

IFAC PapersOnLine

Guidelines for Editors of IFAC Conferences

December 2021

Proceedings of IFAC conferences are published online in partnership with Elsevier in the open access journal [IFAC-PapersOnLine](https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/ifac-papersonline), hosted on the ScienceDirect web service¹:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/ifac-papersonline>

The journal provides open access to the full text of all reviewed papers accepted at IFAC conferences, and supports advanced searches based on paper attributes or content.

The whole proceedings series can be referred to by means of the [ISSN 2405-8963](https://www.issn.org/issn/2405-8963). Each paper is uniquely identified by a DOI (Digital Object Identifier), the current standard for electronic papers citation. IFAC-PapersOnLine is indexed by Scopus, the Web of Science (WoS), and Google Scholar.

Electronic publishing poses new challenges to the organizers of IFAC conferences, and especially to the conference Editors, who have the responsibility for compiling the proceedings of the conference. This document has been written as a guide for conference Editors to help them to get acquainted with the IFAC publication procedures and the technical requirements for the electronic paper files that are to be collected from the authors. The use of a standard electronic system for handling the paper submission and review process, as well as the preparation of proceedings is required for all IFAC conferences.

Up-to-date information about the proceedings publication process can be found at

www.ifac-control.org/publications

If you have any questions or problems with the publication process, please contact the editor of IFAC-PapersOnLine at the following address:

ifac-papersonline@ifac-control.org

Comments and suggestions about the format or the contents of this document are welcome at the above mail address.

For a general view of all aspects of the organization of an IFAC conference, please refer to the [IFAC Organizer's Guide](#).

¹ Proceedings up to 2014 are archived in the IFAC Proceedings Volumes series, available at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/14746670>

IFAC Proceedings

Proceedings are the final collection of papers from an IFAC meeting. Proceedings are typically produced after the meeting. Proceedings are the only way in which papers from IFAC meetings are published.

Proceedings from all IFAC conferences are published by IFAC, in cooperation with the IFAC publisher, in the open-access IFAC-PapersOnLine journal, and can be cited via an ISSN and a DOI (Digital Object Identifier), a unique industry-standard identifier assigned to every paper.

Proceedings must be published for symposia and conferences, but they are not mandatory for workshops. If the organizers of a workshop choose to publish proceedings, the same procedures as for symposia/conferences, including peer review of full draft papers, must be followed. If the organizers decide not to publish proceedings, they must not produce any other publication of the workshop.

Not all the papers presented in an IFAC conference are acceptable for publication in the proceedings. Only papers that have been selected by the International Program Committee based on peer review of full draft papers can be published. Papers must also have an appropriate length (4-6 pages for regular papers) and comply with the IFAC format and layout standards. This generally excludes extended abstracts and non-reviewed invited or plenary papers, as well as the new categories of discussion and dissemination contributions.

The copyright of all papers submitted to IFAC meetings is held by the authors, who must grant exclusive publishing rights to IFAC under a Creative Commons license when they submit the final version of the paper. Electronic license agreement forms will be made available to the authors for this purpose at the submission site.

Copies of the presented papers (preprints) are usually distributed to the meeting participants by the organizers. Such copies must be identical to the papers published in the proceedings and must include a copyright notice on the first page of each paper, as follows.

“© 20XX the authors. Accepted by IFAC for publication under a Creative Commons License CC-BY-NC-ND”.

Aside from the copyright notice, the copies of papers distributed to the participants must not carry any text or mark that enables them to be considered a publication or cited in any way, such as ISBN, bar code, cataloguing details, or the words “published by ...”.

The organizers are free to distribute other materials to the participants, including non-reviewed contributions, multimedia files, local information, etc. For example, collections of brief paper summaries may be an acceptable alternate document, but collections of paper abstracts are not suitable alternates for preprints.

Editorial tasks step by step

1. Sign the agreement and set up a paper handling system

The following actions must be carried out by the conference editor as soon as the conference has been approved by IFAC:

- Read, sign and return the Publications Agreement letter to the IFAC Secretariat accepting the conditions for the proceedings production.
- Contact the Editor-in-Chief of IFAC-PapersOnLine in order to get up-to-date instructions for authors and organizers. Any instructions that may have been passed on from previous meetings must be discarded.

