Technical Program: The Heart of the Conference

2013 Panel of Conference Organizers
Portland, Oregon

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What is the Technical Program?

The portion of the conference that contains the presentation, review and discussion of technical matter of the event, generally:

- Oral presentation
- Poster sessions
- Workshops and tutorials

Technical papers published as the proceedings of the event and often included in a digital repository, such as IEEE Xplore

- Peer-reviewed

Subject matter falls within the technical scope of the conference

Often sub-divided into tracks and sessions based on topical areas
Why Review Technical Content?

- Determine **suitability** of material for conference
- Determine **quality** of suitable material
- Provide a potential filter for **plagiarism**
- Build up the **reputation** of the conference
- Organize material into groupings to **target interests** of the attendees
- Find people to chair sessions
What’s Involved in the Technical Program

- Developing the overall program flow and content
  - Tracks and sessions
  - Scope of content
  - Allocating schedule time
  - Assigning space to meet anticipated interest

- Structuring the technical program/peer review
  - Call for papers
  - Identifying and organizing reviewers
  - Establishing review guidelines
  - Managing paper submissions, reviews and final program development

- Building the program
  - Proceedings development
  - Publication planning
  - Event program
Preparation for Technical Program Development

» Size the program
  - Target number of papers to match available presentation time and poster session(s)
  - Target submission levels and expected acceptance rate
  - Review approach and reviewer requirements

» Determine if the Non-Presented Paper policy will be used and communicate it during the Call for Papers

» Identify tools to manage paper submission and review

» Plagiarism checking
Preparation for Technical Program Development – cont.

- Develop the timeline for submission and review (working backwards from the conference dates)
  - Proceedings ready for distribution at conference
  - Event program prepared
  - Final paper collection
  - Paper acceptance
  - Review time
  - Submission deadlines
  - Reviewer pool development
  - Call for Papers

- Work with the organizing committee to ensure all parties are aligned
Defining the Review Approach

- Review model
  - # of reviews/paper, # of papers per reviewer
  - Abstract vs. full papers (or two-tier approach)
  - Plagiarism checking (strongly suggested)
  - Non-presented paper policy

- Submission requirements for authors
  - Should meet IEEE standards for references
  - Best if use IEEE template
  - Best if done electronically with communication trail with author(s)
  - There should be one corresponding author/paper
How to Review

First step, **suitability** – determine whether paper is in the conference area of interest and meets any guidelines for length, format, etc

– Often done by the TPC Chair, sometimes with small committee

Second step, **assign** - to one of the major areas of the conference

– Often associated with an individual or group on the Technical Program Committee
Third step, quality – many approaches

- Member of TPC takes the lead of an area and is assigned a group of papers
  - TPC has a number of members in this area
  - Or Area lead has list of reviewers

- Papers are reviewed
  - Review guidelines are critical
  - Comments from reviewers must be useful in judging paper
How to Review

- All reviews should be done before the selection meeting(s)
- A summary with the results of all reviews should be available to the TPC members in each specific area
  - Reviews should be anonymous – authors not known to reviewers
- Final decisions begin on which papers to accept
  - Suggestion – triage based on reviews
    - Absolutely accept
    - Maybe accept
    - Reject
Preparing for the Final Review and Selection

- Final Step, final **acceptance and notification**

- Spend time in the TPC meeting discussing the “Maybe Accept”
  - Try to understand the reviewers’ concerns, does the paper have fatal flaws
  - Look at whether the paper would make a nice contribution to a session – help round out a session
  - How many papers are needed
    - If too many papers have been submitted for the number of available slots some “Maybe” papers will be rejected

- Submit papers for plagiarism checking if appropriate
Notifying Authors of Decision

- It is possible to require that authors make certain changes to papers before they are acceptable
- Communicate to authors with results of review process, any next steps
  - Requirements for presentation at the conference
  - Final paper submission dates
  - Final paper formatting
No matter what conference there are always two challenges:
- Getting enough high quality papers by the submission deadline
- Finding enough experts to give reviews by the deadline
  - It is important that all reviews are completed before any face-to-face meeting of the TPC

Building up conference quality and reputation will help with both of these.
Conference Content Quality, and Self-Service Publishing Tools

