

# IEEE COMMUNICATIONS MAGAZINE

## Editors' Policy

### The IEEE Communications Magazine Editors

The editorial team/board of the IEEE Communications Magazine is headed by the Editor in Chief (EiC). The EiC may appoint Associate Editor in Chief (AEiC) and delegate tasks to him/her as needed to get the magazine's business done properly. He may elect to appoint two AEiCs if necessary. Reference is made to the [IEEE Publications Services and Products Board \(PSPB\) Operation Manual \(OM\)](#) where the functions, duties, and responsibilities of the EiC are specified.

The IEEE Communications Magazine (ComMag) team/board includes several editors' types/grades. An individual interested in becoming a ComMag editor may apply to be Associate Technical Editor (ATE) through the magazine's website and the ComSoc application system. Approval of ATE applications depends on the background and experience of the applicant, on ComMag's needs in various technical areas, and on other factors. Best performing ATEs and most ComMag-experienced persons may be promoted and/or appointed as Technical Editors (TEs). Series Editors are experts in the domain of their respective Series. Upon retirement, Ex-EiCs join the group of Senior Technical Editors. They may be renewed in this capacity if still active with ComMag. Senior Technical Editors support the incumbent EiC in matters of strategic importance to ComMag.

ATEs, TEs, and SEs are term-based ComMag editors who are appointed by the EiC for a 3-year term and may have their service extended for a 2-year interval(s). After their retirement, these editors can only re-apply to start a new service as ComMag editors after five (5) years. Retirement can be due to term expiration, performance, editorial needs, or other factors. ATEs, TEs, and SEs constitute the bulk of the editorial team of the magazine who performs daily editorial activities and safeguards the publication's quality and highest professional standards all the time.

Guest Editors (GEs) for Feature Topics (FTs) and/or Special Issues (SIs) are appointed by the EiC, but they serve on temporary basis and for a specific task. GEs are **REQUIRED** to fully abide by the same rules governing the editorial and review processes of the magazine (like all ComMag's term-based editors). **All editors carrying out the IEEE Communications Magazine editorial work (including GEs) must apply the same policy, guidelines, criteria, and operation standards of the IEEE Communications Magazine irrespective of the publication track they are handling and the specific assignment(s) they are working in.**

ATEs and TEs are required to organize at least one FT/SI per term of service, at which time they would have the additional role of GEs.

Editors are assigned accounts in [Manuscript Central](#) (MC) with user ID's and passwords and have email accounts associated with their MC accounts. Upon arrival of a new manuscript(s), the editor(s) receives email notifications and should be able to access his/her/their manuscript-central account to initiate the review process of the new submission. In the case of FTs and/or SIs, GEs **MUST** regularly check their email and MC accounts for manuscript submissions, processing, and for communications from/to the EiC until the work of their FT/SI fully concludes with final decisions for all manuscripts (including the ones that are delayed until after the FT/SI is published). GEs must be conscious of their timeline and the due dates associated with it.

## The Editor Responsibility in the Review Process

Editors (ATEs, TEs, SEs, and GEs) are responsible for managing and overseeing the review process of manuscripts (each in his/her respective track: Series, Open Call, or Feature Topic). Upon conclusion of the review process, the editor(s) make recommendation to the EiC. Recommendation types are to accept (with or without minor changes), reject, or revise (major or minor revision) the manuscript. Per the [IEEE PSPB OM](#), the final decision concerning any manuscript is the responsibility of the EiC who issues his/her decision based on the reviews, editor(s)' recommendations, his/her own evaluation, and/or any other factors that deem relevant.

**An IEEE Communications Magazine editor shall carry out his/her work as follows:**

1. **An editor may NOT handle a manuscript where he/she has any conflict of interest (Col). If a manuscript is assigned to an editor where Col exists, or may be perceived, the editor must recuse himself/herself. Editors should also avoid assigning manuscripts to reviewers who have Col with their authors.** Editors may refer to [IEEE policies](#) in regard to Col, if they need to do so.
2. Editors should understand the [Features of an IEEE Communications Magazine Paper](#). Manuscripts not fully complying with the [Manuscript Submission Policy](#) must be recommended for immediate rejection (IR) by the editor(s). They may not be forwarded to the review process. Authors of these manuscripts are usually encouraged to revise them and submit new –compliant- manuscripts to the magazine. **Only manuscripts in full compliance with submission policy are forwarded to the review process.**
3. A minimum of three (3) reviews per manuscript are required for the editor(s) to make a recommendation. These should NOT include reviews by the editor(s) himself/herself/themselves. It is recommended to pursue more than three reviewers (up to, but not exceeding, five reviewers), if possible, in order to maximize the chance for timely editorial recommendations. Editor(s) must assign appropriate, competent, and independent reviewers who are geographically and institutionally diverse. The editor(s) must exert utmost effort to select reviewers from geographical regions other than those of the authors and other than his/her own. A strong case must be made to the EiC if an exception is necessary. In his/her assignment of a reviewer to any manuscript, the editor must reference the magazine [Reviewer Guidelines](#) emphasizing the reviewer's responsibility to abide by them.
4. Editors oversee reviewers' work to ensure that they deliver substantive and technically-sound reviews in a timely manner, leading to a timely editorial recommendation. Reviews should also offer constructive advice for authors of rejected papers. Editors should send reminders to