The current Editor-in-Chief of IFAC-PapersOnLine is:

Prof. Juan A. de la Puente
ETSI Telecomunicación
E-28040 Madrid, Spain

Tel: +34 910 672 130
E-mail: juan.de.la.puente@upm.es

- Make all the necessary arrangements in order to set up the paper handling system for the conference. The use of the PaperPlaza Conference Manuscript Management System is required for all IFAC conferences. The contact for PaperPlaza is:

PaperCept, Inc.
E-mail: contact@papercept.net

2. Check the call for papers

The editor must check that the call for papers includes:

- The official IFAC [Copyright conditions statement](#).
- A mention that the copyright belongs to the authors, but IFAC has exclusive publishing rights.
- A mention that the proceedings will be published in IFAC-PapersOnLine.
- Pointers to up-to-date [instructions for authors](#).
- Instructions for draft paper submission.

The last version of the IFAC Copyright Conditions statement and the instructions for authors can be found on the IFAC web site (www.ifac-control.org).

Notice that full draft papers must be reviewed by the IPC in order to be acceptable for publication in IFAC-PapersOnLine. Abstract-based review is only acceptable if no publications are to be produced (e.g. IFAC may agree that papers presented at some workshops are not published).

Although some meetings have accepted in the past draft papers in free style, it is highly recommended that compliance to IFAC paper layout and file format be requested from the beginning. In this way, both authors and reviewers can have a closer idea of the appearance and extension of the final paper. Moreover, possible difficulties with layout or format conformance are better detected at this stage, with time ahead for solving them before the final submission is done.

Notice that this implies that only PDF files complying with the IFAC style rules and PDF requirements are admissible. This must be explicitly stated in the Call for Papers.

3. Await the results of the paper review and selection process

The paper review and selection process are the responsibility of the IPC. The outcome of this process is a list of accepted papers and a set of review comments to be sent to the authors, possibly requesting them to make some modifications before submitting the final version of the papers.

The standard paper handling system approved by IFAC, [PaperPlaza](#), provides support to the IPC in the review process.

4. Open the final paper submission process

Paper files

Paper files must be submitted as PDF files. The organizers must provide the means for the authors to submit their paper files through [PaperPlaza](#), the standard paper handling system that has been approved by IFAC.

The instructions for final paper submission must include the requirement that the paper files comply with the IFAC standards and PDF file properties, as detailed in the instructions to authors. The IFAC PDF requirements are a subset of PDF/A, an ISO standard for archiving documents in the long term (ISO-19005). The paper handling system approved by IFAC validates the PDF properties of the file so that papers that do not comply with the required format cannot be uploaded.

License Agreement forms

The author(s) must grant exclusive publishing rights to IFAC under a Creative Commons license when they submit the final version of the paper. The copyright belongs to the authors, who have the right to share the paper in the same terms allowed by the end user license, and retain all patent, trademark and other intellectual property rights (including research data).

Authors must use an electronic form as provided by [PaperPlaza](#). No paper may be included in the proceedings unless its License Agreement Form has been uploaded.

Management of paper files

The editor is responsible for the proper use of the paper management system. All the modifications in the category of papers or their acceptance status must be made using the tools provided by PaperCept, and no manual modifications should be made to overpass the control checks provided by the system, e.g. to upload a paper without its corresponding license agreement form or with an inappropriate page length.

5. Set up the technical program

The technical program of the conference, including the organization of paper presentations into sessions, must be set up on [PaperPlaza](#). Otherwise, the proceedings cannot be automatically produced, which results in additional delays and costs.

6. Compile the proceedings volume

The proceedings volume contains:

- An introduction file with the following contents:
 - A list of sponsoring organizations (including the sponsoring IFAC TCs);
 - a list of the NOC and IPC members.
 - a preface or presentation, as appropriate.

The introduction file must be sent by the conference editor to the Editor-in-Chief before the end of the conference. The file must be in an editable format as described in appendix C.

