DRS Biennial Conferences:
Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice

1. Research and Publication Ethics

1.1 Publication Ethics Statement

DRS Conferences fully comply with the Code of Conduct and the Best Practice Guidelines of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Programme Chairs (Editors) take the responsibility to ensure high-quality scientific publications that meet standards of academic excellence and to enforce a rigorous peer-review together with strict ethical policies and standards in the field of scholarly publication. In case of an ethical issue, all requisite action is taken. Ethical issues that might be raised by conference participants or readers of conference proceedings will be examined by the programme committee following procedures in line with COPE guidelines.

1.2 Ethics in Publishing

DRS Conferences abides by the COPE's Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing. For handling potentially unethical behavior by authors, reviewers, or members of the programme committee, the DRS Conference Series adheres to COPE's policies. All programme committee members at DRS Conferences have received training in spotting and handling ethical issues.

The programme committee, and if necessary the governance of the Design Research Society, will investigate any ethical concerns brought up by conference participants using the COPE-recommended processes. The Programme Committee can resolve disagreements over the reliability of research reported in articles that have been published.

When appropriate, we will submit disagreements regarding authorship, data ownership, author misbehavior, etc. to the DRS Governance (Executive Board and International Advisory Council). Authors are urged to address any claims that have been made against them with evidence.

We adhere to COPE principles, notably How to Spot Authorship Problems, when handling authorship disputes. Usually, the authorship can be altered via a Correction if all authors agree. If not, we need a credible declaration concerning who is eligible for authorship from the institution(s) of the authors.

2. Copyright Notice and Licensing

In case of acceptance, DRS Conferences will publish the author(s) research paper contribution in the DRS Digital Library (dl.designresearchsociety.org). The author(s) may publish the contribution on his/her personal Web page or any other web page if he/she creates a link to the mentioned volume of DRS Conferences. Similarly, DRS Conferences

may publish the research paper contribution in other databases and web pages provided that a link to the mentioned volume of DRS Conferences is created.

The author(s) warrants that his/her research paper contribution is original, except for such excerpts from copyrighted works as may be included with the permission of the copyright holder and author thereof, that it contains no libelous statements, and does not infringe on any copyright, trademark, patent, statutory right, or propriety right of others.

The author(s) also agrees for and accepts responsibility for releasing this material on behalf of all co-authors. For all articles published in the DRS Conference Series, copyright is retained by the author in the context of an open-access Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 license, meaning that readers can download and study the paper for free. Upon submission of a paper to DRS Conferences, authors agree to comply with an open access Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license. The full guidance that applies to this license can be found at: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

In the case of previously published content, it is important to underline that prior to submission, authors have obtained written permission to reproduce any published material.

3. Programme Committee Code of Conduct

DRS conference programme committees comply with the code of conduct and COPE guidelines to advance knowledge within the field of design research. Programme committees ensure this essential role by:

1. Maintaining and improving the quality of manuscripts published as part of DRS Conferences and the integrity of its peer review process,
2. Supporting the DRS Conference's authors and reviewers,
3. Maintaining and improving the DRS Conference's reputation in collaboration with the Society's wider governance (Executive Board and International Advisory Council).

3.1 Publication Decisions

The programme committee chair is responsible for deciding which of the research papers submitted to the conference will be published. The programme committee chair will evaluate manuscripts without regard to the authors' race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy. The decision will be based on the paper's importance, originality and clarity, and the study's validity and its relevance to the scope of the conference. Current legal requirements regarding libel, copyright infringement, and plagiarism should also be considered.

3.2 Confidentiality

The programme committee chair and any programme committee members must not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, or other editorial advisers, as appropriate.

3.3 Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest

Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted paper will not be used by the programme committee chair or the members of the programme committee for their own research purposes without the author's explicit written consent.

4. Editorial Process

4.1 Pre-check

Shortly following the due date for research paper submissions for a DRS conference, the programme committee will conduct an initial inspection to determine: overall manuscript suitability for the conference, or theme-track; whether the academic requirements of rigor have been met by the manuscript to be eligible for further review. Programme committees have the discretion to seek amendments prior to peer review, reject a submission, or continue with the peer review process.

