



## UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

### Journal roles and responsibilities: Simplification and optimization

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## Editorial

### Journal roles and responsibilities: Simplification and optimization



In the last issue we announced the new Editors of FSI's Digital Investigation journal. In this editorial we are outlining further changes to the roles and journal boards. We'll explain what is changing, why we are changing it, and possibly include some historical context.

The Editor(s)-in-Chief (EiCs) take overall responsibility for editorial management of the journal, keeping it consistent with the journal's aims, scope and journal policies. The EiC coordinates new paper submissions, decides if they are fit for the peer review process, and then assigns them to an editor for further handling. Once the review process has completed, the EiC reviews editor recommendations, and decides on paper acceptance. In addition to the editorial workflow, the EiCs also provide support to the editors, handle ethical issues together with the publisher, and further develop journal strategy to improve quality and adapt the scope to our ever changing field.

The previous handling editor role is being renamed to Senior Editor (SE). The SE responsibilities include assigning papers to relevant peer reviewers, monitoring reviewer progress, and submitting a final recommendation to the EiC based on the review feedback. The SEs assist with strategic journal planning, help find suitable candidates for the boards, and advise on the changes to improve the journal's quality and scope. The SEs help organize special issues, which involve coordinating guest editors and soliciting subject matter experts to cover specific topics.

The responsibilities of the Associate Editor (AE) are similar to the SE and include assigning papers to relevant peer reviewers, assisting with the review process, and submitting final recommendations to the EiC based on the review feedback. AEs may help coordinate or act as guest editors for special issues. The AEs may also be involved in strategic planning and improving journal quality and scope.

With well-defined editorial functions in place, the editorial board is being renamed to the Advisory Board (AB). The responsibilities of the AB include acting as an ambassador for the journal by promoting the journal in local networks, at conferences and events, and encouraging individuals in the field to submit their research to the journal. The AB assists in peer reviewing articles, suggests topics for special issues, and are encouraged to submit their own research for publication. The AB will also be engaged for advice on strategic decisions for the journal.

The legal panel was originally created to strengthen the connection to the legal community, especially in matters of digital evidence acceptance within legal jurisdictions. This panel will be

merged with the advisory board, taking on the same responsibilities with a continued focus on providing legal expertise.

The Board of Referees will continue to function as a pool of community peers who are willing to review papers in their respective areas of expertise. They will provide feedback to the editors and give their recommendation on paper revision or acceptance. Referees may be expected to review 6–10 papers per year depending on the volume of relevant submissions, and may also contribute to the journal as guest editors for special issues. Newcomers to the community who specialize in a particular area of digital forensics are encouraged to join the board of referees. Please contact the one of the journal editors if you are interested.

The Emerging Career Advisory Board (ECAB) was originally created to help newcomers to the community who wanted a more active role contributing to the journal. The ECAB will be dissolved, and the current members will become part of the AB. People starting their career in digital forensics who are enthusiastic about becoming actively involved with the journal are encouraged to join the AB. New members may also seek mentoring support from the EiC, SEs, and AEs. The growth of our community depends on energetic young talent bringing new ideas.

The journal has a long history of innovation and new initiatives. Some of these ideas made perfect sense at the time they were created, but can be challenged and revised today. This new structure re-evaluates some the roles, clarifies responsibilities, and simplifies the editor and board organization. This simplification also provides a clearer succession path for people wishing to contribute to the success of the journal, and increase their level of commitment over time. We don't expect these changes to adversely affect the journal quality or efficiency, on the contrary, we see the change as a welcome improvement.

As a final note, the journal editors are strong supporters of both open and free access to research within the policies and guidelines of Elsevier. Members of all journal boards are eligible for free access to FSI Digital Investigation articles. Also, journal authors are permitted to make their own papers freely available on their personal websites.

Bruce Nikkel, Editors-in-Chief, Zeno Geradts, Editors-in-Chief