

**Letter of Agreement for Co-Sponsorship of the  
IEEE LIFE SCIENCES LETTERS (LSL)  
DATED: 7 March 2014**

**Introduction**

This document serves as an agreement between the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society, the IEEE Circuits and Systems Society, IEEE Control Systems Society, and the IEEE Life Sciences Technical Community (LSTC) (here out called “Partners”) for Financial Co-sponsorship beginning 1 January 2014 for a period of three years and ending 31 December 2016.

**Periodical Scope**

The IEEE Life Sciences Letters (LSL) is dedicated to the timely publication of high quality manuscripts that apply methods of quantitative analysis to biological problems at the molecular, cellular, organ, human and/or population levels. The key scientific themes addressed by the journal include personalized medicine, pharmaceutical engineering, synthetic biology, and systems biology. The Letters publication will focus on short papers with a maximum length of 4 IEEE two-column pages, with quick decision, ideally within four weeks.

The topics covered by this journal include:

- Personalized medicine: Data mining methods for extracting meaning from biological data, Customization of therapy to individual patients, Big-data and Omics approaches to biomarkers and therapeutics for complex diseases, Micro/nanofluidics technologies related to Omics, Noninvasive physiological monitoring using optical technology.
- Pharmaceutical engineering-Control principles that led to novel approaches to drug target identification, Development and manufacturing of products, processes, and components in the pharmaceutical industry, Application of engineering principles to clinical studies for purposes of safety and efficacy, Engineering techniques for discovering, modifying, or designing therapeutic agents.
- Synthetic biology-Modeling, design and construction of synthetic biological networks, Identification methods for reverse engineering of multicomponent biological networks, Optimization and optimality in life science problems, Minimal cell design.
- Systems biology-Analysis and simulation of gene regulatory networks, Signal transduction cascades, Synchronization phenomena at the cellular and subcellular level, Dynamical modeling, analysis and identification of biological networks at different scales of organization, both spatial and temporal, Optogenetics techniques.

Minor variation within the proposed scope is expected. However, major changes were specifically prohibited by the IEEE Periodicals Committee.

The main emphasis of the proposed journal is on rapid publication of short articles in these and closely related areas.

**Implementation**

This Agreement shall be acted upon by the Presidents of the Financial Sponsors with the approval of their respective Board of Governors (BoGs) or Administrative Committees (AdCom). This Agreement, upon approval by the appropriate IEEE Technical Activities or other IEEE Boards, shall become a part of the records of the IEEE Technical Activities Board (TAB).

**Administrative Partner** (IEEE Life Sciences Technical Community (LSTC), Partner D)

In order to ensure a successful launching of the journal, one of the **PARTNERS** will be designated as the Administrative Partner of the Periodical at the inception of this Agreement and shall provide the manuscript handling system for receiving, logging, filing, and delivering submitted manuscripts to associate editors and reviewers in fulfillment of peer review process. The Administrative Partner is responsible for the finance accounting and the financial reporting to IEEE. It is recommended that the Administrative Partner has a significant % of Financial Ownership of the **IEEE Life Science Letters** (hereafter called the *Periodical* or *LSL*). Sufficient budget shall be allocated to pay for the administrative costs.

## **Financial**

The **Periodical** shareholder ownership will be as follows:

Partner D shall be the Administrative Partner

Financial % ownership:

**Partner A: IEEE Engineering in Medicine & Biology Society, 2 shares**

**Partner B: IEEE Circuits & Systems Society (IEEE CASS), 1 share**

**Partner C: IEEE Control Systems Society (IEEE CSS), 1 share**

**Partner D: IEEE Life Sciences Technical Community (LSTC), Administrative, 1 share**

The Financial Sponsors are responsible for all financial and technical obligations of the Periodical. Compliance with financial and technical responsibilities entitles Financial Sponsors to voting privileges on the Steering Committee as outlined below. Financial ownership of the Periodical requires that all Shareholders accept the responsibility of the expenses of the Periodical throughout the year and share in the potential profit or loss of the Periodical according to the percentage of shareholder ownership as noted above.

