

Guide to Proposing and Organizing Special Issues

Proposing a Special Issue Topic

The IEEE Internet of Things Magazine (IEEE IoTM) is soliciting Special Issue (SI) proposals. An SI is a group of articles organized around a timely narrow-scope technical topic of interest to the magazine readership. An SI may be composed of 6 to 12 papers. SIs can give papers special prominence and should provide better opportunity for the reader to explore special and emerging topics.

Potential Guest Editors (GEs) interested in organizing an SI are invited to submit their proposal through the IEEE IoTM Manuscript Central after discussing it through e-mail with the magazine's Editor-in-Chief (EiC) and Associate Editor-in-Chief (AEiC). The proposal should address the topic's background and motivation, scope, its significance, timeliness, and relevance to the IEEE IoTM. The proposal should also include:

- A tentative schedule of the following important dates:
 - Manuscript Submission Deadline.
 - Authors' Revision Notification Date.
 - Revised Manuscript Submission Deadline.
 - Final Decision Notification Date.
 - Publication Date.
- A plan to advertise a Call For Articles (CFA)
- Short biographies of the GEs and their experience in the topic and in editorial work (not exceeding 250 words each).
- Draft of the CFA (attached separately).

Some of the requirements for an acceptable SI proposal include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Proposers are expected to take the time to examine the scopes of: IEEE IoTM Vertical Areas, currently active SIs and earlier published SIs in the last 12-to-18 months (please visit the IoTM's website and the IEEE Xplore for further information). New hot topics that are not already covered by the magazine (currently or recently) will be considered. It is, of course, expected that proposed SIs will have minimum-to-no overlap with the magazine's other publication tracks (*i.e.* Vertical Areas and other SIs). Topics of interest should have the potential to uniquely contribute to the magazine.
2. A successful SI must have a short and catchy title that attracts the IEEE IoTM's broad and diverse readership.
3. An SI must have focused scope on a particular issue and should not be too broad. New ideas that fit the scope of IEEE IoTM and/or complementing other publication tracks (current and recent) while not duplicating them, are always welcome.

4. Each SI is expected to be managed by a team of, at least 4-to-5 Guest Editors (GEs) with at most 6-to-7 GEs (including the Lead GE), where:
 1. Each GE should add a unique aspect to the team and each must have a particular role.
 2. All GEs should contribute to the solicitation and review processes; and must respect IEEE IoTM's policies. The proposal should explain how the GEs will work together.
 3. The selection of GEs must strike a good geographical balance and a balance between academia and industry. In addition, the GE selection is highly encouraged to exhibit gender diversity.
 4. It is preferred that GEs have prior experience with the IEEE IoTM (*e.g.* authors, reviewers, and/or editors); and the lead GE must have significant experience in this regard (including full knowledge of the IEEE IoTM's policies and processes). Proposals led by Senior Editors, Vertical Area Editors, Associate Editors and Column Editors (who served or are currently serving on the IEEE IoTM's editorial board) are always encouraged and welcome.
 5. The team should mix experience with fresh blood, and may not include GEs who served in this particular role (as IEEE IoTM GEs for another SI) or had past SIs published within the last 12 months at least.

Organizing a Special Issue

1. Guest Editors (GEs) should be aware of all IEEE IoTM's policies including [Guest Editors Guidelines](#), [Manuscript Submission Guidelines](#), [Reviewers Guidelines](#) and [Manuscript Publishing Guidelines](#). They **MUST** fully respect and implement these guidelines and **MUST understand that failure to do so, and/or to deliver manuscripts on time, may result in cancellation of the SI at any point in time.**
2. Under current IEEE Communications Society magazines' policy, **GEs are prohibited from publishing papers they (co-)authored in their own SI. GEs are responsible, however, for authoring a Guest Editorial that introduces the SI and is published as a preamble of it.**
3. **Submissions to the SI should be made based on an open call for papers, not personal invitations. Individual authors can be encouraged to write a paper but with an understanding that all submissions must comply with the [Manuscript Submission Guidelines](#) and must go through the same peer review process without any assurance of acceptance.**
4. If an SI proposal is accepted, the EiC/AEiC will schedule the SI for a specific issue after discussing this schedule with the GEs. The Guest Editors should then start to advertise the CFA.
5. If possible, the CFA will be advertised in the magazine. However, **advertising a CFA is the responsibility of the GEs, who should not rely only on publishing the CFA in the IEEE IoTM and/or its web site.** Guest Editors must advertise the CFA per their proposal plan, through the IEEE Communication Society's Technical Committees, mail lists, conference flyers, newsletters, and through their own professional networks. They are responsible for properly informing potential authors about [Manuscript Submission Guidelines](#) and about respecting them.
6. All paper submissions must be through the IEEE IoTM's [Manuscript Central](#) (MC). Manuscript management, reviewing, and communications with authors/reviewers should be done through

MC. The SI will have an MC account/submission-category and the GEs will have access to it along with an associated email account. When a new paper is properly uploaded, this email account will be notified by MC. If an assigned reviewer does not have an account, GEs can create a new reviewer account. GEs must check their email account regularly until final decisions are made about all papers submitted to their SI (including papers the processing of which may continue after the SI is published).

