

SP Magazine Special Issues' Guest Editors' Handbook

1. Focus

SPM publishes timely **tutorial-style** articles focusing on comprehensive reviews of important, broad, and established fields within the scope of signal processing. We strive to achieve the highest level of publication quality, scholarly impact, and reader benefit.

2. Proposal Criteria

Before proposing a specific topic, we encourage prospective guest editors to discuss the appropriateness of the topic with the Area Editor (Special Issues), Namrata Vaswani (namrata@iastate.edu) or the Editor-in-Chief (EiC), Robert Heath (rheath@utexas.edu).

The proposal should have the following organization. Each point should be addressed with sufficient detail and clear evidence.

- **Section 1 Introduction:** Motivation, timeliness, and importance of the topic (e.g., popular or special sessions in conferences, research projects, funding programs, or industry consortia). We ask for this information to ensure that the topic is of current interest and will generate enough submissions.
- **Section 2 Biographic Information:** Qualification, track records, and broad representation of the proposed Guest Editors (GEs). Include short bios and related publications of each proposing GE. It is suggested that a proposal for a special issue should have at least 3 and at most 5 GEs. The GEs should be from different institutions. The same guidelines for selecting Associate Editors for the Society Transactions should generally apply when selecting GEs, e.g., seniority and tenure (for proposers from academic institutions). At least one of the GEs must be an active member of the IEEE Signal Processing Society. We ask for this information to ensure that the GEs are qualified and that the team with a broad representation from different organizations and countries.
- **Section 3 Topics:** A tentative list of topics covered in the special issue. This may be in bullet form with additional explanations as needed. We ask for the information to better understand the scope of the issue.
- **Section 4 Potential Authors:** A list or potential list of authors. As a means of advertising the special issues, the proposers should solicit articles from experts (to be clear, not invited authors, just an encouragement to submit). If some of them have already agreed to write that should be mentioned in the proposal. We ask for this information to evaluate the likelihood that the issue will receive enough submissions.
- **Section 5 Relation to Other Special Issues:** Relation to any recent special issues published or planned for publication in SPM or other journals/transactions/magazines. Proposals overlapping with any topic covered recently or in the near future in SPM or other publications are discouraged. A list of recent topics covered by SPM can be found (under *Information for Authors*) at <http://www.signalprocessingsociety.org/publications/periodicals/spm/>. Sample proposals for special issues are available upon request. We solicit this information to make

sure that there are no competing special issues in other venues that may reduce the number of potential submissions.

- **Call-for-Papers:** A draft call-for-papers should be provided in a near-finalized form for printing. The following should be included:
 - Title
 - Description
 - Topics
 - Submission process, indicating that manuscripts are to be submitted according to the Information for Authors as published in any recent issue of SPM and as available on the Signal Processing Society website.
 - Important dates following the below example based on a tentative publication date, which can be obtained from the Area Editor.

8/1/18 White paper due
9/1/18 Invitation notification
11/1/18 Full length manuscripts due
1/1/19 First review to authors
3/1/19 Revision due
5/1/19 Final decision
6/5/19 Final package due
9/1/19 Publish manuscript
- The IEEE logo and the logo of the IEEE Signal Processing Society

3. **Proposal Review**

The Senior Editorial Board of SPM reviews proposals for special issues. The decision to approve or reject a proposal is made by the Area Editor (Special Issues) and the EiC, based on the reviews from the Editorial Board members.

4. **Open Call for White Papers**

After the special issue proposal is approved, the GEs should finalize their call-for-papers and send to the Signal Processing Society Publications office. Based on that, an open call will be issued, for white papers pertaining to the special issue. Submission of white papers is the first stage of a two-stage review process (white paper and full paper). Such a process is used to ensure broad participation and publication quality, and to avoid wasting the time of authors who may have any other venue in which to resubmit a rejected paper. The contents required in a white paper can be found (under *Information for Authors*) at <http://www.signalprocessingsociety.org/publications/periodicals/spm/>

GEs should make their best effort to disseminate the call-for-papers widely through announcements in conferences, newsletters, and online advertisement. SPS will make the call-for-papers available on the Signal Processing Magazine website. SPS will also email all the members with information about the special issue upon request, and can help get the call-for-papers in other journals. The GEs should plan for additional effort to disseminate the call-for-papers through their own networks. For example, they should contact the Potential Authors they listed in the proposal. They should also consider bringing printouts to conferences and forwarding to newsletters and other mailing lists. The GEs may contact the Area Editor for Social Media Tiago H. Falk falk@emt.inrs.ca for guidance on publicizing using social media channels.

5. White paper review process

Submission of white papers will be handled through Scholar One at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/spmag-ieee>

GEs will have accounts established in Scholar One at least one month prior to the white paper deadline. Scholar One will be opened at least two weeks in advance of the submission deadline to allow authors to submit their white papers. Rebecca Wollman r.wollman@ieee.org is the main point of contact for problems, e.g., if the Scholar One account does not get activated correctly.