Sharing in the potential profit or loss of the Periodical will be according to the following schedule:

- First three years of operation, or cash-flow neutrality, whichever occurs earlier: each share is equivalent to \$10,000 per year for the Financial Sponsor societies other than LSTC. Once cash-flow neutrality is achieved: 75% of surplus is to be split among the Financial Sponsors according to shares owned (other than LSTC), 25% to LSTC, until the original investment of the Financial Sponsors (other than LSTC) have been fully repaid.
- The year after the original investments of the Financial Sponsors (other than LSTC) has been fully repaid: 50% to the Financial Sponsors according to shares owned (other than LSTC). 50% to LSTC.
- Subsequent years: 25% to the Financial Sponsors according to shares owned (other than LSTC), 75% to LSTC.

Annual distribution of the Profit/Loss will be completed by IEEE in accordance with its established practices for year-end reconciliations. The Administrative Partner will provide oversight of IEEE to ensure the distribution occurs in a timely fashion.

## **New Partners**

New partners (either financial or technical) can request to participate in LSL. Upon receipt of request to participate, the LSL Steering Committee will review the request and will recommend regarding approval to the existing partners. The addition of a new partner with a majority vote of the Partners, with shares as established above. New financial or technical sponsors will begin their partnership of LSL at the next available MOU renewal, or earlier should there be time to amend the existing MOU.

## **Administration**

**LSL** will be administered by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the Financial Sponsors, including a chair, plus the Editor-in-Chief (EIC).

## **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee shall act as Trustees for the publication and shall have administrative responsibilities for the Periodical such as:

- Monitor quality and timeliness of the Transaction with the assistance of Administrative Partner's Executive Office,
- Verify the technical content of the Transaction is in accordance with the established scope and areas of interest,
- Approve the periodical budget (page count, subscription rates, etc.),
- Work with the EIC to establish operating policies and procedures for the Transactions,

The membership of the Steering Committee shall consist of six members, five of whom have voting rights and are termed delegates of their sponsoring partners. There is one ex-officio member (without voting rights) of the committee: the EIC. The Chair appointed from among this group will only vote to break a tie.

Each Society delegate must be appointed by his/her Society President, shall serve a two-year appointment commencing Jan. 1, and may be re-appointed for one additional term. Society delegates may be reappointed to the board after a five year hiatus from their prior term of up to four years.

The distribution of delegates is as follows:

**PARTNER A: two voting delegates on the Steering Committee**

**PARTNER B: one voting delegate on the Steering Committee**

**PARTNER C: one voting delegate on the Steering Committee**

**PARTNER D: one voting delegate on the Steering Committee**

Each delegate shall have equal (one) vote on matters before the Steering Committee. However, as described below, the Chair of the Steering Committee will not vote other than to break a tie. Business of the Steering Committee will be decided by majority vote and Roberts Rules of Order will govern formal activity of the committee.

The Steering Committee shall convene **at least three times per year via teleconference during the start-up phase, and annual thereafter**, to review the progress of LSL and prepare the budget of the LSL. If possible, the LSL Steering Committee meetings shall be scheduled to precede the AdCom/BoG meetings of all financial partners to allow review of preliminary budget submission of the Periodical

Delegates unable to attend the Steering Committee Meeting can participate by teleconference or by transferring their voting privilege to another member of the Steering Committee, provided the Chair is notified in writing (including email) of the proxy transfer one week prior to the meeting.

**Selection of the Chair of the Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee shall elect its Chairperson from amongst its current voting, delegate membership. S/he shall serve a term of two years, non-renewable. The Chairperson shall serve as the focus for Committee communications and shall direct, on behalf of the Committee, the operational matters of the Committee to the Financial Sponsors. The Chair shall vote only to break a tie. In the event a Financial Sponsor shall withdraw from the Steering Committee, and the chair shall be the appointment of that Financial Sponsor, the term of the chair shall not survive the participation of the Financial Sponsor.

A Secretary shall also be elected from among the voting representatives of the steering committee.

