

Preparing Manuscripts for MICCAI: Avoiding Desk Rejection

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Abstract. As the submission platform manager for the Medical Image Computing and Computer Assisted Intervention (MICCAI) Society, I have observed various formatting, anonymity, and other issues in the submitted manuscripts. I hope this document will assist authors in better preparing their manuscripts to avoid disappointment in the form of desk rejection.

Keywords: MICCAI · submission.

1 Introduction

When managing the submission platform for previous MICCAI conferences, the majority of the email inquiries received were about how to anonymize their manuscript. The remaining emails were mostly concerned with whether or not the template could be modified in a certain way to gain extra writing space. Despite our best efforts, a large number of manuscripts failed to adhere to the submission guidelines, in particular, many were not anonymized properly and some were desk-rejected due to format violations. This document addresses most of the issues observed and hopefully can help authors better prepare their manuscripts for MICCAI.

2 Formatting Issues

2.1 The template

The purpose of having a template is to enforce overall consistency. All accepted MICCAI manuscripts will be published in a proceedings. Each paper must adhere to the provided template to maintain overall consistency in structure and layout. Any modification to the template is strictly prohibited.

2.2 What is considered as a modification to the template?

Template tampering includes, but is not limited to, the following list:

- Any modification to margins, font size, line spacing and to change the general layout of the document is not allowed.
- One commonly observed format violation is the manipulation of vertical spacing to gain extra writing space, to fit content within the allowable page limit, or to fit a table or a figure within a page. This includes but is not limited to, changing the vertical spacing between the end of a section to a new section or sub-section and reducing the vertical spacing between a figure or a table to text. Using commands like `\vspace` and `\hspace` in LaTeX is strictly prohibited.
- Do not remove the author section and keywords on the title page to gain writing space. See also Section 3.1 below.
- Wrapping text around a figure or a table is not allowed. This violation was mostly observed in users of the MS-WORD template.
- Changing the font size, style, and spacing in the reference section to reduce the space occupied by the said section is not allowed.
- Papers exceeding the number of allowable pages will also be rejected. The allowable number of pages is 8 pages of content (including text, figures, and tables) plus up-to 2 pages of references. Any manuscript exceeding either of these two will be rejected. Please note that the acknowledgement section count as part of the 8-page main content.
- If the author is converting their manuscript to PDF format from Microsoft Word or other word processors, it is the author's responsibility to make sure the converted file does not exceed the page limit.

3 Preserving anonymity

The reviewing process of MICCAI is double-blind, in that authors do not know the names of the area chairs/reviewers of their papers, and area chairs/reviewers do not know the names of the authors. Authors must avoid providing information in their manuscripts that may identify them. Authors can re-insert such information in the camera-ready manuscript after it is accepted for publication.

3.1 Author information

For review purposes, do not include any author information in the author section below the title. This includes names, email addresses, affiliations, and URLs. Use asterisks (i.e. `***`) or “anonymous”. DO NOT remove the author section to gain extra writing space. See Fig. 1 for an example of what your submission should look like. Some manuscripts failed to anonymize the author information appearing in the header section of each page. Specifically, the command `\authorrunning` in the title section of the LaTeX template must be anonymized.

My MICCAI2020 Submission

Anonymous
Anonymous Organization
@***.***

Fig. 1. Anonymizing author information section below the title

3.2 Acknowledgement section and grant information

Remove all identifying texts from the Acknowledgement section. This includes the funding agency, the name of the grant, hospital information, and any other information that can be used to identify the authors and their affiliations. Don't forget to add blank lines as a placeholder for this information if you want to add it to the camera-ready copy.

3.3 Dataset

Any information that can reveal author information, such as information on a dataset, including specific dataset names that can be used to identify other publications by the same authors, location of data collections, and links to data in Github or Dropbox, must be removed. If your dataset is publicly available then you should reference it in the third person, e.g. “we used the publicly available BRATS data-set (website, ref)”.

3.4 Images or tables

Remove all identifying information associated with images or tables as well as any identifying information visible by hovering the cursor over images in PDFs.

3.5 Citing your own work

If authors need to refer to their own previous work, do so in the third person, e.g. “in [2] the authors showed that ...”. If this is impractical, replace the reference with asterisks, i.e. “*****”. Any journal title, volume, and page number that can be used to identify authors must be removed. See [1] as an example.