- A file with the technical program of the conference, including the titles and authors of all the papers included in the Proceedings, with their respective page numbers. This is the table of contents of the proceedings volume, which is automatically generated by the [PaperPlaza](#) system. The conference editor must ensure that the technical program of the conference is fully uploaded to [PaperPlaza](#) in order to enable the table of contents to be generated.
- The PDF files of all the papers included in the technical program, stored in the [PaperPlaza](#) system. The conference editor must check that only papers that have been peer-reviewed and comply with the IFAC format standards are included in the proceedings. If there are any papers that should not be included in the proceedings, e.g. for not having been reviewed or not having the required format or page length, a list with the papers to be excluded must be sent to the Editor-in-Chief of IFAC-PapersOnLine together with the technical program.

7. Produce the participants kit

The organizers of an IFAC conference may provide copies of the accepted papers for distribution to the meeting participants, either in printed or electronic form. Such copies must be identical to the papers published in the proceedings, and must include a copyright notice on the first page of each paper as follows:

“© 20XX the authors. Accepted by IFAC for publication under a Creative Commons Licence CC-BY-NC-ND”.

Aside from the copyright notice, the copies of papers distributed to the participants must not carry any text or mark that enables them to be considered a publication or cited in any way, such as ISBN, bar code, cataloguing details, or the words “published by ...”.

The organizers are free to distribute other materials to the participants, including non-reviewed contributions, multimedia files, local information, etc., but these materials are not an IFAC publication and may not include any part of the IFAC proceedings.

8. Publishing the papers

The final collection of presented papers is published on the PapersOnLine site. Therefore, there is no physical Proceedings volume, but a set of files that can be read or downloaded from the site. The papers are directly uploaded to the site from the [PaperPlaza](#) handling system.

Once the proceedings package has been transferred to the publisher, no articles can be added or removed from the proceedings. The proceedings are just a special issue of an electronic journal, and the conference editor, as responsible for its contents, must carefully check that the proceedings include all the articles, and only those articles, that are to be published (see step 6 above).

Special cases

Extended abstract papers

An IFAC conference may accept a limited number of papers reviewed on the basis of extended abstracts. These are not published in IFAC-PapersOnLine but may be provided by the conference organizers in the participants kit or posted on the conference web site.

Discussion contributions

Discussion contributions are submitted with the goal of being only presented at the conference, in order to get feedback and generate discussion with participants, without generating a publication (that means, they are not going to be published at IFAC-PapersOnLine).

Dissemination contributions

Dissemination contributions are in conjunction to papers that are provisionally recently accepted by some IFAC Journal, whose contents can be discussed at IFAC conferences. Similar to the case of discussion papers, dissemination papers will not be included in the official conference proceedings published in IFAC-PapersOnLine.

Workshops

The organizers of a Workshop may decide not to publish the papers in IFAC-PapersOnLine. In this case, no other publication of the meeting may be done. If preprints are distributed to the attendants, they may not be considered a publication, and the regulations in section 6 above apply.

Although it is not required, IFAC recommends that Workshops publish their papers in IFAC-PapersOnLine. In this case, all the regulations for IFAC publications apply to Workshops as well, including the requirement that full draft papers must be peer-reviewed.

Other publications

An expanded version of a paper that has been presented at an IFAC meeting may be published as a paper submitted independently by the author to one of the IFAC Journals or to a non-IFAC Journal.

A subsequent derivative publication may be based on the already published IFAC conference article, but it must satisfy all the requirements of an original contribution to the literature, as prescribed by the journal to which the paper is submitted. A submission that constitutes of minor modifications of the IFAC conference article is a form of self-plagiarism, which is not acceptable. At a minimum, the journal paper must explain the contribution of the conference paper, and describe the distinguishing additional contribution made in the journal paper. All submitted papers will undergo the normal review process of the corresponding journal.

Whenever a derivative journal publication does eventuate then this journal paper must contain an appropriate reference to the already published article in IFAC-PapersOnLine publication, e.g.:

Originally published in IFAC-PapersOnLine, DOI: xxxx

Appendix A – IFAC paper style and layout

All papers submitted to IFAC technical meetings must comply with the [paper layout](#) which is available on the IFAC web site. [Template files](#) are also available for some common word processing tools.