- Plagiarism screening via CrossCheck
- eCopyright form
- PDF eXpress and PDF eXpress PLUS
Conference Content Quality Issues

- Papers well outside of the stated subject matter scope of the conference
- Papers well outside of IEEE’s core subject areas (EE, Computing, and related areas)
- Papers that are poorly or unintelligibly written
- Fraudulent content, e.g., machine-generated papers
- Papers that lack some or all of the basic elements commonly found in scientific research papers:
  - Introductory question or hypothesis -> brief summary of related previous scholarly work by others -> research methods -> results -> conclusions
CrossCheck compares submitted manuscripts against a very large database of published technical papers (as well as over 6 billion Web pages).

CrossCheck provides technical program chairs with a summary report that highlights a paper’s similarity to previously published work:
- Papers discovered at Levels 1—3 plagiarism by volunteers or staff to be rejected without needing further review/resolution.
- Levels 4 and 5 plagiarism cases to be handled at the discretion of volunteers.
- Staff is available to assist with this process.

The TP chair can then follow up to isolate and review the high-scoring papers as necessary.
Conference organizers are encouraged to use CrossCheck as early as possible during the manuscript review process.

Because CrossCheck detects similar content that may turn out to be problematic, IEEE encourages organizers to screen their authors’ submissions prior to publishing the proceedings.

- This will allow organizers to take any necessary editorial actions without delaying the publication of the proceedings, and more importantly, the posting of the proceedings in Xplore.
How IEEE Conferences Can Take Advantage of CrossCheck

1. Choose a paper management vendor that includes CrossCheck screening in its suite of services

_The following vendors have integrated CrossCheck into their systems:_

- EDAS
- PaperCept
- MIRA
2. Sign up to use the CrossCheck Portal

- For technical program chairs who prefer to use their own processes for manuscript submission, IEEE offers a standalone CrossCheck application

- The CrossCheck Portal offers a simple, streamlined interface, as well as a direct connection to IEEE staff who can help flag problematic papers
Get Information on the IEEE CrossCheck Portal


* How to access the IEEE CrossCheck Portal

IEEE publication volunteers who would like to use the Portal are encouraged to contact the IPR Office for more information. Please complete the following registration form and staff will contact you with details on accessing and using the Portal.

* Required field
Name: *

E-mail: *

Publication Title: *

Publication Date:

Submit
What is the eCF?

The eCF is a Web-based version of the IEEE Copyright Form. It functions by way of an interactive ‘Wizard’ that determines the author's copyright status through a series of questions and replies, and then brings the author to the appropriate form to sign.

What is the basic requirement for use of the eCF?

Use of the eCF is open to any IEEE conference publications chair who wants to link his or her manuscript submission site to the eCF tool, and who has previously registered the submission site with the eCF system as a ‘trusted source’.

What happens next?

Authors will input their paper’s metadata as part of the submission process for their final, approved paper. The eCF “Wizard" guides authors to the appropriate form, which is signed by typing in their names and clicking on a "Submit" button.
More eCF Questions and Answers

How is an author's copyright status determined?

The author's copyright status is established by determining (through the eCF Wizard) the type of organization the author is affiliated with (for example, private industry, U.S. Government, or a Crown Government).

How do I "sign" the IEEE Electronic Copyright Form?

Simply by typing your name at the proper location.

How does this tool benefit me as a conference publication chair?

The burden of transferring copyright is shifted from the conference publication chair to the individual authors.

Register at http://ecopyright.ieee.org/registration/registration.html
**PDF eXpress**

- **PDF eXpress** is an IEEE-sponsored tool that assists conference authors in meeting IEEE Xplore requirements for PDF files. Usage is restricted to conferences that have completed the acquisitions process through the IEEE Conference Publications team.

- **PDF eXpress** is also a Web-hosted application that will perform one of two functions:
  - It will convert a non-PDF source document (typically, a Microsoft Word document or LaTeX bundle) into a PDF that meets IEEE Xplore requirements, or...
  - It will confirm that an author-generated PDF meets IEEE Xplore requirements (and if not, it will identify the issues that are causing problems for that PDF).
What is an “Xplore-compliant” PDF?

