

Policy on Prepublication for Submissions to IEEE Electron Device Letters

THE ADVENT of the widespread use of the Internet and the World Wide Web has changed the way research results are published, distributed, and accessed. These changes have necessarily altered our views on what constitutes prepublished content and, hence, ineligible to be valued as “novel” in a manuscript submitted for publication. In this editorial, we attempt to clarify and document our policy on this subject to authors (as well as to the editorial board) of IEEE ELECTRON DEVICE LETTERS (EDL). This document would be maintained in the Information for Authors (available at http://eds.ieee.org/images/files/Publications/edl_info_for_authors.pdf) and updated as needed.

First, we would like to underscore that the *Letters* is intended for rapid publication of important new results. A manuscript for *EDL* must be concise and precise, and most importantly, it must be *newsworthy*. We expect *EDL* submissions to be original works which are relevant and which *significantly* advance the state of the art. There is no room in *EDL* for papers which are extensions of prior publications. We request authors who wish to expand on or report incremental advancement beyond their prior journal or conference publications not to bring that work to *EDL*. Instead, we recommend that they write a full-length article for IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON ELECTRON DEVICES, or the newly introduced IEEE JOURNAL OF ELECTRON DEVICES SOCIETY, with extended discussions of the original work and detailed explanations. Short reports of complementary research may also appear in the *Transactions* as briefs. Our readers expect the *Letters* to focus on rapid dissemination of significant novel research. Authors are requested to assist the editorial board in meeting the readers’ expectations.

We recognize that it is appropriate for original contributions to contain technical material which is available elsewhere in order to highlight the relevance of the novel content. Such material is considered as “prepublished” if

- 1) it has undergone peer review,
- 2) the published article is archived and cannot be edited, and
- 3) the full article is publicly available, albeit for a fee or a subscription.

The editor and reviewers would, of course, exclude all the prepublished content while evaluating the novelty of an *EDL* submission. Authors must include appropriate citations to all prior publication. Furthermore, if the submission includes material which is either in press or under consideration for publication elsewhere, such as at an upcoming conference, then the authors should bring this to the attention of the editor in

the cover letter and upload a copy of the related document. They should also proactively inform the editor if, during the time when the *EDL* submission is still in process, the authors submit another manuscript elsewhere with overlapping content. Intentionally concealing a possibility of duplicate publication of novel content is professionally unethical and unfair to both the publishing entities affected.

With many different media available for the dissemination of research results, there is a need to clarify which of these publications are deemed to be “prepublished” in the context of evaluating a manuscript for publication in *EDL*. In the following sections, we attempt to specify our perspective on each of the most important venues.

Books and Journal Publications: Books, monographs, and scholarly articles appearing in generally accessible publications after a formal peer review process are clearly considered to be prepublished material. These include journals published by corporations, e.g., the *Bell System Technical Journal*.

Conference Publications: Contents published in conference proceedings which are archived in traditional or Internet libraries, such as the *IEEE Xplore*, are also prepublished material even if a subscription is required to gain access. Technical presentations and posters displayed at a meeting whose proceedings are as easily accessible to readers as regular journals can no longer be considered as novel in a new submission. Exceptions can be made to conferences and workshops which either publish only a short abstract or accept contributions without review or whose proceedings are not generally available in libraries. In case of doubt, authors should contact the editor for clarification.

Technical Reports, Dissertations, and Lectures: Internal reports and memos distributed within an institution, lecture notes, tutorials, seminars, and academic theses or dissertations are not considered as prepublication even if available online.

Electronic Postings of Scholarly Articles: Electronic copies of articles posted by their authors on publicly accessible Web sites or public servers are currently not considered as prepublication. These include centralized repositories such as arXiv. However, it is important to note that this is a controversial area which is still being debated internally within EDS Publications. Often, these author postings are not of fixed content, i.e., the authors may edit the original posting. In such cases, they are not even a valid reference that can be cited in the authors’ manuscript.

Patents and Patent Applications: It is conceivable that authors prepare a paper based on an invention of theirs for which there is a patent pending or issued. This will not disqualify their submission for publication in *EDL*. A published patent or a patent application is not considered as prepublished. However,

if none of the authors are listed as inventors, then the ideas documented in the invention cannot be considered as novel content in the submission. In both instances, we expect the authors to cite the patent or the application number.

Press Releases and Advertisements: Press releases and advertisements are not counted as publications.

It is critically important for the quality and credibility of *EDL* to be able to properly arbitrate on what constitutes novel content in an original manuscript, in a manner which is fair to both the contributing authors and earlier researchers. The Editors and, ultimately, the Editor-in-Chief strive to do that, but their decisions have to be based on the integrity of information provided by the author. Therefore, as a final note, we want to

remind prospective authors that, during their communication with the Editor, they have an ethical obligation to voluntarily disclose all knowledge of relevant republished content in their submission, as well as that of any unpublished content which is in press or submitted for publication elsewhere.

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AMITAVA CHATTERJEE, *Editor-in-Chief*