TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD

Paper Reviewer Webinar
Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting
and
Transportation Research Record
August 2017
TRB Review Coordinator and Reviewer Resources

- Paper Review Coordinator Technical Instructions
- Paper Review Coordinator Policy Guidelines
- Paper Triage Process
- Paper Review Technical Instructions
- Paper Review Policy Instructions
- Tutorial Webinars
- TRB Staff Contact
- MyTRB Login Guidance
Areas of Expertise

- **Voluntary** feature in MyTRB paper review
- **Helpful terms** for Review Coordinators to match Reviewers with Papers.
- Requires action from both Paper Review Coordinators (PRC) and Reviewers.
  - PRC selects terms for the Pool
  - Reviewers then pick from the list
  - Both need to be done before August paper assignment
Areas of Expertise

• Enhancements:
  – Up to 15 can be defined, nearly doubled
  – Reviewers will have MyTRB access in early July.
    • Moved up on the calendar to allow time for your Reviewers to pick
  – One page quick reference sheets to help you and your reviewers
Critical Dates - Reviewers

- **June 1**: TRB paper submission website opens.

- **July 1 – August 14**: Reviewers can log onto MyTRB and select their **Areas of expertise (AoE)** if made available by Paper Review Coordinators.

- **August 1**: This is the hard deadline for paper Submission

- **August 14 – August 18**: At least 3 reviewers will be assigned to each paper. Please respond to the paper review requests.
Critical Dates - Reviewers

- August 14 – September 15: Time to conduct your reviews
- September 15: This is the deadline for completion of reviews
- Late November – late January: The committee paper review coordinator sends the revised papers to the initial reviewers for re-review. After re-review, the committee makes the final publication recommendation for these papers.
Critical Dates

- **Late November–late January:** The committee paper review coordinator sends the revised papers to the initial reviewers for **re-review**. After re-review, the committee makes the final publication recommendation for these papers.

- **February:** TRB make final publication decisions and start notifying authors.
TRB Annual Meeting

- 13,300 attendees
- Over 220 technical committees, 330 subcommittees, 18 task force Meetings
- The meeting program covers all transportation modes, with more than 5,000 presentations in over 800 sessions and workshops
The TRR is one of the most cited and prolific transportation journals in the world, offering unparalleled depth and breadth in the coverage of transportation-related topics. TRR Journal publishes approximately 70 issues annually of outstanding, peer-reviewed papers presenting research findings in policy, planning, administration, economics and financing, operations, construction, design, maintenance, safety, and more, for all modes of transportation.
TRB/TRR Submission

By the Numbers

Over 6000 Submissions
15 – 20% Presentation Only
Less than 2% Publication Only
80% Publication & Presentation
TRB/TRR Submission

- United States: 47%
- International: 52%
TRB Peer Review Process

The TRB peer review process is used both for papers submitted for presentation at TRB’s Annual Meeting and for papers submitted for publication in the Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board.
TRB Peer Review Process

• TRB uses a “single blind” peer review process. In this process the paper authors do not know the identity of the reviewers but the reviewers know the identity of the paper authors.

• Additionally in our system the authors do not know which committee is reviewing their paper until the review is complete. This protects the committee membership from lobbying.
Paper Review

- Reviewers are asked to rate the paper on each of the characteristics listed below on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - Unacceptable, 2 - Poor, 3 - Fair, 4 - Good, 5 - Excellent) and provide comments that will be sent to the authors.
Paper Review

1. Is the paper written well enough to be readily understood? Poor English grammar is sufficient grounds for rejection of the paper.
2. Well organized
3. Abstract clearly conveys meaning of paper
4. Objectives appropriate and clearly stated
5. Methodology technically sound
6. Data valid
7. Conclusions valid and properly supported
Paper Review

8. Existing work adequately described and properly referenced
9. Study effort adequately described
10. Demonstrated contribution to the state-of-the-art or practice
11. Original and timely
12. Useful to researchers
13. Demonstrated long-term value as a research reference or description of practice
Paper Review

14. Length of paper appropriate for subject and intended audience

15. Free of sensitive statements advocating special interests, advertising, and recommendations on government policies and programs
Paper Review

Reviewers are also asked to provide comments to the Author and Comments to the Paper Review Coordinator.
Paper Recommendations

- Presentation
  - Yes
  - No
- Publication
  - Yes
  - No
  - Revise
Paper Triage Process

Paper authors do not have a “right” to a full TRB review. To qualify for review a paper must meet all the TRB guidelines and standards – these are spelled out in detail in the Requirements for Submitting a paper. Papers that do not meet TRB guidelines and standards can be rejected at any point in the process.
Paper Triage

- Papers in which the language quality is poor enough to make understanding the content very difficult.
- Incorrect Format (Line numbers, etc)
- Too long (TRB papers have a 7500 word limit)
- Duplicate papers and/or Multiple Part papers
- Papers that are commercial/promotional in nature
Paper Triage Process (cont.)

Papers not meeting our requirements, after August 1 will be administratively withdrawn by TRB staff without a review.

The initial staff triage does not Catch all papers

Please inform your paper review coordinator if a paper has been assigned to you should be removed from review consideration.
What is Rereview? I thought I was done.

• Rereview is for those papers where the committee was not able to make a final publication recommendation.
• The author submits a revised paper and a file that summarizes the changes they have made to respond to the reviewer comments.
Take Away Messages

• Know the instructions that are being given to the authors and reviewers.
• The process is fast and the September 15th deadline is critical.
• Your reviews are critical to the authors, the committee, and our transportation community.
• We really appreciate all your help and are ready to provide support throughout the process.
• Stay in contact with your TRB staff officer - the worst problems are those we don’t hear about early.
Questions
James Bryant, Ph.D., P.E.
jbryant@nas.edu