A summary of the main layout characteristics follows:

Paper length and file size

Organizers should limit the length of regular papers to 6 pages in the final version. The limit for plenary and keynote papers is 18 pages. Flexibility can only be applied at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief of IFAC-PapersOnLine.

Page size and margins

- A4 paper (210 × 297 mm)
- Margins:
 - First page: top 35 mm, bottom 25 mm, left/right 15 mm.
 - Other pages: top 25 mm, bottom 25 mm, left/right 15 mm.
- Main text is two columns, with a 5 mm gap between columns.
- No headers, footers, or page numbers.

Title page

The title page must contain the following items, centred on the page with a left and right margin of 30 mm (i.e. a maximum width of 150 mm):

- Title, with a maximum of 10 words, 14 pt Times boldface.
- Author names, 10 pt Times boldface.
- Author affiliations, 10 pt Times italic.
- An abstract with no more than 250 words.
- A list of 5–10 keywords.

The abstract and keywords should be separated from the previous and following text by a pair of full width (150 mm) horizontal lines and an 8 pt vertical space.

The rest of the title page is body text, formatted in two columns as detailed below.

Text format

- Times Roman 10 pt, or equivalent font, unless explicitly stated otherwise.
- All paragraphs must be justified, if possible.
- Single line spacing.
- The first line of a paragraph should not be indented.
- 8 pt additional vertical space between paragraphs.
- Avoid hyphenation at the end of a line.

Section headings

- Section headings must be centred, in capital letters, and numbered consecutively, starting with 1.
- Sub-section headings should be in capital and lower-case italic letters, numbered 1.1, 1.2, etc, and left justified, with second and subsequent lines indented.

Tables

- All tables should be numbered with Arabic numerals.
- Headings should be placed above tables, underlined and centred.
- Leave one line space between the heading and the table.

Illustrations

- All photographs, schemas, graphs and diagrams are to be referred to as figures.
- Lettering and symbols should be clearly defined either in the caption or in a legend provided as part of the figure.
- Figures should be placed at the top or bottom of a column wherever possible, as close as possible to the first reference to them in the paper.
- Figures should be restricted to single-column width unless this would make them illegible.
- The figure number and caption should be typed below the illustration, left justified, with subsequent lines indented.

Equations

- Equations should be numbered with Arabic numerals.
- SI units should be used for physical magnitudes. All non-standard abbreviations or symbols must be defined when first mentioned, or a glossary provided.

References

- In the text the surname of the author and the year of publication of the reference should be given.
- Two or more references by the same authors published in the same year should be differentiated by letters a,b,c etc.
- For references with more than two authors, text citations should be shortened to the first name followed by et al.
- Only essential references, which are directly referred to in the text, should be included in the reference list.
- References must be listed in alphabetical order at the end of the paper. References to the same author(s) should be in chronological order.

- Journal references should include:
 - author's surname and initials;
 - initials and surnames of remaining authors;
 - year of publication (in brackets);
 - article title (where provided);
 - abbreviated journal title (in italics);
 - volume number and page numbers.
- References to books should include:
 - author's surname and initials;
 - initials and surnames of remaining authors;
 - year of publication (in brackets);
 - book title (in italics);
 - name of the publisher and place of publication.
- References to multi-author works should include after the year of publication:
 - chapter title (where provided);
 - "In:" followed by book title (in italics);
 - initials and name(s) of editor(s) in brackets;
 - volume number and pages;
 - name of the publisher and place of publication.

Appendix B – IFAC PDF specifications

PDF (Portable Document Format) is an open standard, developed by Adobe Systems, which has become the preferred format for electronic publishing on the Internet. PDF enables documents to be stored in a platform and device independent format, ensuring that the appearance of the document is the same when read on different computer systems. PDF documents can be read on a variety of freely available viewers, including Adobe Reader®, Ghostview, and Xpdf, among others.

PDF has evolved with time, and different versions of the standard have been produced. Furthermore, there are optional settings that may affect portability, and some of the enhanced characteristics that have been added to the basic PDF format can make it difficult to read PDF files on some computer platforms. In order to ensure that the paper files stored in the IFAC PapersOnLine site can be read with the highest quality on all computer platforms, and that IFAC papers can be efficiently searched, PDF files containing papers submitted to IFAC meetings are required to comply with a set of specifications, which are listed below. Some PDF characteristics are required for the file to be published in IFAC PapersOnLine, while others are recommended for best quality presentation.