• No digital rights management or security can be applied
• Fonts must be embedded
• No hyperlinks to third-party sites
• No bookmarks
• No form fields
• No Adobe Acrobat 9 files

What is the point of all of these rules?

To provide a consistent, best-in-class user experience to every researcher viewing articles in IEEE Xplore®.
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- You will receive a welcome package via e-mail, including a project-specific URL, and Conference ID to send along to the authors whose papers have been accepted for presentation at your conference.

- Place a link to your PDF eXpress site on your conference’s author instruction page:

![PDF eXpress](image)
What Does PDF eXpress Look and Act Like?
How Do I Know That My File Was Converted Successfully?

(Note circled areas – these fields are populated from information the organizer provides when requesting the PDF eXpress site set-up)
## What Happens When My File Fails PDF eXpress Checking/Validation?

<table>
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<th>Paper Title</th>
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<td>Sample PDF</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong>*:</td>
<td>Failed PDF Check; use <a href="#">PDF Check report</a> to find problem(s), and then get solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PDF Checks</strong>:</td>
<td>1 of 3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Source File Conversions</strong>:</td>
<td>0 of 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**OPTIONS:**
- [Try Again](#)
- Request Technical Help

**Status***
- Manual Conversion = File Type Not Automated - conversion will be performed next business day
- Error = Please check your email for additional information
- Upload incomplete = Click on the "Try Again" link to complete the upload of your file
PDF eXpress PLUS is very similar to PDF eXpress, with one key additional feature: “PLUS” enables authors to deposit their final, Xplore-validated PDFs on the site for collection by the conference's publication or technical program chair.

**Benefits:**

- Eliminates the need for publication or program chairs to track down individual authors for their papers
- Helps ensure that the publication or program chair has the most recent version of the author’s paper
- Meets a business need for small to medium-sized conferences whose publishing requirements are very simple
Conference Publications Portal

Concept

- New concept under development
- Brings together existing functionality for the conference organizer
  - Paper management
  - Quality verification
  - Publication support
- Platform for new tools and capabilities in the future
  - Event planning and management
  - Conference finance
Program/Publication Support They See From IEEE

- IEEE Publication information and tools scattered across IEEE web sites

- No peer review or paper management support

- Copyright management
  - Submit eCopyright through paper management system, or go to IPR web site to get use of eCF tool

- Plagiarism Checking (CrossCheck)
  - Some conferences don’t check at all
  - Go to IPR CrossCheck portal to check for plagiarism

- Xplore compliance verification
  - Separate PDF eXpress site to run papers through

- Search for production vendor to prepare their proceedings
Single point of entry that provides critical publication functionality to the conference
- eCopyright management
- PDF eXpress format verification
- Plagiarism checking via Cross Check
- Suite of peer review/paper management resources
  - Turnkey self-service application with basic functionality for small (<100 papers) conferences
  - Links to preferred vendors for larger conferences
- XML conversion (to be designed)
- IEEE publication information/guidelines

Other conference/author-support tools and services
- Publication production services (eCP, CPS)
- Author Digital Toolbox
Welcome to the IEEE Conference Publications Portal

Quality Tools and Services

**CrossCheck**
Use CrossCheck, our plagiarism checking tool to ensure the quality of submitted works.

**PDF eXpress**
Access PDF eXpress to verify compliance with IEEE Xplore to ensure a timely inclusion in IEEE's digital library.

**eCopyright**
Use this resource to register the copyright of your papers with IEEE.
Where We Are today: Concept Phase

- Overall portal design and development
  - Identifying customer needs
  - Engaging customers early in the design and development processes

- Identification of key functional components
  - CrossCheck
  - PDF eXpress
  - eCopyright
  - Links to services and information

- Identify and add self-service paper management tool for small conferences

- Concept testing to ensure customer confirm functionality and offer approach
### Publication Portal and Beyond

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
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| - Basic peer review tool  
  - PDF eXpress  
  - eCopyright  
  - Links to peer review vendors for larger conferences | - Data sharing between ICX, eCopyright, PDF eXpress and CrossCheck | - Event planning services  
  - Registration  
  - XML conversion  
  - Budgeting? (NetSuite)  
  - Synch to Xplore |
Thank you!

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