Members of the programme committee are not permitted to observe the review of their own submitted manuscripts other than in their capacity as authors.

4.2 Peer Review

4.2.1 General Guidelines for Peer Review and Editing

All submissions to be considered for publication in DRS conferences are expected to meet standards of academic excellence and are subject to rigorous, well-established, fair, and unbiased double-blind peer-review performed by professionals. Shortly after the due date for submission, the paper will undergo an initial review by the programme committee to determine its acceptability and compliance with conference guidelines. The programme committee may discuss with experts before deciding on appropriate actions, including but not limited to recruiting reviewers with specific expertise, assessment by additional reviewers, and declining to further consider a submission.

The programme committee will then plan the independent experts' peer-review process and gather at least two review reports for each submission. Peer reviewers' identities will remain anonymous to the authors. Before making a judgment, the chair of the programme committee will require sufficient modifications from the authors (and, if necessary, a second round of peer review).

The programme committee chair makes the final decision. We only publish articles that have been approved by highly qualified reviewers with expertise in a field appropriate for the article. The articles that have been accepted are further copy-edited.

4.2.2 Peer-review Process

All submitted manuscripts are expected to meet standards of academic excellence and are subject to initial appraisal by the programme chair and, if found suitable for further consideration, to peer review by independent, anonymous expert referees.

No paper will be automatically rejected on the ground of being too applied or too theoretical; technically skilled papers from any field of design research are encouraged. Authors are required to present their scientific findings in a clear manner and in the spirit of broad academic debate on the subject explored in the paper.

DRS Conferences operate double-blind peer-review, where in addition to the author not knowing the identity of the reviewer, the reviewer is unaware of the author's identity.

For every article that is submitted, at least two review reports are gathered. The programme committee chair has the option to suggest reviewers during pre-check. In addition, qualified members of the programme committee, qualified reviewers from the database, or fresh reviewers found through online searches for similar articles will all be used by the DRS Conferences programme committee.

Potential reviewers may be recommended by authors. The programme committee checks for any conflicts of interest that may be flagged or observed and disqualifies people who may have them.

All reviewers undergo the ensuing checks:

- have no financial ties to any of the authors;
- should not be affiliated with the authors' institution;
- should not have co-authored a publication within the last three years with the authors;
- possess appropriate expertise and a track record of publications in the topic represented by the submitted article (Scopus, ORCID);
- are seasoned academics in the subject matter of the research submitted;
- have a recognized and approved academic affiliation.

Reviewers who agree to examine a paper should:

- have no ties to any of the authors;
- possess the required knowledge to assess the level of a paper;
- throughout peer review, deliver high-quality review reports and show responsiveness;
- uphold moral and professional norms.

After accepting a review invitation, reviewers have 30 days to complete their reviews on the online conference platform. Requests for extensions will be considered.

From submission to final decision or publication, the programme committee chair coordinates the review process and serves as the main point of contact for authors, reviewers, and other members of the programme committee.

4.3 Revision

The programme committee for DRS Conferences will ask the author to modify the article if changes are needed before notifying the programme committee chair. Before deciding whether to offer revisions to authors when there are conflicting review reports or when there are one or more rejection recommendations, the programme committee chair may request further input.

Depending on whether the reviewer requested to see the revised version, revised versions of manuscripts may or may not be supplied to reviewers. By default, the amended paper will be given to reviewers who ask for significant adjustments or urge rejection.

4.4 Programme Committee Chair's Decision

After peer review, the programme committee chair can decide whether to accept a manuscript after receiving at least two review reports. The programme chair will look at the following before deciding:

- The appropriateness of the chosen reviewers' criticisms and the author's answer, as well as the paper's overall scientific quality.
- The programme chair, in consultation with programme committee members, has the choice of accepting the work in its present form, accepting it with changes, or rejecting it.
- The programme committee chair, in consultation with programme committee members, are free to disagree with the reviewers' recommendations. If they do, they ought to include an explanation of why for the benefit of the authors and reviewers.

Members of the programme committee are the only people who can approve an article for publication. After that, employed DRS Conference staff may inform authors of the decision. Staff members of DRS Conferences never decide whether to accept papers.