Required PDF file properties

- A4 paper size (210 × 297 mm).
- PDF version 1.4 (Acrobat 5) or PDF/A.
- All fonts must be embedded in the file. This also applies to so-called base 14 fonts (Times, Helvetica, Courier, Symbol and ZapfDingbats) or their equivalent (Times New Roman, Arial, Courier New, etc.).
- Only scalable fonts can be accepted. Type 3 (bitmap) fonts should not be used.
- Fonts that require non-English language support are not allowed.
- The file must contain searchable text. Files resulting from scanning printed papers are not acceptable.
- All security settings (passwords, print or copy restrictions) must be removed.
- There must be no links or bookmarks in the file.

Recommended PDF properties

- Subset all fonts if less than a 100% of the characters are used.
- The file should be optimized for a faster viewing on the web.
- The print Resolution should be set to 600 dpi.
- Color/Grayscale Images: Bicubic Downsampling at 300dpi.
- Compression for Color Images: JPEG/Medium Quality.
- Monochrome Images: Bicubic Downsampling at 600dpi.
- Compression for Monochrome Images: CCITT Group 4.
- Compress Text and Line Art: Yes.

The file settings can be checked by opening the “Document properties” window in Adobe Reader®.

Appendix C – Introduction file

The editor of the conference must send to the Editor-in-Chief a front matter file with the following contents:

- Names of the main organizers and sponsors, as needed;
- list of the NOC and IPC members;
- Foreword or preface, as the editors may find it suitable.

The introduction file must be in an editable format (MS Word or compatible) so that the editors and the production team can add the necessary codes (ISSN, DOI, etc.).

Templates for the front matter file can be downloaded from the IFAC web site.

Appendix D – IFAC Copyright conditions

All publication material submitted for presentation at an IFAC-sponsored meeting (Congress, Symposium, Conference, Workshop) must be original and hence cannot be already published, nor can it be under review elsewhere. The authors take responsibility for the material that has been submitted. IFAC-sponsored conferences will abide by the highest standard of ethical behavior in the review process as explained on the Elsevier webpage (<https://www.elsevier.com/authors/journal-authors/policies-and-ethics>), and the authors will abide by the IFAC publication ethics guidelines ([http://www.ifac-control.org/events/organizers-guide/PublicationEthics Guidelines.pdf/view](http://www.ifac-control.org/events/organizers-guide/PublicationEthics%20Guidelines.pdf/view)).

Accepted papers that have been presented at an IFAC meeting will be published in the proceedings of the event using the open-access IFAC-PapersOnLine series hosted on ScienceDirect (<https://sciencedirect.com/>). To this end, the author(s) must grant exclusive publishing rights to IFAC under a Creative Commons license when they submit the final version of the paper. The copyright belongs to the authors, who have the right to share the paper in the same terms allowed by the end user license, and retain all patent, trademark and other intellectual property rights (including research data).

(Revised November 2019)

Appendix E – Article Sharing Policy

Prior to submission to an IFAC conference

Authors may share their article in the following ways:

- On the author's personal website or their institution website
- On institutional or funder websites if required
- On arXiv.org
- In the author's own classroom use

This does not count as a prior publication.

Upon submission to an IFAC conference

Authors may share or post their submitted version of the article (also known as the pre-print) in the following ways:

- On the authors personal website or their institution website
- On institutional or funder websites if required
- On arXiv.org
- For the author's own classroom use

The following text should be included on the first page of the posted article: "This work has been submitted to IFAC for possible publication".

Upon acceptance to an IFAC conference

If an author previously posted their submitted version of the article in any of the following locations, they can replace the submitted version with the accepted version.

- Authors personal website or their institution website
- Institutional or funder websites
- arXiv.org

The following text should be included on the first page of the posted article: "*© 20XX the authors. This work has been accepted to IFAC for publication under a Creative Commons Licence CC-BY-NC-ND*".

When the article is published, the posted version should be updated with a full citation to the original IFAC-PapersOnLine publication, including DOI.

Final published article

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