

USFRS Policy on Manuscripts and Peer Review

References: (a) Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals (commonly referred to as the [Vancouver Convention](#)).
(b) [IEEE Submission and Peer Review Policy](#).
(c) Committee on Publication Ethics – [COPE](#)

Purpose

The US Foundation for Radio Science, Inc. ([USFRS](#)), established in August 2025, supports U.S. engineers and scientists in advancing the state of the art across a broad range of disciplines related to applied electromagnetics, including radio astronomy, wireless communications, radio-frequency devices, antennas, propagation and remote sensing, and biomedical applications. USFRS primarily advances this mission through sponsorship of the National Radio Science Meeting (NRSF).

Consistent with this mission, this policy establishes USFRS requirements and expectations regarding manuscript authorship, peer review, and the use of generative tools, including generative artificial intelligence (AI), in the preparation, submission, and review of manuscripts.

USFRS expects submitted work to represent original scholarly contributions and requires that all submissions be subject to appropriate standards of authorship, attribution, transparency, and accountability.

Scope

This policy applies to manuscripts and related scholarly works submitted to, reviewed for, published in, or presented at USFRS-sponsored and USFRS co-sponsored venues. This includes, but is not limited to, the National Radio Science Meeting (NRSF), the IEEE International Symposium on Antennas and Propagation and USNC-URSI Radio Science Meeting, and the North American Radio Science Meeting.

For venues conducted in partnership with other organizations, the policies of the primary sponsoring organization (e.g., IEEE) shall govern where applicable and shall control in the event of any conflict with this policy.

Definitions and Interpretations

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Generative tools / generative AI systems: Software systems that produce or modify text, images, data, code, analyses, or other content in response to prompts, including large language models and related generative machine-learning systems.

Substantive contribution: Any contribution that meaningfully affects the intellectual content of a manuscript, including generation of text, figures, tables, analyses, interpretations, or research concepts. Routine formatting or mechanical language correction is excluded.

Editorial assistance: Use of tools to improve clarity, grammar, spelling, formatting, or minor paraphrasing that does not materially alter meaning or introduce new intellectual content.

Disclosure: Acknowledgment of the use of generative tools in the preparation of a manuscript, including identification of the tool used and a description of its substantive contribution where applicable.

Manuscript review process: All stages of handling submitted work, including peer review, editorial handling, session organization, and committee-level adjudication.

Interpretations: Where ambiguity exists, this policy shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the principles of transparency, accountability, and research integrity as established in COPE guidelines and IEEE publication ethics standards.

For the purposes of this policy, the following modal verbs shall have the meanings below:

- “shall” indicates a mandatory requirement.
- “shall not” indicates a prohibition.
- “may” indicates permitted discretion.

Authorship

USFRS follows the authorship criteria recommended by the Vancouver Convention (Ref. (a)). To qualify as an author, each listed author shall satisfy all of the following criteria:

- Make substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or to the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Draft the work or revise it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Provide final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work and ensure that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Authors shall be responsible for the accuracy, originality, and scientific integrity of all content contained within a manuscript submitted to a USFRS-sponsored or USFRS co-sponsored venue.

Submission and Peer Review

USFRS follows applicable submission and peer review guidance established by IEEE (Ref. (b)) and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (Ref. (c)). Additional USFRS-specific requirements are provided below.

In the event of a conflict among applicable policies or guidance documents, the following order of precedence shall apply:

1. Policies of the primary sponsoring organization, where applicable;
 2. Explicit requirements enumerated within this USFRS policy;
 3. IEEE Submission and Peer Review Policy (Ref. (b)); and
 4. COPE recommendations and guidance (Ref. (c)).
- Non-human entities, including generative AI systems and other generative tools, do not satisfy authorship requirements and shall not be listed as authors of a submission.
 - The use of generative tools to create substantive manuscript content shall be disclosed in the Acknowledgements section. Such disclosures should identify the tool used and describe the nature and extent of its use.
 - The use of generative tools solely for editorial assistance shall not require disclosure. Editorial assistance includes activities such as grammar checking, spelling correction, formatting assistance, paraphrasing for clarity, or language polishing of the authors' original content, provided that the tools are not used to generate substantive new content. Such tools may be used only to improve the presentation of the authors' original work and not to generate substantive intellectual contributions.
 - If generative tools are used in the creation of manuscript text, analyses, concepts, or other substantive intellectual content, authors shall clearly disclose where such use occurred and remain fully responsible for verifying the accuracy, validity, originality, and appropriate attribution of the resulting content.
 - The use of generative tools for routine research support activities, such as literature searches or search-assistant functions, does not require disclosure. Authors remain responsible for ensuring that all cited works are accurately represented and properly credit prior work.
 - Authors shall manually verify the existence, relevance, and accuracy of all cited references prior to submission. The inclusion of fabricated, non-existent, or otherwise unverifiable references (commonly referred to as "hallucinated" references) is prohibited.

