reviewer if the reviewer commits to deliver the review in time. If you cannot do so, please contact the EiC.

If the GEs or reviewers detect a potential case of plagiarism or self-plagiarism, they must notify the EiC. IEEE rules establish that reviewers cannot ask authors to cite their own papers without proper justification. If it is the case, such request must be eliminated from the review report, and the EiC should be notified.

Please note that all reviews must be directly entered into MC and should not be handled by email.

An SI has two review rounds. After each round of reviews, the GEs will make an editorial recommendation that is received by the EiC for approval. Your recommendation can include comments. Please note that comments to the EiC are not accessible to the authors. Any comments you want to make to the authors should be included in the decision email in order for the authors to be able to view them.

The recommendation can only be made when you have received the number of reviews required to make a decision. This number is set by default equal to 3, and is shown on the screen of each paper, on the right side ('# reviews required to make decision'). Once the number of reviews is received, the system will inform you by email that you can make an editorial decision. Click 'Making Preliminary Decision' on the very top right corner, you will see the choices for the editorial decision. Click one of them, and then click 'Create Draft E-Mail', then a standard decision letter corresponding to the decision will open up. You can modify the letter and save it. When you click 'Send for Approval', the decision will go to the EiC for approval.

The approval, or EiC alternative recommendation, will be done once all papers submitted to an SI have been reviewed and ranked. The EiC and GEs will have a call to discuss the papers that are invited to the second review round and those that can be accepted after the second review round. Papers that require more than two reviews cannot be considered within the SI due to the publication deadlines. However, the GEs remain responsible for handling these papers, and they can recommend the EiC to consider them as open-call papers if the paper is of high quality. Only high quality papers with significant novelty and contributions should be invited to the second

review round. However, not all papers invited to the second review round might be finally accepted. This is actually indicated to the authors when a major or minor revision decision is taken.

It is very important that GEs respect the timeline for an SI agreed with the EiC and IEEE Publications staff. Delays can compromise the possibility to publish the SI in the agreed issue of VTM. Final accepted papers must be received by IEEE three months before the date of the special issue (e.g. accepted papers to be published in a June issue must be received by the IEEE by the end of February at the latest).

The number of papers that can be accepted within an SI will depend on: 1) the quality of the submitted papers, 2) the number of submitted papers, and 3) the available budgeted pages. The EiC will inform the GEs of the maximum number of possible accepted papers after the first review round.

Once a paper has been accepted for publication and no further changes are required, MC automatically notifies the IEEE Publication Editor. It sends the information needed for publication. The authors are asked to upload required materials (including IEEE Copyright Form) via the online system to the IEEE Publication Editor.

Guest Editorial

GEs must prepare a guest editorial for their SI once the final list of accepted papers has been decided. The guest editorial should introduce the context, relevance, and timeliness of the SI and should present the papers (in the order of their publication) included in the special issue. This presentation should not be merely descriptive; it should highlight the main contributions and takeaways from each paper to encourage readers to read the entire paper. The guest editorial should be one or two (maximum) pages long depending on the number of papers included in the SI. The guest editorial should include the guest editor biographies (50–75 word limit) and a high-resolution photo (at least 300 dpi or higher).

Problems and getting help

If you experience any problem related to MC, you can use their online support. Click on the ‘Help’ icon and use the ‘Answer (FAQ)’ tool or ‘Submit a question’ to email a question. This question goes to either the developer of the tool or to a dedicated support person at IEEE. If there is a problem in the editorial process, contact the EiC. Assistance with user accounts and manuscripts is provided by the MC System Administrator that supports VTM (Sonal Parikh, s.parikh@ieee.org). The following are common problems or situations that occur. In general, if there is a concern, do not hesitate to contact the MC System Administrator or EiC.

- The reviewer can't find the paper to review. This is usually the result of the reviewer having two accounts, which causes problems with the tool. Contact the System Administrator to check this and merge any duplicate accounts.
- The reviewer is having trouble logging into the tool. This is usually due to the fact that the account is new and was created when the GE requested the review. Ask the reviewer to check for an existing account using the online tool. If this fails, the MC System Administrator or EiC can have the tool send the reviewer an 'Account Created' email with account information.
- The reviewer submitted a review then needs to add/change something. In this case, the GE should use the online support function to have the paper moved back into the reviewer's account.

Please note that MC keeps copies of all versions of a paper and of the correspondence between yourself and the author. The 'Audit Trail' item (left side on the screen of each paper) keeps track of any action taken or email sent related to the paper.