

IJDAR guidelines, for the benefit of authors and reviewers

General policy and expectations

The role of IJDAR in the document analysis community is to provide a forum for the publication and dissemination of archival quality manuscripts that provide either a snapshot of the status of the field or advance the state of the art. In either case, it is essential that the authors, reviewers and editors uphold the highest scientific standards in carrying out the research, presenting the results and ultimately providing peer review of these works. To this end, we have tried to summarize the expectations of the journal, and ultimately the community, with respect to submission and publication in IJDAR. Over the past several years, the journal has gained very positive exposure in the document analysis and pattern recognition communities and we expect this will continue as long as we continue to demand only the highest quality in our published manuscripts.

The first and perhaps most straightforward expectation involves the overall readability of the document. The community expects manuscripts that are well written and that clearly and concisely communicate the contributions to the reader. While sometimes poorly written articles can be improved with sufficient effort, the amount of effort the author puts into the communicating to the reader will have a significant effect on the outcome of the review process. Articles that are difficult to read are difficult to review and will ultimately not engage the reader.

An important issue with respect to readability is also that the paper should be reasonably self-contained. Although a thorough paper can of course be written on a method or a contribution which is only a part of a larger work (such as a PhD thesis or a major collaborative project), it is not expected that a paper in IJDAR can only be understood in association with other papers elsewhere, because it would be written in a purely incremental way with respect to such papers. A publication in IJDAR should add a significant contribution to the knowledge within the community on its own.

The second expectation is that approach and results should be supported by solid scientific research. This includes for example, a solid review of the related literature, not just a list of other papers on the same topic, and a comparison of the approach to the state of the art. Authors must be able to make a convincing argument that there is value to the problem they are addressing and that the solution they propose is sound. It is not sufficient to allow “yet another technique” to well addressed problems be published just because no one has previously tried it. It must still advance the state of the art in a meaningful way.

Typically solid scientific research requires validation against existing datasets, or in cases where such data do not exist, against a newly created dataset that the reader can be sure adequately tests the system. The procedures and evaluation protocols should be communicated in a way that would allow other interested researcher to reproduce the general concepts. A sufficient amount of data should be used to demonstrate statistical significance.

In cases where a new problem is being defined, the goal should be to set a baseline and carefully identify the challenges of the problem. This includes where existing techniques are sufficient and

where they are not, and to what extent solutions to the problem exist. Defining the problem in a way that allows others to understand the significance, and the potential impact on the field can be very challenging, but at the same time, opening up new areas of research plays a significant role in allowing the community to grow.

So in summary, it is the role of the authors to provide high quality submissions that significantly extend what would typically be found in a conference paper, it is the role of the reviewers to make sure that the submissions are held to the highest quality standards and it is the role of the editors to ensure the submissions are managed in such a way that accepted publications are improved to the archival quality, worth of journal publication. The role of each is essential to ensuring IJDAR continues to thrive in the community.

Page Limit

IJDAR manuscripts should be limited to 20 pages (two column, double spaced and inclusive of figures), except for cases where the topic warrants additional space. Authors proposing papers longer than 20 pages should provide detailed justification to the editors in the cover letter for the submission. Editors will review requests on a case by case basis.

Datasets

As performance evaluation and benchmarking is an important aspect of research in IJDAR-related areas, it is perfectly understandable that a paper submitted to IJDAR can be mainly focused on describing a dataset meant to be a reference for benchmarking of evaluation purposes.

As with any other archival scientific publication, such an article should include a positioning of the proposed dataset with respect to the state of the art (references to similar datasets, improvements with respect to existing datasets, specificities in the way of organizing, labeling and using the dataset, etc.)

In addition, as the very purpose of scientific communication is to enable others to use and reproduce the matter described in the paper, information should be provided about how to access the dataset: where to download it (preferably from a stable repository, not from an individual homepage), what the copyright issues are, if the dataset is free or available for a fee (which is expected to be low), etc.

Provided no strong legal reasons make it impossible, the authors are advised to make the dataset available through the webpage of one of the appropriate Technical Committees of IAPR (the International Association for Pattern Recognition):

- IAPR TC10 on Graphics Recognition: <http://www.iapr-tc10.org/> under the “Resources” item
- IAPR TC11 on Reading Systems: <http://www.iapr-tc11.org/> under “Datasets” item

Special issues

IJDAR encourages the proposal of Special Issues on emerging topics or methodologies on IJDAR-related areas. The intention of a special issue should be to provide extra exposure to a timely

research topic that is of potential interest to a large portion of our community as well as other communities. While we have had special issues solely related to events in the past, we are moving away from this model toward special issues that are focused on a particular topic, be it in association with a special event or not. Guest editors will be expected to solicit papers that provide a well-rounded overview of the topic, including survey papers and papers that cover various techniques, tools and datasets. The goal, as with any individual paper, is to give the reader as comprehensive and as objective of overview of the topic as possible. This should include, for example what interesting problems remain unsolved.

The following procedures are to be followed when planning a special issue for IJDAR:

1. Special issues (SI) can be proposed by a group of editors that include at least one current or former IJDAR Associate Editor, which will serve as "contact guest editor" for the SI.
2. A proposal for a SI must be submitted to the IJDAR Editor-in-Chief(s) and should include the following information:
 - The name and address for communication of the guest editor(s);
 - The name of the contact guest editor;
 - A draft Call for Papers with the title and abstract of the SI describing the scope and significance of the proposed theme and the timetable to be followed in the processing of papers for the SI;
 - In case the topic emerged from a previous event (e.g. a conference) a list of potential contributors coming from this venue;
 - A preliminary time schedule for the SI organization;
 - A list of possible reviewers who are not involved in any submitted paper (the list shall be updated on the basis of papers submitted to the SI);
3. A final decision about the proposed SI will be made by the EIC(s) usually within a one month. The EIC(s) will make a decision considering both scientific merits of the proposed SI and the number of accepted SIs for the near future. The EIC(s) will also inform the proposers about the expected number of pages allocated to the SI. In this light, it is recommended to do not reject papers only for space constraints. If more papers than expected are deemed to be accepted, then the papers in excess will be put in the standard queue of papers to be published. The guest editors will be responsible to select the papers that will appear in the special issue guaranteeing a balance of topics.
4. If accepted, the editors of the SI will be responsible for advertising the call for papers with the help of IJDAR EIC and Springer support whenever possible.
5. All the papers submitted to a SI shall be uploaded through the standard web-based submission system and will undergo a regular review process handled by the guest editors.
6. Papers submitted to the SI will be assigned to the contact editor of the SI who will coordinate the reviewing with the usual procedures and quality standards.
7. The due date for submission of papers to a SI must be between six and ten months from the day the SI is advertised first.
8. In order to avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest, any SI editor or co-editor may not be an author or co-author of any submitted paper. However, the editor(s) are solicited to write an article introducing the special issue. If the previous introductory paper is more than a mere introduction of the SI (in general max two pages) and contains some research material, such as a survey on the subject, it will be reviewed in the usual way and handled by the EIC in charge of the SI.

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