

IEEE Software

Theme Issue Solicitation and Review Process

(guidelines for prospective theme issue guest editors)

IEEE Software solicits theme issue proposals by guest editors (GEs). Proposals should adhere to the content and formatting rules described in Section 1. A proposal can be submitted at any time or in response to a call for proposals, as reported in Section 2. Once submitted, a proposal will undergo a review process as discussed in Section 3.

Contact information:

Editor in Chief: Diomidis Spinellis, dds@computer.org

Theme Issue Associate Editor: Henry Muccini, henry.muccini@univaq.it

1. Proposal Content and Format

Your proposal should contain at least these sections:

Proposed Title

The title should be clear, crisp, and meaningful. Try to make it no more than five words.

Proposers' Information

Provide names, affiliations, and contact information (postal address, electronic address, telephone number, and fax number). We expect at least one guest editor from industry and one from academia.

Introduction and Relevance of Theme

Explain the theme and how it fits in the larger context of software engineering. Describe the theme's relevance to *IEEE Software* readers: importance, timeliness, target audience, and so on. Examine recent publications, including other themes published in *IEEE Software*, to convince the evaluators that the theme complements other work or fills a gap. Clarify how your theme differs from previous ones. For a look at previous themes in *IEEE Software*, see the collection of *IEEE Software* magazine covers at <https://obren.info/ieeesw>.

Focus

Detail the particular questions that will be addressed or perspectives that will be described. If other publications have addressed similar themes, how will this theme differ? Describe what readers will learn and whether this information is available elsewhere.

Theme issues are a natural way to attract focused tutorial and survey articles. This can increase *IEEE Software*'s relevance to practitioners. We expect you to solicit such articles from your network and colleagues and to work with authors to get the articles fit for *IEEE Software*. Identify in the proposal the titles and potential authors of specific survey or tutorial articles you aim to publish and the level of the potential authors' commitment. You

might also want to include an explicit note in your call for proposals indicating that you seek such articles.

Organization

Discuss what you want the theme section to include. It must include the following:

- An introduction, probably including a tutorial or overview to introduce concepts and terminology, enabling readers unfamiliar with the topic to understand the articles. Don't summarize the articles; instead, explain how they relate to the topic and to each other. Your introduction should also contain a sidebar on related references.
- A balanced selection of refereed articles. The preferred way to provide this balance is by using a Point–Counterpoint article that highlights conflicting views related to the theme. (For example, see the March/April 2000 issue.) Alternatively, the theme section might comprise articles suggesting significantly different viewpoints on a subject. (For example, see the July 1991 issue.) Roundtable discussions representing the views of several experts are also popular.

List of Potential Reviewers and Authors

Balance academics with industrial and governmental contributors. State preliminary contacts that have been made. However, remember that *IEEE Software* is a refereed publication; all invited manuscripts (except for the Point–Counterpoint article) must be refereed and aren't guaranteed acceptance. Most manuscripts that appear in the issue will likely be the result of your solicitation. You should propose a credible plan for ensuring enough high-quality submissions.

Promotion Plan

It's your responsibility to actively solicit submissions and ensure that we receive a significant number of high-quality submissions. So, you should propose a credible and detailed promotion plan. Thoroughly discuss which promotion lists, promotion groups, and events (for example, workshops, research projects, industrial or academic collaborations, and networks of excellence) you'll be using and targeting to reach the most appropriate authors for your theme issue. Invite reviewers, colleagues, and board members to help promote your theme issue.

Call for Articles

Create a call for articles based on your theme. A good call is specific and clear.

Include

- the theme issue title,
- the possible topics included in the theme issue,
- the guest editors' affiliation and contact information, and
- this text:

“Manuscripts must not exceed 3,000 words, including figures and tables, which count for 250 words each, the abstract, and references. Submissions exceeding these limits might be rejected without refereeing. Articles deemed within the theme and scope will be peer

reviewed and are subject to editing for magazine style, clarity, organization, and space. We reserve the right to edit the title of all submissions. Be sure to include the name of the theme for which you're submitting.

“Articles should have a practical orientation and be written in a style accessible to practitioners. Overly complex, purely research-oriented or theoretical treatments aren't appropriate. Articles should be novel. *IEEE Software* doesn't republish material published previously in other venues, including other periodicals and formal conference or workshop proceedings, whether previous publication was in print or electronic form.

“For general author guidelines: www.computer.org/software/author.htm

“For submission details: software@computer.org

“To submit an article: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/sw-cs>”

GE Qualifications

Besides technical qualifications, highlight your experience as editors in *IEEE Software* and other publications. Attach a biography of up to two pages for each GE, including a list of the five most relevant publications. Two GEs are preferable to one. At least one GE must reflect an industrial and practical viewpoint.

2. Solicitation

IEEE Software theme issue proposals are collected in three ways:

- Anyone can submit a proposal at any time.
- Calls for proposals will be posted to the major software engineering lists, one month before the annual editorial-board meeting. Anyone can submit a proposal.
- Board members may submit themes at the annual meeting.

3. Submission and Review

Proposals should be submitted to the theme issue associate editor (TIA) and copied to the editor in chief (EIC), following the guidelines in Section 1. (A template is available at <https://publications.computer.org/software-magazine/write-for-software>.)

The TIA will perform the initial check on the proposal. If a proposal has potential, it will be submitted to the *IEEE Software* editorial and advisory board members for evaluation.

The board members' evaluation will be based on technical accuracy, objectivity, balance, GE capability, proposal quality, and relationship to other planned and recent themes (including those of other publications). The review will include

- a textual review written by the *IEEE Software* board members,
- an indicator of the proposal quality, and
- an indicator of the theme's relevance.

Although theme issue proposals can be submitted at any time, they'll be evaluated twice a year: in November and May.

On the basis of the board members' comments, the TIA will decide whether the proposal should be revised, accepted, or rejected. The TIA will inform the EIC, lead editor, and

boards regarding any decisions.

The EIC will then notify the proposal submitters, and the lead editor will set up the schedule for the accepted theme issues.

4. Instructions for Guest Editors

- Each theme issue may account for about five papers. In case you receive many more good submissions, please contact us immediately.
- Articles must be submitted in the *IEEE Software* MS Word template, which is available at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/sw-cs>.
- The recommended number of reviewers is three. Two is the absolute minimum.
- Guest editors may not submit an article to the theme issue they edit. However, they should write an introduction to their issue.