### **Budget**

Annually, the Administrative Partner is responsible for preparing and submitting the initial budget of the Periodical to the Steering Committee for review. The Steering Committee can approve the Periodical budget provided it is breakeven or better. Expenses and page budgets cannot exceed an annual increase of 10% unless authorized in advance by a vote of the financial partners with same voting structure as the SC. In the case of a proposed deficit budget, the Steering Committee must receive final budget approval from the President of every Financial Sponsor, unanimously. Mid-year expense increases, such as page increases, that are expected to result in a deficit budget must be similarly approved unanimously. All Financial Sponsors will receive a copy of the approved budget for the Periodical simultaneously when submitted to the IEEE TAB Finance Department.

### **Reporting Process**

The Steering Committee will submit a written report regarding the progress of the Periodical to the participating Societies annually by 31 December reviewing the Periodical's progress over the year (page count, timeliness, citation factor, sub-to-pub, etc.) and review / report of the budget.

### **Editorial Management**

The EIC and the Editorial Board (see below) are responsible for the editorial content and quality of the Periodical.

The Editorial Board shall be responsible for the technical quality of the *Periodical*. The Editorial Board, under the leadership of the EIC, shall assure appropriate peer review of submitted manuscripts; timely review and publication of accepted manuscripts; adherence to the page budget; and editorial policies and procedures.

LSL will be considered an OPEN ACCESS IEEE journal and will advertise, promote and process manuscripts submitted for open access publication.

## **Selection of the EIC:**

This begins with the appointment of an EIC Search Committee by the *Steering Committee*. The EIC Search Committee shall be comprised of four members – one from each financial Sponsor, and an EIC Search Committee Chair. That Chair, who will be appointed by the Administrative Partner's Publication Chair or VP Publications, will moderate discussions, and will vote only to break a tie. The recommendation of the EIC Search Committee shall be presented to the *Steering Committee* for approval. The *Steering Committee* shall complete selection of each EIC-elect a minimum of six months prior to the end of the term of the sitting EIC, to allow the incoming EIC to shadow the incumbent EIC prior to taking office.

A Steering Committee member interested in nomination as EIC must resign, allowing his/her sponsoring Society to appoint a replacement representative.

The EIC shall be appointed for a three-year term by the *Steering Committee*. An EIC can be reappointed but cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

If an EIC position becomes vacant before the end of the term, the Steering Committee shall elect a replacement to complete the term. An EIC may be removed from office by a two-thirds affirmative *Steering Committee* vote.

## **Responsibilities of the EIC:**

The EIC is responsible for the overall editorial operations of the *Periodical*, which includes submission of Editorial Board member nominations to the steering committee for review, final decision on editorial board nominations, and the assignment of papers to the Editors.

The Editorial Board shall be comprised of between 10 and 100 members with expertise across the disciplines of the *Periodical*, and shall normally serve terms of two years, renewable once. Editorial board members may be reappointed to the board after a one-year hiatus from their prior four-year term.

At the discretion of the EIC, the Editorial Board may be structured so as to have senior or deputy editors to organize the reviewing of articles across the scope of the Periodical, or for other sound publication reasons. The EIC will work with the Steering Committee on such a structure.

The EIC may request that an editorial board member step down if duties are not being fulfilled prior to the end of a term. *Steering Committee* members may nominate Editorial Board members to the EIC, however all Editorial Board appointments are made by the EIC, with the consent of the *Steering Committee*. It is the intent of this document that the EIC and the Steering Committee achieve consensus on Editorial Board composition.

The Editor in Chief shall be an acknowledged leader in the field of interest of the Periodical. He/she shall agree to assume the roles and responsibilities of the EIC and realize that there will be no remuneration for service to the Periodical.

The function of the Editor-in-Chief (EIC) shall include oversight of the daily operations of the *Periodical* such as:

- Interact with Authors
- Help to maintain the Reviewer Database
- Initiate and monitor the review process to its completion
- Select Associate Editors and members of the Editorial Board for the approval by the Steering Committee
- Provide input and approve the assumptions created by IEEE staff to help create the page budget, present the page budget for submission to the Steering Committee for approval as part of the overall budget approval process
- Ensure that the Periodical follows IEEE Policy and Procedures
- Create the technical content of the Periodical in accordance with the established scope and areas of interest and
- Execute policies as established by the Editorial Board and approved by the Steering Committee
- Oversee the content of the Journal website
- Serve as ex-officio, non-voting member of Steering Committee

Travel funds for the EIC to attend appropriate meetings (IEEE POE, Periodical Reviews) and conferences (ISBI, etc.) will be budgeted and reimbursable to the EIC through the LSL budget.