reviewers as needed and may rescind a review if lacking substance or violating policy/guidelines. **A reviewer may NOT exploit the review opportunity to ask authors to cite his/her own work/publications.**

5. The editor must rate the reviews delivered for the manuscript.
6. The editor, not the reviewers, is ultimately responsible for making a proper recommendation about a given manuscript. The recommendation should not simply be based on a majority of the three reviewers' opinions. The editor must read the manuscript and assess the totality of the remarks on the manuscript, including his/her own remarks.
7. When submitting his/her recommendation, the editor must fill the "comment to the authors" section in MC making a strong case for the recommendation based on reviewers' remarks and on the editor's own remarks. The editor should examine the manuscript compliance with the [Manuscript Submission Policy](#) and report the outcome of this examination. The editor may also fill the confidential "comments to EiC" section with useful justification(s) of the recommendation made, if needed.
8. After a minor-revision is done of a manuscript, and if the minor changes requested are adequately made, the editor can make a recommendation with either a limited subset of the original reviewers or without reviews.
9. Note that if a manuscript is "Accepted with Minor Changes", the authors do not upload a revision. Instead, they are expected to make these changes in the final submission for production/publication directly.
10. Details about how the editorial and reviewing process are carried out in Manuscript Central are provided in [Clarivate's website](#) where a pdf may be downloaded. [IEEE Support](#) can be contacted if Manuscript Central is not functioning according to the Editor Guide.

## Special Editorial Cases Team (SECT)

This is a group of some of the IEEE Communications Magazine's most-experienced editors who are charged with the responsibility of handling cases of special editorial difficulty or challenge. Papers are referred to editors of this group as needed to ensure proper handling/correction of their review process. SECT is usually comprised of ComMag TEs.

## Guidelines to Writing Series/FT Editorials

Series Editors and Guest Editors are required to prepare an editorial for their papers. The editorial should introduce the papers in the order of their appearance and should address the significance, impact, practical usefulness, and future directions of the topic(s) of the papers. Perhaps most important, it should convey the editors' enthusiasm to the readers. An editorial which does little more than describing each paper is not appropriate. For 3-4 papers, the editorial (roughly 800 words plus short editors' bios and editors' photographs) must not exceed one magazine page. For 5-12 papers, the editorial (roughly 1600 words plus short editors' bios and editors' photographs) must not exceed two magazine pages. Editorials are emailed in plain text to the publications staff

([pubsub@comsoc.org](mailto:pubsub@comsoc.org)) or submitted otherwise as requested by the EiC and the production process. They are to be accompanied with the color photographs of each editor. Digital photographs in .tif format with at least 300-dpi resolution are preferable.

## Tentative/Default Publication Timeline

- **Final manuscript files due:** The 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, 2 months prior to publication. For example, final materials for a paper in the January issue are due by November 1. Please be aware that if this deadline is missed, the paper may not be published on time.
- **Series/FT editorials due:** The 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, 2 months prior to publication. For example, the ones for a January issue are due by November 1.
- **Page proofs sent to contact author:** 3 weeks prior to publication date.
- **Page proofs back to publication department:** 2 weeks prior to publication date.

### Version History of this Document:

Version Number and Date of Release	Description of the Version	Objective and Publication
<b>V1.0, September 2018</b>	<i>First formal ComMag guidelines,</i> Author: Tarek S. El-Bawab	Part of ComMag comprehensive guidelines for authors, reviewers, editors, and FT proposers. Completed and released after the restructuring of the magazine in 2018, published on the magazine website
<b>V2.0, October 2021</b>	Completed IEEE Communications Magazine Policy, Author: Tarek S. El-Bawab	Current version, released after three years of using the 2018 guidelines, incorporating the remarks of authors, reviewers, and editors through this period

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