



How to review?

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"Review the papers of others as you would wish your own to be reviewed"

Mihir Bellare

IACR Distinguished Lecture:
Caught in Between Theory and Practice

<https://tinyurl.com/4brf7bkj>

More details:

[https://icml.cc/Conferences/2022/
ReviewerTutorial](https://icml.cc/Conferences/2022/ReviewerTutorial)

Why bother with reviewing?

Value creation

For authors: feedback

For the community: better papers

These are our axioms. Everything follows from these.

Further reasons:

- Opportunity to learn
- Proof of being part of a community (external expectation/approval)
- Stepping-stone to larger roles
 - meta-reviewer, senior meta-reviewer, editor, ..

Mechanism of reviewing

Reviewing

1. is voluntarily
2. but if accepted, it becomes a responsibility!

Corollary: Do not accept, if you cannot deliver on time and with the expected quality. **Delays are costly.**

Can I review? Should I review? Am I ready?

- Start early
- Ask for help before agreeing (e.g., from your supervisor, fellow students)
- Read about the job
- It is OK to do an imperfect job if you try and the limitations are admitted in the review (honesty)

How to start?

Read the instructions!

They are there for YOU!

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Step 1: Look at the review form. What information will you need to provide?

ICML form, main aspects:

1. Novelty, relevance, significance
2. Soundness
3. Quality of writing/presentation
4. Literature

Aspect-based evaluation.

Use this list even if there is no form.

Step 2:

Read the paper. Think about these different aspects.

Identify:

- contributions
specific claims, data, etc.
- support for contributions

Summarize contributions with your own words.

Step 3:

Think of each of the aspects. Justify any statements that you make.

1. Novelty, relevance, significance
2. Soundness
3. Quality of writing/presentation
4. Literature

Be be be..

- polite
- precise
- honest
- empathic
- professional

Delicate(?) issues

How novel?

How significant?

How surprising?

How well written?

Will readers be happy to see this paper?

Recommendations

Reviewers may or may not be asked for recommendations

Check whether you need to provide one

Allow room for adjustment, indicate your confidence (and limitations of your review)

Proofread, final check

Would you be happy to receive this review?

- Assuming interest in scientific progress
- A negative review can be useful if the author can learn from it

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Further resources

- [How to be a good reviewer \(ICML 2022\)?](#)
- [How to be a good meta-reviewer \(ICML 2022\)?](#)