



### Publication of Proceedings Papers in *Optical Engineering*: A Topic Revisited—Again!

“The road to hell is paved with good intentions”<sup>1</sup> is an oft quoted line. Sometimes I feel that way about the decision concerning proceedings papers as stated in my first editorial<sup>2</sup>:

The Society has available to it a large body of knowledge developed by a wide range of competent workers in our field. At present, that material is published in our proceedings. As editor of *Optical Engineering*, I would like to capture some of that knowledge in the archival literature.

I then encouraged chairs of meetings “to select material from your proceedings and encourage the authors to present that material in the form necessary for consideration for publication in our journal.”

I readily admit that the above is not a clear statement, but two conditions are presented: The first is that the paper should be selected by the chair and that the material is presented in a form suitable for the journal. An interpretation of those conditions is not necessarily straightforward. I wrote a second editorial<sup>3</sup> on this topic in June 1992, in which I stated:

Some believe that this process is double publication and, hence, clutters the literature. However, I believe that proceedings and journals fulfill important yet different roles, and that it is acceptable, on occasion, to have basically the same material appear in both places. Of course, there will always be some difference between the two publications of the material dictated by format, author revisions, and the review process. Nevertheless, I expect this to be a continuing area of debate.

I then included a section on information for authors that was a little more specific and talked about the paper being reformatted and revised.

So what does that mean! Let me try to be more specific about the guidelines that I believe are in place based on discussions with the Publications Committee of the Society:

- A modified version of a proceedings paper may be submitted to *Optical Engineering* as a regular or special section paper. The paper should meet the guidelines set forth in the “Information for Contributors” that is published in each issue of *Optical Engineering*.
- The paper for *Optical Engineering* cannot be identical

to the paper in a proceedings. Just a format change is not sufficient. As a guideline, we expect about 25% of the paper to be different—these differences will certainly be in the actual text but may also be in the figures.

- Authors should clearly identify that the paper submitted to *Optical Engineering* is a revised version of a paper presented at an SPIE conference. Details of the proceedings publication should be added including volume number, page number (a paper number if not yet published), conference title, and location with date.
- Papers submitted will go through the standard review process used by the journal.

This means that authors need to think carefully about the preparation of papers for proceedings and for the journal and not be misled into writing one paper for both. The time to plan both papers is before either is finalized.

We are not, in my opinion, on “the road to hell”—our intentions are indeed good but our goal of disseminating important information in optical science and engineering through the papers of *Optical Engineering* is a worthy one for SPIE. So I ask you to work cooperatively with me in this important area of proceedings papers. My role is to facilitate the dissemination of information and to help authors get their results to the appropriate audience through the pages of *Optical Engineering*.

#### References

1. “Hell is paved with good intentions and roofed with lost opportunities.” Portuguese proverb. Quoted by Samuel Johnson in 1775 as “Hell is paved with good intentions.” “The road to hell is paved with good intentions” is a more modern corruption of the original proverb, but, nevertheless, meaningful.
2. *Optical Engineering* 30(1), 4 (Jan. 1991).
3. *Optical Engineering* 31(6), 1141 (June 1992).

**Brian J. Thompson**  
Editor

## Optical Engineering Editorial Schedule

*October 1993*

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