7. Submission deadlines are firmly respected and are not subject to change in principle. A request for a short extension can only be approved in very special and limited circumstances. Such requests must be submitted only to the EiC/AEiC.
8. An SI schedule may often not accommodate acceptance of manuscripts requiring Major Revisions because these manuscripts need to go through a second (and more) round(s) of review before acceptance. However, the GEs remain responsible for handling such manuscripts. If they are properly revised and eventually found acceptable, they can be published later under the General Call For Articles track.
9. Note that if a manuscript's decision is Accept with Minor Revisions, the authors do not upload a revised manuscript, but are expected to make these minor revisions in the final paper they send to the [publications staff](#) directly.
10. The EiC/AEiC may assign a Senior Editor, Vertical Area Editor or Associate Editor to serve as a liaison to the Guest Editors. The Liaison Editor will have access to the papers and reviews, will provide the GEs with help and advice, and oversee the progress toward a committed schedule. The Liaison Editor is not intended to duplicate or replace the duties of the Guest Editors. The Liaison Editor does not review papers, but may be requested by the EiC/AEiC to scan the final accepted papers and their reviews to verify conformance with the IEEE IoTM's guidelines for format, style, and quality.

Manuscript Format/Style Guidelines Emphasized

GEs **MUST** observe the magazine's [Manuscript Submission Guidelines](#) carefully, and must understand that they are not optional, and that GEs are not at liberty to exempt any submission from them. Besides not complying with format guidelines, a manuscript may be immediately rejected without review also if it is out of scope of the SI, has been previously published or has been submitted elsewhere at the same time, or clearly better suited as a journal or a conference paper. If a submission is judged to be outside the scope of the SI but otherwise has merit within the broader scope of the magazine, the EiC/AEiC should be notified to redirect it to another publication track.

Guidelines to Writing SI Editorial

Guest Editors are required to prepare an editorial for their papers that introduces the papers in the order of their appearance and should address the significance, impact, practical usefulness, and future directions of the topic(s). Perhaps most important, it should convey the Editors' enthusiasm to the readers. An editorial which does little more than describing each paper (article) will not be acceptable. For an SI (6-to-12 papers), the editorial (roughly 1600 words plus short editors' bios and editors' photographs) must not exceed two magazine pages. Editorials should be emailed in plain text to the [publications staff](#), along with the color photographs of each Editor. Digital photographs should be in .tif format with at least 300 dpi resolution.

Using Manuscript Central

- Log in with your User ID and Password at [Manuscript Central](#). You may update your password and edit your information.
- Click on "Guest Editor Center". To see all the manuscripts assigned to you, click on "Original Manuscripts" in the left frame. Or to search, insert information about a specific paper (*e.g.*, author's name) on the right and click "Search". Note: your designation will be "Guest Editor" on any paper for which you are the assigned editor.
- Download the articles by clicking on the article title. In the next window, click on the article's title again. The file will be downloaded to your hard drive and opened by the appropriate application.
- Familiarize yourself with the article. Once you decide if an article is to be either rejected without review or submitted to the review process, return to the manuscripts page and click on the "View Details" button for the article you are working on. Find the "Guest Editor Actions" section and do one of the following:
 - If you choose to recommend rejecting the article without a review, click the "Make Recommendation" button. In the next window, go to the "Post Recommendation" block and click the "Post Recommendation" button. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select the "Rejected" radio button. You may add information to the two comment blocks at the top of the page as you see fit. Click "Send to the Editor-in-Chief" button.
 - If you choose to submit the article to the review process, click the "Assign or Remove Reviewer" button. In the next window, follow the "Instructions" in the box in the lower half of the page. You must assign a minimum of three reviewers to the article. We suggest that you assign more than three (only up to 5), because (a) often a reviewer will be late with a review or never completes the task; and (b) generally, the more reviewers there are (up to 5), the easier it is for the Guest Editors to make a good decision, and the better the quality of the published article.
- You will be notified by email when the review is complete. Read the review(s) carefully and rate them. To make a decision recommendation once a minimum of three reviews are completed, return to the Editorial Board Center of Manuscript Central. Click "Original Manuscripts: Manage Reviewers and Make Recommendations" in the left column, and then click "View Details" for the article you are working on. Scroll down to the second from the bottom block and click "View Review Form" for each Reviewer. To see any documents that the Reviewer may have added to their evaluation or to add your own documents, click the "Attach Files" button below the "View Review Form" button. When you are ready to make a recommendation, go to the "Guest Editor Actions" block and select the "Make Recommendation" button. Scroll down to click "Post Recommendation" when you are ready to send your recommendation to the EiC/AEiC. Fill out the form and enter your comments. When you are finished, click "Send to Editor-in-Chief." Click "Send Letter."

GEs can download a PDF of the Manuscript Central instructions by clicking on the "Guest Editor Center Guide" in the Guest Editor Center. Please contact [IEEE Support](#) if Manuscript Central is not functioning according to the Guide.

Timeline

- **Accepted Manuscript-Central IDs due:** The 1st of the month, 2 months prior to publication. For example, a complete list of all papers in the March issue is due by February 1st.
- **Final manuscript files due:** The 15th of the month, 1.5 months prior to publication. For example, all final materials for an article in the March issue are due by February 15th. Please be aware that if this deadline is missed, the paper cannot be published on time.
- **Guest Editorials due:** The 15th of the month, 1 months prior to issue date. For example, all final versions of the Editorials in the March issue are due by February 15.
- **Page proofs sent to contact author:** 3 weeks prior to publication date.
- **Page proofs back to department:** 2 weeks prior to publication date.

Submission of Accepted Materials

Please instruct authors to read the [Manuscript Publishing Guidelines](#) page to determine what they need to send to the [Production Staff](#) prior to the deadline.