From the Editor-in-Chief

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Dear Colleagues,

The issue at hand marks the completion of the 6th issue; half of 2021 is gone! Time flew amidst challenges due to the pandemic. There may be light at the end of the tunnel, but we must still be careful.

With respect to JINT, we plan a considerable re-organization of the Editorial Board to take effect on July 1. We believe this is necessary to improve the paper review process, include new members in the Board, and represent more accurately the geographical areas from which we receive papers. As I have repeatedly stated, the only objective is to make JINT better.

Along this line of thought, I feel that, once more (and I apologize for the repetition), I want to emphasize the key points authors must follow when they submit a paper, as well as what we do before a paper is assigned to a handling editor.

- Authors should run a ‘similarity check’ before submission. *iThenticate* is one option, however, you may use any other tool.
- In each paper, mainly in the Introduction section, authors should provide clear statements of originality, novelty, distinct features of their proposed approach, method, algorithm, technique, etc., compared to similar work, as well as contributions. This facilitates greatly the review process.
- If the paper, before submission to JINT, has been uploaded on the web as a report, or it has been published ‘internally’ as a technical report, then, the authors should state this in a cover letter to avoid delays (*iThenticate* will return a very high similarity % that will lead to rejection).

Once a contributed paper is received, then:

- Each submitted paper is checked for duplication. Contributed papers may have about 20% total overlap with previously published work in the technical sessions. We do realize that same references may be used in multiple papers, though. If this percentage is higher, the paper is usually returned for revision and explanations. If the percentage exceeds, roughly, 30%, then such papers are rejected without review, but with explanations.
- Topical Collection papers (formerly labeled as Special Issue invited papers, which are usually enhanced versions of accepted conference papers, may have overlap of 30% with previously published work, but the authors must reference or acknowledge the corresponding conference papers.

If we all follow the above steps, then, the review process will be better, more to the point, and faster.

Enjoy the issue.

Kimon P. Valavanis
Editor-in-Chief

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