PUBLISHING ETHICS FOR EDITORS AND REVIEWERS

The policies and guidelines provided here are in place to protect the quality and integrity of forms of scholarly practice and research, as well as the reputations of the publications produced by SAE International. SAE International's full policy and ethical guidelines for authors are available here.

CONFIDENTIALITY

One of the most important elements of dealing with any suspected violation of publishing ethics is confidentiality. The whole peer-review process should be treated as confidential and sensitive. Any suspicion that publishing ethics have been violated should be treated in the same way.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Journal editors, associate editors, editorial board members, and reviewers are central to the publishing process. They serve the research community in the publication and dissemination of scholarly research.

The main responsibilities of editors, associate editors, editorial board members, and reviewers are:

- To handle all submissions fairly and in a timely manner, acknowledging submissions and communicating decisions made after peer review, including any help or advice that can be provided by the reviewers or the editors themselves
- To ensure that all submitted manuscripts are treated confidentially. Details should not be disclosed to others without the prior consent of the author. In addition, the identity and details of all reviewers should be treated confidentially
- To act objectively, making decisions about papers based entirely on their relevance, importance, and quality
- To make known any conflict of interests that might occur
- To take account of authors' wishes regarding reviewer choices
- To ensure that, should any suspicions of scientific or publishing misconduct occur, they are treated reasonably, sensibly, and confidentially and to ensure that any author appeals are dealt with fairly and quickly
- To comply with data protection regulations as appropriate

Reviewers

SAE International appreciates the essential role of the reviewer in the publishing and dissemination of scholarly research. All reviewers should read these guidelines before conducting a review for an SAE International journal as an aid to carrying out their duties and to ensure they act in full awareness of our policies and practices.

Reviewers should preview a manuscript that they have been asked to review to see if they have conflicts of interest that could complicate their review. Reviewers must disclose to editors any conflicts of interest that could bias their opinions of the manuscript and should recuse themselves from reviewing specific manuscripts if the potential for bias exists. Reviewers must not use knowledge of the work they are reviewing before its publication to further their own interests.

It is the responsibility of all reviewers to deal with requests from editors and associate editors to review papers and make those reviews in a timely manner, with care, consideration, and above all objectivity, exercising confidentiality at every stage. It is appreciated by authors when reviewers explain and support their judgments so that comments may be fully understood. There are checklists for reviewers that will help with the process, and training is available upon request. Reviewers should not retain copies of any article that they review.

Editors, Associate Editors, and Journal Staff

Editors and Associate Editors who make final decisions about manuscripts should recuse themselves from editorial decisions if they have conflicts of interest or relationships that pose potential conflicts related to articles under

consideration. Other editorial staff members who participate in editorial decisions must provide editors with a current description of their financial interests or other conflicts (as they might relate to editorial judgments) and recuse themselves from any decisions in which a conflict of interest exists. Editorial staff must not use information gained through working with manuscripts for private gain. Editors should publish regular disclosure statements about potential conflicts of interest related to the commitments of journal staff. Guest editors should follow these same procedures.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If a guest editor, associate editor, or reviewer believes that his/her relationship to an author, if known, or the subject matter of an article, may constitute a conflict of interest for any reason, this must be disclosed to the journal editor or journal staff.

Reviewers may suggest an author add references to a manuscript but should avoid self-promotion.

DUPLICATION SUBMISSION OR PLAGIARISM

If a reviewer suspects for any reason that an author may have submitted the paper in the same or similar form to another publication or suspects that plagiarism or duplicate publication has occurred, then this should be discreetly brought to the attention of the journal staff.

Reviewers must take great care to maintain confidentiality in all cases because accusations, whether suspicions are proven or disproven, can have a serious and damaging effect on the career and reputation of the individual(s) concerned. Any communication with the editor must be balanced, carefully argued, and suitably qualified such that reviewers do not leave themselves, the journal editor, or the publisher open to accusations of libel, which may occur whether or not the case is proven.

Once suspicions have been communicated to the journal staff, they will be investigated with the same discretion by the editor and SAE International staff. All procedures will be carried out in a sensitive and confidential manner.

SPECIAL ISSUES

SAE often publishes special issues on certain "hot" topics in its journals, offering comprehensive overviews of a wide range of promising and innovative research areas in mobility engineering. All special issue proposals are initially evaluated by an editor-in-chief and associate editors of the applicable journal, and guest editors are carefully vetted by SAE staff and journal editors. Each special issue is administered by a panel of guest editors (in consultation with regular journal associate editors and/or editors-in-chief) and is comprised of rigorously peer-reviewed articles from top researchers across industry, academia, and government. Manuscripts submitted for special issue consideration are further evaluated by SAE staff for plagiarism and by an associate editor with relevant expertise for topical relevance and scientific integrity. If the manuscript is found suitable on those grounds, it is then handled by a guest editor in the same manner as regular manuscript submissions—subject to a double-blind peer-review process, with a minimum of three independent subject expert reviewers. Upon recommendation by the guest editor after reviews and manuscript revision, the editor-in-chief evaluates the manuscript, reviews, and recommendation. Approval must be given by the editor-in-chief for publication in the special issue, with the editor-in-chief's decision being final.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

If you are employed by an organization or institution that receives public funding, it is conceivable that correspondence carried out in connection with your editing of the journal could be subject to a claim for disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act or similar legislation.

A claim is most likely to arise in relation to dispute over authorship, priority, or allegations of plagiarism or where an author disagrees with the decision reached on an article. In our experience, disputes reach the stage where legal action is threatened only where concerns are not addressed in a timely manner or there is evidence of editorial misconduct (for example, by failure to follow proper procedures or through statements that could be deemed libelous or slanderous). It is, in our opinion, extremely unlikely that a Freedom of Information claim will arise, but it is important to make editors and reviewers aware of the possibility.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS (COPE)

SAE International journals are members of and support the ethical principles set out by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). A number of useful resources, such as guidelines, discussion papers, and the COPE Code of Conduct are available on the COPE website. SAE International recommends the COPE Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.

COPE provides an excellent set of flow charts to aid editors and reviewers when instances of suspected violation of publishing ethics occur. Advice includes what to do when

- Suspected duplicate/redundant submission occurs
- Suspected plagiarism occurs
- Suspected fabrication of data occurs
- Changes in authorship occur
- A reviewer suspects undisclosed conflict of interests
- A reader suspects undisclosed conflict of interests
- An ethical problem with a manuscript arises
- An editor suspects that a reviewer has appropriated an author's ideas or data

For a full list, please visit the COPE website at http://publicationethics.org/about.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARDS

SAE International is committed to ethical and compliant research and publications. Each author has the sole responsibility to confirm approval from the applicable Institutional Review Board (IRB) where necessary and required. All submissions to SAE publications should receive IRB approval in the following cases, including, but not limited to:

- Research involving human subjects: in order to assure the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects and to ensure the institution and researchers/investigators have complied with applicable regulations
- Any information or product that is subject to FDA approval, testing, or regulation
- Any information or product that is required to follow Department of Health and Human Services (specifically Office for Human Research Protections) guidelines and regulations
- Any information that is part of an application for a product, research, or marketing permit subject to FDA inspection or regulation

IRBs may grant exceptions to these requirements, which the author is required to provide upon request by the Publisher.