### **Editorial Policy**

Editorial selection and review shall be consistent with policies and practices of IEEE as is consistent with the statement of scope (above).

Additionally, as a matter of principle, IEEE shall direct the Editors of their other publications to forward suitable material to the *Periodical*. IEEE shall coordinate with the *Steering Committee* any plans for publishing special issues of their respective periodicals in the area of the *Periodical*.

LSL will direct papers not within its scope to other IEEE publications for possible consideration.

Authors of IEEE conference and symposia papers are encouraged to submit their papers in journal form to the *Periodical* for consideration to be published as original papers or work, also considering the criteria of adding new content to previously published work. However, all LSL papers must undergo the same stringent review process as regular submissions.

### **Copyright**

The title of the *Periodical* shall be registered in the name of IEEE, and the *Periodical* as a whole shall be copyrighted by IEEE. All authors of articles and material in the *Periodical* shall have their copyright transferred to IEEE, except in the case of material in the public domain. All IEEE copyright procedures and practices shall be followed. The IEEE may freely reuse the copyrighted material for its own purposes without charge. Revenues from copyright fees, or other subsidiary rights fees associated with the *Periodical* that are paid by outside parties to be collected by the IEEE, shall be credited to the *Periodical* in accordance with IEEE procedure.

### **Marketing**

There shall be a coordinated marketing effort, executed by the Administrative Partner. All financial sponsors are required to advertise LSL quarterly to their membership; distribute any call for papers for

Special Issues or Sections of the Journal and provide a web link from their Society Publication website to the LSL website.

### **Subscriptions and Fulfillment**

All Sponsors shall offer the Periodical to their Society members according to the rates established by the Steering Committee and confirmed by the participating Financial Sponsors. The Steering Committee shall also establish rates for other Society and IEEE members as well as non-member subscribers.

### **Electronic Distribution**

The Periodical will be included in the IEEE All Society Periodicals Package (ASPP) and its sub-packages as well as the IEEE Electronic Library Xplore. LSL shall not be included in any sponsoring Society's member digital library.

### **Arbitration**

In the event of a disagreement regarding the Periodical among the Financial Sponsors, a review panel consisting of the Chair of the TAB Periodicals Committee and other members appointed by the TAB Periodicals Committee will meet to resolve the issue. In the unlikely event the review panel is unable to come to a resolution by majority vote, all parties agree to request for an Arbitration Committee selected by TAB for mediation and resolution of the issue.

### **Presidential Oversight**

The sponsoring Society Presidents shall meet at least once a year during the Technical Activities Board meeting series to review the progress of LSL, and shall participate in additional meetings deemed necessary at the discretion of any of the Society Presidents, which shall be arranged by the Administrative Partner.

### **Agreements, Durations, and New Agreements**

All agreements must be approved by the TAB Periodicals Committee. The period of this Agreement shall be three years from the date of signature of the Financial Sponsors.

- 1) Withdrawal of Agreement: In the event that a PARTNER wishes to withdraw from this Agreement, the REMAINING PARTNERS retain all the rights and will continue to publish the periodical. Notification of intent to withdraw must be made one year prior to the expiration of this agreement. The remaining partners need to sign a new agreement with the new % of financial ownership.
- 2) If a new Financial Sponsor is added during the course of the MOU, a new document specifying the new percentage of financial ownership needs to be signed by all Financial Sponsors.
- 3) At the termination of the agreement, a new Agreement needs be signed by all Financial Sponsors with possible new % of financial ownership.

As Financial Sponsors, this agreement is accepted by:

Signed for by the **PARTNER A:**

IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society

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Bruce Wheeler

**President**

Signed for by the **PARTNER B:**

IEEE Circuits and Systems Society

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Vojin Oklobdzia

**President**

Signed for by the **PARTNER C:**

IEEE Control Systems Society

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Jay Farrell

**President**

Signed for by the **PARTNER D:**

IEEE Life Sciences Technical Community

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Donna Hudson

**Chair, Life Sciences Technical Community**