

## AREA CHAIR GUIDELINES

This page provides detailed guidelines to Area Chairs (AC) for MICCAI 2017. Please read the instructions carefully if this is your first time as AC for MICCAI, and just as carefully if you have been on the committee before, as there are some changes in the review process compared to previous MICCAIs. Specifically, we adopted the model of the AC, where each AC will have specific expertise and more responsibilities for the papers that are assigned to him/her. Being an AC is a demanding task that involves managing the review process for a set of papers, selecting papers for orals and awards, interacting with the Organizing Committee (OC) and other ACs. All ACs are expected to attend the Program Committee (PC) meeting on-site in Quebec City from May 12<sup>th</sup> to May 14<sup>th</sup>. The role of AC entails a significant commitment.

### 1. Responsibilities of the Area Chairs

ACs are expected to play an active role in ensuring high quality, timely, fair and constructive reviews. ACs also help the OC select the best papers to be presented at MICCAI 2017. The ACs are involved in the following steps of the review process

#### Paper submission and assignment to Area Chairs

(Deadline for paper submissions: **Feb 24<sup>th</sup>**, midnight Pacific Time)

Authors will submit their papers using Microsoft's Conference Managing System (CMT). The MICCAI Conference review process will be double-blind, i.e. the ACs and reviewers won't know the authors, and the authors won't know the reviewers or ACs. Paper assignment to ACs will be completed automatically using CMT and the Toronto Paper Matching System (TPMS), which has been successfully used by well-respected conferences such as CVPR, ICML, IPMI. The system is complex, taking into account paper matching scores, subject areas, conflicts and global load balancing - but remember, it is only automatic and not necessarily optimal for each individual AC. If you feel a paper has been incorrectly assigned to you, please let maxime@miccai2017 or louis@miccai2017 know; we will re-assign the paper to another AC and you will get a replacement paper that has been manually selected.

#### Reviewer assignment - Phase 1

(Deadline for reviewer assignment: **March 6<sup>th</sup>**)

Note that MICCAI 2017 is running double-blind - neither reviewers nor ACs can see the author list, nor can the authors see reviewers or ACs. ACs see the identity of reviewers and reviewers know who the AC is.

The CMT system will provide a list of reviewers for each paper to the AC. This ordered list is generated based on subject areas (relevance) and TPMS. Based on their expertise and judgment, the AC will select at least 9 reviewers. You can filter

the list by researcher type (e.g. undergraduate, MSc, PhD, Post-Doc, Faculty) or subject areas and sort by relevance according to keyword matching [score 0-1.0, 1.0=best match] or TPMS rank [1..512,1=best match] to help you choose reviewers. Select your reviewers and save for each paper. Please watch the following video tutorial to help you: <https://youtu.be/-s0XCbLPBso>.

It is possible, but difficult to add a reviewer that is not in the reviewer database because we can't automatically identify conflicts and maintain load balancing through CMT and TPMS. If you want to add a reviewer not in the database, you must (1) ensure that the person is willing to review, and then (2) contact maxime@miccai2017.org (and cc louis@miccai2017.org) and we will include the reviewer by hand within CMT for that paper during Phase 2.

### **Reviewer assignment - Phase 2**

(Deadline for phase 2: **March 10th**)

Once all ACs have selected 9 reviewers, the CMT system will re-optimize matching of reviewers to papers based on a large weighting placed on the AC's suggested ranked list of reviewers. The optimization will take into account the ordered list from the AC, TPMS score, relevance, conflicts identified in Researcher.CC and conflict domains from CMT while load balancing across all papers, reviewers and ACs. The top three reviewers on the revised list will be sent the paper for review automatically.

### **Reviewing**

(Deadline for reviews: **April 14th**)

Each AC will be responsible for shepherding the review process for a maximum of 20 papers. The AC duties include:

- reading the articles;
- following up on reviewers to ensure timeliness in their reviews;
- checking the reviews for quality

During reviewing, the AC will log in frequently and react to the reviewers' actions; remind reviewers to login and download the papers; and especially ask for more details in the review or to request a fairer review. *This is critical*. Should the AC be unsatisfied with the quality of a review, and fail to get further feedback from the reviewer, then the AC will be able to ask (maxime@miccai2017.org) for additional reviewer(s)' input on the paper, beyond the original three reviewers. Any reviewer that does not provide a quality review will be identified in the reviewer database.