Programme committee chairs and other members of the programme committee at DRS Conferences are not involved in the processing of their own scholarly work. Another impartial member of the programme committee will be assigned to them. In this case other members of the programme committee who don't have a conflict of interest with the authors make the final decision.

4.5 Editorial Impartiality

All publications published by DRS Conferences are subjected to peer review and evaluation by our independent programme committees; DRS Conferences staff members are not involved in the selection of manuscripts for publication. The programme committee chair decides exclusively on the basis of the appropriateness of the chosen reviewers' criticisms and the author's response, as well as the paper's overall scientific quality.

5. Ethical Guidelines for Authors

- Only those who have significantly contributed to the manuscript and claim authorship should be included as authors.
- Conflicts of interest should be disclosed in the paper prior to submission.
- Original research outcomes must be novel and not previously published.
- Appropriate funding statements need to be included in the manuscript.
- Appropriate acknowledgments are made within the manuscript.
- Research errors are disclosed immediately to the programme committee.
- Informed consent and responsible conduct are ensured to protect research participants' rights.

5.1 Authors' Duties

5.1.1 Reporting Standards

Authors of original research reports should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the paper. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.

5.1.2 Data Access and Retention

Authors could be asked to provide the raw data of their study and should be prepared to make the data publicly available if practicable. In any event, authors should ensure accessibility of such data to other competent professionals for at least ten years after publication (preferably via an institutional or subject-based data repository or other data Centre), provided that the confidentiality of the participants can be protected and legal rights concerning proprietary data do not preclude their release.

5.1.3 Originality, Plagiarism Policy, Data Fabrication, and Image Manipulation

DRS Conferences publish only original peer-reviewed articles.

Plagiarism is not acceptable. In case of plagiarism, the manuscript is rejected, and necessary action is taken in line with the Publication Ethics Guidelines.

Plagiarism can occur in two forms: 1) authors intentionally copy someone else's work and claim it as their own, or 2) authors copy her or his own previously published material either in full or in part, without providing appropriate references – also called "self-plagiarism" or "duplicate publication".

DRS Conferences will judge any case of plagiarism on its own merits. If plagiarism is detected, either by the programme committee or peer reviewers at any stage before publication of a manuscript –before or after acceptance, during editing or at page proof

stage, we will alert the author(s), asking her/him to either rewrite the text or quote the text exactly and to cite the original source. If the plagiarism is extensive - that is, if at least 25% of the original submission is plagiarized - the article may be rejected, and the author's institution/employer notified.

Authors will submit only entirely original works and will appropriately cite or quote the work and/or words of others. Publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work should also be cited.

Data presented and used in the research endeavor must be original and not in any way fabricated. Image files must not be modified in any way that could cause misinterpretation of the information provided by the original image. In case such modification is detected, the manuscript is rejected. Authors should only use images and figures in their articles if they are relevant and valuable to the scholarly work reported.

5.1.4 Using Third-Party Material

It is the responsibility of authors to obtain the necessary written permission to include material in their article that is owned and held in copyright by a third party, including – but not limited to – any proprietary text, illustration, table, or other material, including data, audio, video, film stills, screenshots, and any supplemental material.

5.1.5 Citation Policy

Where the text or image/illustration, table, or any other material is taken from other sources (including the author's previous published manuscripts) the source should be clearly indicated and cited, and that appropriate permission is obtained.

Authors must avoid excessive and inappropriate self-citation or prearrangements among author groups to inappropriately cite each other's work, as this can be considered a form of misconduct called citation manipulation. Please check the COPE guidance on citation manipulation.

5.2 Conflict of Interests

All authors must disclose any relevant relationship or interest that could affect their work. Authors can declare any potential conflicts of interest via the online submission system during the submission process. In cases where no conflicts exist, the authors should state: "Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest".

If applicable, authors must declare current or recent funding (including article processing charges) and other payments, goods or services that might influence the work. All funding, whether a conflict or not, must be declared in the 'Funding Statement'. If there is no funding role, please state "The funders had no role in this study".

