How To Be a *Great Peer Reviewer* for the AES Journal

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Audio Engineering Society

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Advancing the State of the Art

- The field of Audio Engineering moves forward by sharing new and useful ideas and results: the Journal of the AES (JAES) provides this platform.

- JAES offers a unique audience of practitioners, enthusiasts, companies, and academic scholars.

- Publishing in JAES helps establish you as an expert in your specialty area of audio engineering. This is important for career advancement and professional satisfaction.

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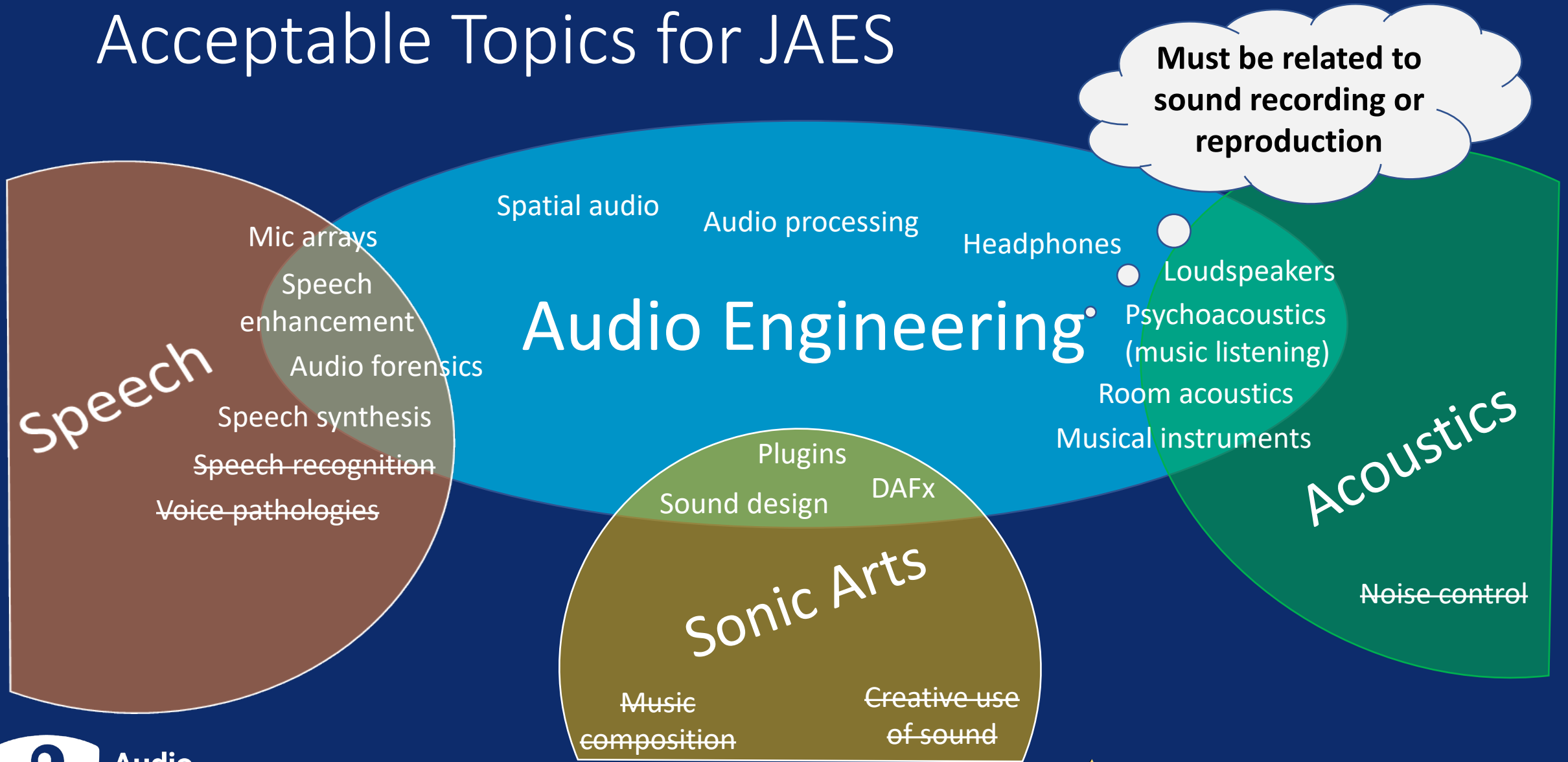MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY | NORM ASBJORNSON College of ENGINEERING

Local, Convention, Conference, Journal

- The Audio Engineering Society offers many opportunities to share your work:
  - AES **local sections** are often looking for presenters and technical demonstrations
  - AES **Conventions** feature technical sessions with late-breaking information
  - AES **Conferences** offer more in-depth coverage of new ideas

and
  - The **AES Journal** provides corroborated and fully-peer-reviewed articles of archival quality

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Publishing in the Journal

- A manuscript suitable for the Journal of the Audio Engineering Society will face many tough layers of scrutiny—including *peer review* by other experts in the field.

- Some manuscripts are initially rejected—and nearly every manuscript requires some revision before publication—to ensure very high quality.