If the authors need to refer a concurrent submission to MICCAI or another conference, the authors should include an anonymized version of the submission as supplementary material.

3.6 Supplementary material

Do not include any identifying information in the supplementary material. Even though reviewers are not obliged to review such material, anonymity must still be preserved.

4 Full disclosure of authorship and domain conflicts

Full authorship and domain conflicts must be disclosed in CMT, the manuscript submission system, to avoid conflict of interest between authors and reviewers of a paper. If a reviewer or area chair assigned to your paper is found to have a conflict of interest with the authors due to incomplete or inaccurate information, the paper will be rejected.

4.1 Conflict of interest

When assigning a manuscript to a reviewer for peer review, it is important to avoid conflict of interest between the authors of the manuscript and the reviewer as this may compromise a reviewer's professional judgment in evaluating the manuscript. Adapted from the "Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Reviewers" from Elsevier¹, the following situations are considered conflicts and should be avoided:

- Co-authoring publications with at least one of the authors in the past 3 years
- Having collaborations (e.g. joint granted projects) in the past 3 years
- Being colleagues within the same section/department or similar organisational unit in the past 3 years
- Supervising/having supervised the doctoral work of the author (s) or being supervised/having been supervised by the author(s)
- Receiving professional or personal benefit resulting from the review
- Having a personal relationship (e.g. family, close friend) with the author(s)
- Having a direct or indirect financial interest in the paper being reviewed

For the submission platform to properly detect conflicts of interest, an author must disclose all co-author information and a list of domain conflicts of all authors of the paper. The list of domain conflicts should include not only the authors' current institutional email domains but the email domains of institutions or organizations with which the authors have had close relationships, within the past 3 years. Below is an example of correct domain conflicts:

¹ <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-systems-and-software/policies/conflict-of-interest-guidelines-for-reviewers>

Scenario: Author 1 and Author 2 are co-authors of the same paper. Author 1 is currently working for Institute A with the email domain InstituteA.edu and is also collaborating with a research group in Hospital B with the email domain hospitalB.com. Author 1 also worked for company C with the email domain CompanyC.com 2 years ago. Author 2 is currently working for Institute D with the email domain InstituteD.edu and has a close relationship with OrganizationE.org.

The list of domain conflicts of this paper: InstituteA.edu; hospitalB.com; CompanyC.com; InstituteD.edu; OrganizationE.org

5 Supplementary Material

The purpose of supplementary material is not to present additional results but rather to serve as a platform for authors to provide supporting materials such as videos, images, tables, or proof of equations. It's important to note that reviewers are not obligated to review supplementary material. Your main paper should be self-contained; reviewers should not need to refer to the supplementary material to assess your paper.

When preparing supplementary material, please ensure the following:

- Supplementary material should NOT be appended to the back of your main paper. A link to submit supplementary material will be made available on the submission platform once you have created a submission.
- Supplementary materials are in the form of supporting images, tables, and proof of equations that do NOT represent additional results. It may not include results on additional datasets, results obtained with an improved version of the method (e.g., following additional parameter tuning or training), or an updated or corrected version of the submission PDF. The inclusion of additional results in the supplementary material will lead to automatic desk rejection.
- Supplementary material may include a more detailed analysis of experiments presented in the paper, or a concurrent submission (properly anonymized) to MICCAI or another conference.
- Supplementary material may include videos without any identification markers.
- Supplementary material should not contain text except for proof of equations or figure captions or anonymized concurrent submission. Captions should not exceed 100 words.
- Supplementary material must not exceed two pages unless you are submitting codes or a concurrent submission.
- Do not include any identifying information in the supplementary material. Even though reviewers are not obliged to review such material, anonymity must still be preserved.

6 Final thoughts

Authors whose manuscripts were desk-rejected for the above reasons often felt the decision to be unfair and unkind. To accept such papers despite submission guidelines not being taken seriously would be unfair and unkind to those authors who have carefully revised their manuscripts to ensure all requirements were met. We wish you the best of luck with your submissions!

References

1. *****, Journal *****, vol. **, No. **, pp.**-**.