

Special Issue Guidelines

1 Background

Special Issues deal with timely topics of broad interest and should be organised by recognised experts in the area. They should have a well-articulated and unifying theme and should reflect the best work in an area of significant importance or emerging and hot topics. They should aim to attract articles of significant interest and quality.

To note:

We will consider specific conferences or symposia as possible sources for Special Issues, if these events are deemed by the Editor-in-Chief to be of the standard required by the journal. Papers will need to be reworked into a form suitable for journal publication and, where conference proceedings are published, enhanced by inclusion of at least 30% novel scientific material. Where copyright of published proceedings is not held by the author or the IET, large blocks of verbatim text must be removed or reworded or permission sought for reuse from the copyright holder (for text, figures or tables). Conference papers must be appropriately cited and copies attached on submission, with an explanation of how the paper has been changed. Conference based Special Issues will not generally have an open call-for-papers.

2 Submission of a Proposal for a Special Issue

A detailed proposal must be prepared and forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Office. This should include the following:

- Aims and objectives of the proposed Special Issue topic along with a brief discussion of its current importance.
- Names of the Guest Editors and their affiliations with a brief explanation as to why they are qualified to edit a Special Issue on the proposed topic.
- Names and details of which Guest Editors will be handling papers on the submission system ReView (<https://www.iet-review.rivervalleytechnologies.com>).
- A list of active researchers in the area of the proposed topic who will be invited to contribute to the Special Issue (in addition to any open call-for-papers).
- A list of any specific articles to be invited with titles and author names.
- A suggested title for a high-quality Review article to be invited for the Special Issue with suggestions of potential authors (which may include the Guest Editors).
- A proposed submission deadline. We recommend at least 6 months to build submissions (unless the majority of papers are already in a finished state). A decision deadline would then be approximately 6-8 months after this to allow for revisions and papers to move through peer review. The print issue would typically have a cover date of 1-3 months after the decision deadline, depending on the journal in question.
- A list of the paper types that you will consider for this SI e.g. research/review/case study/brief. This list should not exceed the paper types normally considered in this journal.

In addition to a proposal, the Guest Editor(s) will be required to provide a draft call-for-papers (if applicable) that includes the aims and objectives of the Special Issue along with a bullet list of specific subjects covered, and a list of Guest Editors with contact details for at least the lead Guest Editor.

To note:

All proposed Special Issues will be subject to the Editor-in-Chief's approval.

The Editorial Office reserves the right to adjust submission deadlines as they see fit in accordance with suitability and publication deadlines.

The Editorial Office reserves the right to disband a Special Issue at any time if the number of papers of an acceptable quality fails to reach a pre-agreed minimum (usually 3 papers unless otherwise stated), including if too few submissions are received initially. In addition, if the number of papers unacceptably exceeds the journal's page budget, some material may be published in subsequent regular issues.

3 Responsibilities of Guest Editors

We encourage the Guest Editors to appoint their colleagues to act as their co-Guest Editors. However, there should be no more than 3–5 Guest Editors for each Special Issue.

If there is more than one Guest Editor, one or two Lead Guest Editor(s) must be nominated. They will serve as the official contact for the Editorial Office and Editor-in-Chief. Responsibilities of the Guest Editors are listed below.

- Guest Editors are responsible for inviting submissions (the Editorial Office will offer support in the sending of invitation if required) and announcing the call-for-papers as widely as possible. This should include electronic mailing lists and at relevant conferences.
- Guest Editors that will be handling papers must have an account on ReView (<https://www.iet-review.rivervalleytechnologies.com>) before the Special Issue can be set up. Once you have registered, please send your username or email address you have linked to the account to the office so permissions can be added.
- Once a submission has been assigned, the Guest Editors are responsible for selecting and securing a minimum of two independent reviews for each manuscript. The reviewers must be qualified researchers with expertise in the topic area of the submitted papers. Instructions on how to use the system will be provided by the Editorial Office as soon as submissions are received.
- The Guest Editors will also be responsible for ensuring that reviews do not become significantly overdue, where needed additional reviewers are invited in a timely manner, and reviewers are not overused.
- Guest Editors are responsible for making preliminary accept/decline decisions based on the first round of review, and then organising subsequent rounds of review as necessary. Accepted papers will be published e-first at the earliest opportunity and collated together in the final issue.
- The system decision of 'Reject with the opportunity to resubmit' should not be used by Special Issue Guest Editors.
- If a Guest Editor believes that a paper would be suited for a regular issue of the journal rather than the Special Issue then this may be advised in the reject letter. Any papers which are rejected after first submission or subsequent revisions will not be further considered for the Special Issue.
- The review and decision-making processes are to be conducted in a timely manner. Any required action from the Guest Editor(s) should be undertaken within 1 week of becoming due.
- The Guest Editor(s) will be required to provide an Editorial for the Special Issue – the Editorial Office will provide the timescale, format guidelines and list of

accepted papers. Failure to produce an Editorial within this timescale will result in either an Editorial being sought from the Editor-in-Chief, or the issue being published without an Editorial. The Editorial is the primary place where Guest Editors are credited for their work on the Special Issue. Please note that once all papers are accepted there will be a short window to get this editorial in (while mentioning each accepted paper) and typeset, so your swift action is appreciated at this stage.

To note:

The Editorial Office reserves the right to take action on any paper on the Guest Editor's behalf, or fully cancel the Special Issue and publish any papers received as regular papers in the journal, if unacceptable delays arise.

4 Responsibilities of the Editor-in-Chief

The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for assessing Special Issue proposals and may consult the Editorial Board as required. The Editor-in-Chief will make the final decision regarding the suitability of the proposed Special Issue topics and Guest Editors.

In case the appointed Guest Editors fail to fulfil any of their duties listed in section 3, the Editor-in-Chief will take a full responsibility for the finalisation of the Special Issue in accordance with the terms specified in this document.

5 Potential Conflicts of Interest

In order to avoid conflicts of interest in the process of producing a Special Issue, the following policy will be applied:

- A Guest Editor cannot appear as author or co-author on more than two submissions to the Special Issue.
- Any paper submitted by a Guest Editor as author or co-author to the Special Issue will be handled by the Editor-in-Chief.
- The following people are precluded from taking part in the review process of any paper submitted for consideration as a Special Issue paper:
 - Any person in the same organisation 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.

6 Useful Links

IET Author Guide:

<https://digital-library.theiet.org/journals/author-guide>

IET Referee Guide:

<https://digital-library.theiet.org/journals/referee-guide>

Policy in Relation to Plagiarism, Infringement of Copyright and Infringement of Moral Rights and Submission to Multiple Publications:

https://digital-library.theiet.org/files/plagiarism_copyright_infringement_policy.pdf

How to Publish FAQs:

<https://www.theiet.org/publishing/publishing-with-iet-journals/how-to-publish-in-a-journal-faqs/>