The involvement of anyone other than the authors who 1) has an interest in the outcome of the work; 2) is affiliated to an organization with such an interest; or 3) was employed or paid by a funder, in the commissioning, conception, planning, design, conduct, or analysis of the work, the preparation or editing of the manuscript, or the decision to publish must be declared.

Conflicts can include but are not limited to the following:

- Financial — funding and other payments, goods and services received or expected by the authors relating to the subject of the work or from an organization with an interest in the outcome of the work
- Affiliations — being employed by, on the advisory board for, or a member of an organization with an interest in the outcome of the work

- Intellectual property — patents or trademarks owned by someone or their organization
- Personal — friends, family, relationships, and other close personal connections
- Ideology — beliefs or activism, for example, political or religious, relevant to the work
- Academic — competitors or someone whose work is critiqued

5.3. Competing Interests

A competing interest can occur where the author(s) (or the author's employer, sponsor or family/friends) "have a financial, commercial, legal, or professional relationship with other organizations, or with the people working with them which could influence the research or interpretation of the results".

Competing interests can be financial or non-financial in nature. To ensure transparency, the author(s) must also declare any associations which can be perceived by others as a competing interest.

5.4. Authorship

Authors listed on an article must meet all the following criteria:

1. Have made a significant contribution to the work reported, whether that's in the conception, study design, execution, acquisition of data, analysis and interpretation, or in all these areas.
2. Have drafted or written, or substantially revised or critically reviewed the article.
3. Have agreed on the conference to which the article will be submitted.
4. Reviewed and agreed on all versions of the article before submission, during revision, the final version accepted for publication, and any significant changes introduced at the proofing stage.
5. Agree to take responsibility and be accountable for the contents of the article and to share the responsibility to resolve any questions raised about the accuracy or integrity of the published work.

5.5 Corrections and Retractions

When errors are identified in published articles, the programme committee will consider what action is required and may consult the wider governance of the DRS and the authors' institution(s).

6. Reviewers' Ethics and Responsibilities

6.1 Contribution to Programme Committee Decisions

The peer-reviewing process assists the programme committee chair and members of the programme committee in making publication decisions and may also serve the author in improving the paper.

6.2 Promptness

Any selected referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript, or knows that its prompt review will be impossible, should notify the programme committee and withdraw from the review process.

6.3 Confidentiality

Any manuscript received for review must be treated as a confidential document. Submissions must not be disclosed to or discussed with others except as authorized by the programme committee.

6.4 Standards of Objectivity

Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Referees should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

6.5 Acknowledgement of Sources

Reviewers should identify cases in which relevant published work referred to in the paper has not been cited in the reference section. They should point out whether observations or arguments derived from other publications are accompanied by the respective source. Reviewers will notify the programme committee of any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper of which they have personal knowledge.

6.6 Disclosure and Conflict of Interest

Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Reviewers should not consider manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions associated with the papers.

7. Open Access Policy

7.1 DRS Conferences Open Access Information and Policy

DRS Conferences publishes all articles under the open-access model, defined under Budapest, Berlin and Bethesda open access declarations. The full content of the articles published by DRS Conferences is freely available for anyone to read, download, print, use, re-use and build upon. The published articles are distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction, free of charge, in any medium, provided that the original author(s) and original publisher are given due credit. The copyright of the published work is retained by the authors. DRS Conferences will always provide free access to all the articles published without any obligations or restrictions, to all readers, in any part of the world.

All articles published by DRS Conferences are rendered to be available worldwide under an Open Access license, ensuring that:

- everyone gains free and unlimited access to the full-text of all articles;
- everyone could re-use the published material on the grounds that proper accreditation/citation of the original publication is given;
- open access publication is supported by the authors' institutes or research funding agencies by payment of an appropriate Article Processing Charge (APC) for accepted articles.

7.2 Copyright / Open Access

Articles published in DRS Conferences will be Open-Access articles distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC). The copyright is retained by the author(s). DRS Conferences will insert the following text on the first page of any published paper:

© 20XX by the authors; This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

8. Legal Notice

Neither DRS Conferences, nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use to which information contained in the articles published may be put, nor for any errors which may appear despite careful review, preparation and checking.