### **Rebuttal**

(Deadline for submission of rebuttal: **April 23rd**)

The goal of the rebuttal process is to provide a way for authors to correct possible misinterpretations in the reviewers' findings, and inform the AC's recommendation for scoring. Once the reviews of the papers have been sent to the authors, authors have one week to submit their rebuttal. *Important*: Only the AC will read the rebuttal.

## **Paper scoring**

(Deadline: **April 28th**)

Suggested process:

1. Identify an initial decision of clear accepts, borderlines and clear rejects papers.
  - a. Papers with 3 accepts go into initial accept
  - b. Papers without a single reviewer accept or borderline accept should go into initial reject
  - c. For papers with other recommendations, it's the AC's decision to assign them into an initial category based on the reviews and the authors' rebuttal
2. To refine the categories, the AC should aim for 20%, 30%, 50% accept, borderline, and reject
  - a. The actual ranking of all AC papers **is not crucial**. What is crucial is the 3 categories: accept, borderline, and reject
    - i. All borderline papers will be treated equivalently in the final paper selection process
  - b. The 20% accept, 30% borderline, and 50% reject are rough guidelines
    - i. For example, an AC might not have a distribution of papers with **exactly** 20% accept
3. By default, if there is an agreement between all 3 reviewers, the AC should follow the reviewers' recommendation, i.e. accept or reject
  - o If an AC decides to overrule all 3 reviewers, this AC should provide a clear justification why

*Please watch the following video tutorial for CMT instructions about paper ranking.*

<https://youtu.be/WURZnQ4kDmM>

## **Physical Program Committee meeting**

(**May 12th - May 14th**)

We strongly encourage the presence of each AC at the physical PC meeting at the Quebec City Conference Center. We unfortunately cannot cover the cost of travel and accommodation for the meeting but meals will be covered. Apart from the selection of orals to form the MICCAI 2017 program, there will be a number of scientific presentations during the meeting, where you may have an opportunity to

present work from your laboratory. Specific details about the program and responsibilities will be announced prior to the meeting.

## 2. Best Practices of Being an Area Chair

This paragraph should remind all ACs of best practices<sup>1</sup> of being an AC.

- Written report: One of the most crucial duties of ACs is the preparation of a written report on each paper. This is where the AC justifies his/her recommendation to accept/reject a paper. The reports are representative of a good quality review process, and should highlight clearly why the decision was reached. If all reviewers agree on a paper, the report can be simple, but tries to encourage authors and provides constructive feedback. If there is even a slight disagreement on the reviews, it is your job to clarify why and how the disagreement was resolved. Overruling all three reviewers to make a decision on a paper is not acceptable. If you strongly feel that the paper deserves that, make sure to discuss it in detail with the OCs.
- Conflicts of interest: If you identify any paper that you may have a conflict of interest with (e.g. it was written by a current or former student, post-doc or supervisor, or by a collaborator in the last two years), please notify the ACs immediately so that the paper can be re-assigned. DO NOT talk to any other AC about papers assigned to you without prior approval from the OCs as there may be several other ACs conflicted with the paper. Also, DO NOT talk to any other AC about your own paper(s) (the paper(s) you are an author on) or a paper you have some conflict with, during this whole process.
- Attitude: Be aware that you have a strong influence on the decision for a paper. Take your job very seriously and be fair. Be professional and willing to listen to other reviewers and ACs. Do not give in to undue influence from anyone.
- At the conference: Please keep track of your accepted papers; for talks, have a question or two prepared for the speakers to stimulate discussion. For posters, go see the poster and ask questions.

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<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgements: These guidelines were inspired by CVPR 2014 guidelines:  
[http://www.pamitc.org/cvpr14/ac\\_guidelines.php](http://www.pamitc.org/cvpr14/ac_guidelines.php)