

INFORMS Journal on Computing

Special Section “Software Tools for Vehicle Routing”

We happily announce that the INFORMS Journal on Computing will publish a Special Section of its Software Tools Area in conjunction with the [DIMACS Implementation Challenge on Vehicle Routing](#).

The results of the DIMACS Implementation Challenge made clear the value of open-source vehicle routing tools in achieving state-of-the-art performance. In that spirit, the aim of this special section is to collect the best and most impactful **software and data contributions** in the vehicle routing community. We welcome submissions from the broader community as well as from Challenge participants.

The Software Tools Area of the INFORMS Journal on Computing

The Journal’s Software Tools Area seeks papers describing software and/or data made available to the research community. Contributions in this Area should be novel with respect to software, but need not necessarily be so with respect to the underlying mathematics or algorithms. The novelty could be in, for example, a sophisticated implementation that showcases state-of-the-art techniques, an ingenious abstraction that simplifies an important and previously difficult research task, or a robust implementation of an existing state-of-the-art algorithm where none previously existed. The software should be of high technical quality; follow best practices for software engineering; and be usable, maintainable, and of long-term interest to the research community. Submissions should make the case for the novelty of the software or data, describe how it fits into the literature, and explain clearly how it can be leveraged in solving a computational problem of importance to the research community. We anticipate most successful papers will include computational results justifying the value of the submitted software or data, but this is not strictly required. The paper should not be a user’s manual or a technical specification.

The Software Tools Area accommodates both short- and long-form papers. Short papers focused exclusively on the software or data will be subjected to the usual review process, but are not expected to undergo multiple rounds of revisions. Full-length papers must include additional material with enough significance to merit publication. In both cases, the review process will consist of two separate parts: a review of the software/data, to assess the quality and maintainability, and a review of the paper itself, assessing the novelty and potential importance to the research community. We invite interested authors to review the [Journal’s editorial policy](#) for additional details. For recent examples of “short” papers published in the Area, we refer authors to [Besançon et al. \(2022\)](#), [Papp and Yildiz \(2022\)](#), and [Kullman et al. \(2021\)](#); Similarly, for an example of a “long” paper we refer the authors to [Biel and Johansson \(2022\)](#).

Manuscript Submission and Timeline

Note that, because the format of the Journal’s Software Tools Area will be unfamiliar to many, **we require authors to prepare a short proposal (letter of interest) before submitting a full manuscript**. This is described in the timeline below:

- **December 1, 2022:** Letter of interest due to the editors via email. This should be 1-page or less and roughly describe the intended content, type of submission (short or long paper), and expected length of the manuscript.
- **March 1, 2023:** Submission of manuscripts due (via [ScholarOne Manuscripts](https://pubsonline.informs.org/page/ijoc/manuscripts)).
- **August 31, 2023:** Special Section ready for publication.

Submitted manuscripts should conform to the usual high-standard requirements of The INFORMS Journal on Computing, available at:

<https://pubsonline.informs.org/page/ijoc/submission-guidelines>.

Submissions will be peer reviewed with the same procedure as any other submission.

Please also note that the INFORMS Journal on Computing has a Data Policy and a Software Policy, which authors can find at <https://pubsonline.informs.org/page/ijoc/datapolicy> and <https://pubsonline.informs.org/page/ijoc/softwarepolicy>.

When submitting manuscripts via [ScholarOne Manuscripts](https://pubsonline.informs.org/page/ijoc/manuscripts), authors should choose "Special section: software tools for vehicle routing" as the "Article type". Authors are also requested to state clearly in their Cover Letter that the manuscript is for the special section.

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