- Manuscript submission outcomes:

  ACCEPT / MINOR REVISION / MAJOR REVISION / REJECT

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Acceptable Topics for JAES

Must be related to sound recording or reproduction

Speech

Mic arrays

Speech enhancement

Audio forensics

Speech synthesis

~~Speech recognition~~

~~Voice pathologies~~

Audio Engineering

Spatial audio

Audio processing

Headphones

Loudspeakers

Psychoacoustics (music listening)

Room acoustics

Musical instruments

Acoustics

~~Noise control~~

Plugins

Sound design

DAFx

Sonic Arts

~~Music composition~~

~~Creative use of sound~~

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Journal of the Audio Engineering Society

- Editor-in-Chief: Vesa Välimäki

- Managing Editor: Paige Horvath

- Production Editor: Christopher Cifani

- **Associate Technical Editors**: Assist the Editor-in-Chief with specific expertise: loudspeakers, microphones, audio coding, room acoustics, archiving, etc.

Initial Manuscript Screening by Editor-in-Chief

Editor-in-Chief or an ATE (Associate Technical Editor) does the basic screening

1. Out of scope?
   - Not audio engineering, no JAES references

2. Is it well written?
   - Language deficiency, incomprehensible

3. Too much similarity?
   - Earlier AES Conv paper, plagiarism

4. Is the work properly validated?
   - Comparison/evaluation/experiments

5. Is there novelty?
   - Nothing new is claimed, missing references

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Secondary Manuscript Screening by ATE

- Associate Technical Editor carefully reads the abstract, section structure, conclusions, and list of references.

- The ATE identifies 3-5 experts in the area of the manuscript who could understand each and every detail. These individuals are asked to be **PEER REVIEWERS**.

WHO are Peer Reviewers? What do they do?

- Peer reviewers are experts working in the same field as the topic of the manuscript.

- Peer reviewers assess the intrinsic quality, validity, and originality of the manuscript, then make a recommendation on publication.

- For JAES, peer reviewers are *anonymous* to the author. Their service is voluntary, not paid.

- Peer reviewers must be impartial, free of any real or perceived conflict of interest, and must keep confidential the contents of the manuscript.

What makes a good peer review report?

- The peer reviewer needs to assess:
  - The structure and organization of the manuscript.
  - The authors' description of how the new work fits within prior work in the field, and the completeness of the list of references.
  - The clarity and effectiveness of the figures (diagrams, graphs, charts, tables, photos, etc.).
  - The scope and quality of the reported work.
  - The degree to which the authors' claims appear valid, based upon the manuscript's explanations and results.

What do peer reviewers need to remember?

- Peer reviewers are not "co-authors" – the manuscript needs to be considered on its own merits, not "*here's what I would do*."

- Write the review as a recommendation to the editor.
  - Include a brief summary of the work and its relevance.

- Explain how the authors have placed their new work in the context of ongoing work in the field.

- Determine any errors, misinterpretations, and missing information.

- Always be mindful of ethics and integrity.

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Outcomes of the peer review process

- The Associate Technical Editor receives and reads the peer review reports. The result is a recommendation of:
  - **Reject** – the manuscript is not suitable for publication in JAES
  - **Major revision needed** – the manuscript has one or more significant shortcomings that the author needs to address. This might require additional experiments and/or analysis. This recommendation usually involves a full review of the revised manuscript.
  - **Minor revision needed** – the manuscript has some shortcomings that can be remedied by minor adjustments to the text.
  - **Accept** – the manuscript is accepted for publication in JAES.

How should an *author* respond to peer reviews?

- ***Every*** JAES manuscript receives suggestions and critical review comments. Don't be angry or discouraged!

- Take the comments seriously: the suggestions provide an opportunity to improve your manuscript.

- If the reviewer misunderstood something, so would other readers. Use the opportunity to provide a clearer explanation.

- If you are revising and resubmitting, clearly address *each* and *every* reviewer comment.

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Does peer review guarantee perfection?

- Unfortunately, No.
  - Even with thorough and capable peer reviewers, errors and misinterpretations are still possible.

- So what is peer review worth?
  - It provides the author, editor, and future readers a *reasonable* assurance that the manuscript is worth reading and archiving.

Can *you* be a peer reviewer?

- *Yes*, if you…
  - Are recognized as an expert in your field of work.
  - Regularly read and use papers published in JAES.
  - Have demonstrated experience writing and publishing papers, and responding to critical peer reviews of your work.
  - Have time to read and knowledgeably discuss the work of others.
  - Understand and embrace the impartiality, confidentiality, and ethical integrity of the peer review process.
  - Recognize the ***professional obligation*** of AES members to enhance the quality and usefulness of our Journal.

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Conclusion

- Publishing in JAES helps establish you as an expert in your specialty area of audio engineering. This is important for career advancement and professional fulfillment.

- Serving as a peer reviewer contributes to the quality, integrity, and sustainability of AES, and of the AES Journal.

- Peer reviewers enjoy the satisfaction of helping move our profession forward as a key contributor to the audio engineering field.

- Contact an Associate Technical Editor to find out more.

Thank you for your attention

Rob Maher

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Deputy Editor-in-Chief

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