Guidelines for Generative Assistance in Peer Review

Reviewers shall independently read, evaluate, and formulate the content of their reviews using their own professional judgment and expertise. The substantive content, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations contained in a review shall not be generated by generative tools.

Individuals participating in the manuscript review process, including but not limited to reviewers, editors, session organizers, and Commission Chairs, shall not upload or otherwise disclose submitted manuscripts, or any portion thereof, to generative tools unless such tools are explicitly authorized by the sponsoring organization or venue and are subject to confidentiality and data protection safeguards appropriate for unpublished scholarly work.

Unauthorized disclosure of submitted manuscripts through generative tools may compromise manuscript confidentiality, intellectual property rights, and data privacy protections, including protections related to personally identifiable information where applicable.

Disclosure of Generative Tool Use

Authors shall disclose the use of generative tools, including generative artificial intelligence (AI) systems, where such tools have been used to produce substantive contributions to a manuscript. Substantive contributions include, but are not limited to, generation of text, figures, tables, analyses, interpretations, or research concepts that are incorporated into the submitted work.

All required disclosures shall be provided at the time of submission and repeated in the Acknowledgements section of the manuscript.

Disclosures shall identify the specific generative tool(s) used, including the name of the system or model (e.g., ChatGPT), and shall describe, at a minimum, the nature and extent of the tool's contribution to the work in sufficient detail to allow reviewers and readers to understand how the tool was used in the development of the manuscript.

Use of generative tools solely for editorial assistance, as defined in this policy, does not require disclosure.

Failure to disclose required use of generative tools constitutes a violation of publication ethics and treated as a form of misrepresentation of author contributions.

Sanctions for Author Misconduct

1. Initiation, Investigation, and Adjudication

Allegations or credible indications of non-compliance with USFRS publication policies shall be referred to the USNC Executive Committee for review and adjudication.

The USNC Executive Committee serves as the standing first-instance authority for investigation and determination of publication-related misconduct. The Executive Committee may delegate investigatory activities to the USNC Chair and may, at its discretion, consult subject-matter experts to support technical or ethical evaluation of a case.

Upon completion of its review, the Executive Committee shall issue written findings and recommend corrective actions and shall notify the corresponding authors and the USFRS Board of Directors.

2. Appeal

Authors may appeal decisions of the USNC Executive Committee to the USFRS President.

The USFRS President shall convene an appeal committee consisting of three members: the President and two subject-matter experts who were not involved in the initial investigation, deliberation, or adjudication of the case. Individuals who participated in the Executive Committee's review of the case shall not serve on the appeal committee for that case. The appeal committee shall review the case and issue a final determination. The decision of the appeal committee shall be final and binding.

3. Corrective Actions

Depending on the severity of the violation, corrective actions may include one or more of the following:

- Formal notice that the practice constitutes inappropriate scholarly conduct;
- Rejection of the manuscript from the submission venue;
- Removal of a published manuscript from conference proceedings or other official records;
- A minimum six-month prohibition on submission to USFRS-sponsored venues;
- A minimum six-month prohibition on submission to USFRS co-sponsored venues;
- Prohibition on submission to all USFRS-sponsored and co-sponsored venues for a defined or indefinite period;

- Referral of the case to external governing bodies, including URSI, for further review or action.

4. Specific Violation: Fabricated References

The inclusion of fabricated, non-existent, or otherwise unverifiable references in a manuscript submitted to an NRSM or other USFRS venue shall constitute grounds for immediate rejection of the submission, removal from conference proceedings and other official records, and possible further corrective actions.

Authors may appeal such a rejection through the standard appeal process. Rejected manuscripts may be resubmitted only if explicitly permitted by the venue's associated Editorial Board or Organizing Committee following review of the appeal.