

## FAQ on the Electronic IEEE Copyright Form (eCF)

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### 1. How can I register my conference to use the IEEE Electronic Copyright Form?

IEEE Publication Volunteers should go to the registration web page at [http://www.ieee.org/publications\\_standards/publications/rights/ecf\\_registration.html](http://www.ieee.org/publications_standards/publications/rights/ecf_registration.html) to begin the process of setting up their site.

### 2. If I registered a conference to use the eCF last year, do I need to reregister for this year's conference?

Yes, it is necessary for each publication title to be registered in order to ensure the eCF system will recognize and accept incoming data from your conference submission system. You may reuse a source code assigned to your conference, but we prefer to use a new code for each year. Please contact the IPR Office at [ecopyright@ieee.org](mailto:ecopyright@ieee.org) if you have any problems with using a source code for more than one publication title.

### **3. What is the IEEE Electronic Copyright Form?**

The IEEE eCF is a fully digital version of the IEEE Copyright Form. It includes an important feature (the Wizard) that, through a series of questions and replies, determines the author's copyright status and brings the author to the appropriate Form to sign.

### **4. How does this Electronic Copyright Form work?**

You begin by responding to the interactive Wizard, which was designed to be very simple and convenient. After you've finished answering the Wizard's easy questions, you will be transferred a publication agreement that is based on your needs. Once you've read the information on the agreement, and confirmed that it is the correct agreement for you, all you need to do is type in your name and date in the boxes at the bottom. Once you click on the "Submit" button, the process will be completed, and you will automatically receive a copy of the signed agreement via email.

### **5. How do I "sign" the IEEE Electronic Copyright Form?**

Simply by typing your name at the proper location.

### **6. Does a typed name carry the same legal weight as a handwritten signature?**

Yes. Until the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act ("E-Sign") was signed into law in 2000, we were required to obtain a handwritten signature on all copyright transfer forms. The E-Sign Act now gives an electronically signed form the same legal effect as that of an original, hand-signed document.

### **7. Don't you need to use a higher level of security, such as digital certificates or encryption keys?**

If this were a transaction between financial institutions, involving large sums of money, then we'd certainly be using such technology. Given the relatively modest status of this kind of transaction, it would be overkill to employ so much security.

### **8. What about authentication?**

The only way to get to the IEEE Electronic Copyright Form is if you've already been authenticated through at least one identification process.

### **9. What if I am not authorized to sign the Form?**

If you know that you are not in an authorized position to sign the IEEE Copyright Form, or if a co-author of your paper should sign instead of you, be sure to select "I am NOT authorized to sign the publication agreement." Fill in the name and email address of the person who is authorized to sign the agreement. Once you submit this information, the person you've identified will receive an email with a link to the eCF system. The person will be able to complete and sign the publication agreement.

### **10. How do I access the IEEE Electronic Copyright Form?**

The IEEE eCF is only available through an IEEE journal or conference that has registered to use the eCF. Please check with the Editor-In-Chief of the journal, or the Publication Chair of the conference to find out if the eCF is available to submitting authors.

### **11. What should I do if the link that I received to access the eCF does not work?**

You will need to contact the IEEE IPR Office at [ecopyright@ieee.org](mailto:ecopyright@ieee.org) and provide more information. Please submit a question, and include the link and login credentials you received by email.

### **12. What should I do if I receive an error message during the process of completing the electronic copyright form?**

Please try to electronically submit your IEEE Copyright Form again. Your session could have expired. If it still does not work, please try from a computer in a different location, because there could be firewall issues at the network you are using. If you try these alternatives and still have a problem, you could print out a hard copy of the IEEE Copyright Form, hand-sign it, scan it, then email a copy of the copyright form to the publication. Please send it to the same people to whom you have submitted your paper.

### **13. What if I make a mistake while trying to complete the eCF?**

There is a "Back" button at the bottom of each page that can be clicked on at any time during the process.

### **14. What should I do if my electronic copyright form does not include all the coauthors of the paper?**

Author names can be modified, added, or deleted during the eCF process. If an author is added or removed after the eCF has been submitted, this will not be a problem as far as IEEE is concerned. As soon as we have a copy of the signed agreement in our database, we will consider the requirement fulfilled and finished. Any changes to the authors name or listing must be conveyed to the editor or conference publication chair.

### **15. What should I do if the title of my paper is incorrect on my electronic copyright form?**

Paper titles can be modified during the eCF process. The modified title only affects the publication agreement. Any changes to the paper title must be conveyed to the editor or conference publication chair.

### **16. What should I do if I successfully completed the electronic copyright form and did not receive a confirmation email?**

Please contact the IEEE IPR Office at [ecopyright@ieee.org](mailto:ecopyright@ieee.org) to confirm that your eCF was submitted correctly. If the eCF was received successfully, the IPR Office staff will be able to send you a confirmation email along with a PDF receipt for your records.

### **17. What exactly is copyright?**

Copyright is one of a group of intellectual property rights (or laws) that are intended to protect the interests of an author or copyright owner. These laws give an author/owner nearly exclusive control over the use of his/her work. In particular, copyright protects the specific expression of an idea (e.g.,

the specific wording of your text) but not the idea itself. Copyright comes into existence the moment a work (an article, a book, a computer program, an email, a symphony, a sculpture, etc.) is first fixed in any tangible medium of expression, now known or later developed, from which it can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device.

### **18. How is an author's copyright status determined?**

The author's copyright status is determined to a large extent by the type of employer for whom the author works. For example, if you are employed by the U.S. Government, and you are the sole author of your paper, then you should sign the "IEEE Copyright Form for U.S. Government Employees." If you are employed by the U.S. Government, but your coauthors are in private industry, then one of your coauthors should complete the Wizard and sign the IEEE Copyright Form. If you are the sole author and you are employed by a Crown Government (or if you and your coauthors are Crown government employees), then copyright to your paper will remain with the Crown government. You will consequently be asked to sign the "IEEE Copyright Form for Works Subject to Crown Copyright." However, if you are employed by a Crown government, but your coauthor is in private industry, then your coauthor should complete the Wizard and sign the IEEE Copyright Form.