The main objective of the white paper review process is to ensure that only high-quality white papers get accepted. To this end, the Lead GE will coordinate the review of white papers via email as Scholar One is not setup for this first stage. The submitted white papers (except those of GEs) will be reviewed by the GEs and one Editorial Board member who acts as Liaison for the Special Issue. The GEs are welcomed and encouraged to seek help from the Area Editor Namrata Vaswani namrata@iastate.edu to select the Editorial Board Liaison.

The Liaison or the GEs may seek advice from other Editorial Board members if needed. In the whitepaper decision notification (which is sent by the Lead GE), a summary of reviews should be sent to authors to justify the decision.

As a reminder, SPM papers need to be tutorial or review papers written in magazine style

- They cannot be new research
- They cannot be written with as many details as say an overview paper in Transactions on Signal Processing
- At the same time, it is okay and encouraged that an SPM article uses Math where needed to clarify things. This is especially true for precisely stating the problem setting(s) being studied and how the problem occurs in one or more applications.

Papers submitted with one of the GEs as a co-author will be handled by someone from the Editorial Board (Area Editor, EiC or a Senior Editorial Board member) selected by the Area Editor Namrata Vaswani. Up to three such papers are allowed per special issue. The GEs must notify the Area Editor for Special Issues two weeks in advance to indicate how many papers to expect from the GEs. The GEs must also remind the Area Editor when their papers are submitted, as they need to be handled through a separate review process.

The GEs (or their coauthors) are encouraged to send an email to the Area Editor at namrata@iastate.edu (and r.wollman@ieee.org) informing her that their full paper is submitted

Acceptance of white papers should be competitive. It is expected that 50% or less of white papers will be accepted. The exact acceptance rate will depend on the quality of the submissions, the number of submissions, and the target number of full-length articles for the special issue. The Lead GE should work with the Editorial Board Liaison and the Area Editor to agree on the final accepted list prior to notifying the authors.

6. Selected full-length article review process

Authors of selected proposals will be invited to prepare full-length manuscripts. Note that such invitations should not be considered to imply acceptance or any hint of acceptance. Each full paper will be assigned to a GE who will manage a thorough peer review process, similar to that used for papers in journals of high standing. Each full paper should be reviewed by at least three experts in the field, with the exceptions that two reviews may be considered sufficient when the reviews are consistent and thorough.

In rare and exceptional cases, full-length submissions may be solicited without going through the white paper review process. However, to ensure quality, every invited submission needs to be pre-approved by the Area Editor and the submitted manuscript is subject to the second stage of review. The acceptance/rejection decision will be made based upon the same criteria as for other full-paper submissions.

GEs should handle all aspects of the reviewing of the manuscripts. This is to make sure that the stringent deadlines are followed closely under the full responsibility of the GEs. The Lead GE should indicate to the Publications Office the list of manuscripts assigned to each of the GEs. The Publications Office will then give each of the GEs permission on SIM to assign reviewers for their corresponding papers. Submission and review of special issue papers are handled via the online system SIM.

Acceptance or rejection of each paper is decided for the publication in the corresponding special issue only. The rule about page count previously mentioned needs to be enforced strictly. Further, articles that suffer from extended delays in either the review or revision process may be excluded from the special issue and not published later. SPM does not publish special issue papers in subsequent issues as feature articles.

7. Acceptance Rate and Page Count

The Area Editor and the EiC will determine a target acceptance rate and a target page count for each approved issue based on the number of white paper submissions, and page budget available in the journal. After the second stage review, GEs make recommendations on accepted papers and the page allocation for each paper to the Area Editor, who will review and approve the recommendations. The Area Editor and EiC, following the policies and operation guidelines of the IEEE Signal Processing Society, have the right to disapprove recommendations from GEs. It is important to note that GEs may notify authors about the final decisions and page allocations, only after the Area Editor approves the recommendations.

8. Editorial

The GEs should write an editorial of moderate length (1 to 2 printed pages) setting the scope of the special issue, motivation and importance of the topic. The Lead GE should coordinate the writing of the editorial in consultation with the other GEs. It is encouraged that they acknowledge the service of the reviewers as part of the editorial. The editorial should be submitted to the Signal Processing Society Office strictly within one month from the date of acceptance of the last paper for the Special Issue or 12 weeks before the publication date of the issue, whichever is sooner.

9. **Note on avoiding conflicts of interest**

A GE cannot appear as author or co-author on more than one submission to the Special Issue and no more than 3 papers in total in the Special Issue may have a GE as author or co-author.

The Area Editor (Special Issues) of SPM is responsible for handling any paper submitted by a GE. He or she will be responsible for either handling the paper directly or appointing an Editorial Board Member to handle the paper. The Area Editor will also be responsible for ensuring that the paper goes through the same rigorous review procedure. If the Area Editor or EiC submits a paper to the SI, the VP Publications or his/her designee will handle that paper.

To ensure a high-quality special issue and to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, the GEs are reminded that the following people are excluded from taking part in the review process of a particular paper:

- any person in the same organization as any of the authors.
- any research collaborators of any of the authors.
- present or former students, advisors or any people closely connected to any of the authors.

If a GE is in any of the above categories, the GE cannot handle the paper. Another GE should be selected. If all the GEs fall into the above categories for a particular paper, the EiC should oversee the review of the paper.