



## Message from the Conference Editorial Board

Hiroyuki Kajimoto, Maud Marchal, and Yon Visell served on the IEEE World Haptics Conference Editorial Board (CEB) for the first time this year, replacing Fernando Bello, Seungmoon Choi, and Karon E. MacLean. They joined Editor-in-Chief Katherine J. Kuchenbecker to create the four-person team tasked with managing the WHC 2025 paper review process. In close collaboration with the General Co-Chairs Seungmoon Choi and Ki-Uk Kyung, and with input from other key community members, the CEB decided to change two key aspects of the conference. First, we eliminated the short journal paper track that WHC and IEEE Haptics Symposium had operated together with the IEEE Transactions on Haptics (ToH) in recent years; instead of a special submission deadline only for short papers, the stakeholders decided that all articles accepted to ToH within a given time period would have the opportunity to present at WHC 2025. Second, to allow authors to publish substantial high-quality conference papers and survey papers, we created a new long paper track (8 to 12 pages plus references) to complement our regular paper track (4 to 6 pages plus references).

To reduce bias and perceptions of bias, we employed a double-blind review process: long and regular papers were anonymized at initial submission. This practice was first introduced in WHC'23 and was positively received by almost all authors and reviewers. In 2025, we recruited 33 associate editors (AEs) who worked to secure three qualified reviewers for each paper submission while avoiding potential conflicts of interest. For the first time, we distributed papers by having AEs bid on the submissions they would be most interested in handling. We also asked author teams to volunteer to perform at least three reviews of other submissions, uploading their sample papers to PCS to facilitate matching of submissions to reviewers.

WHC 2025 received a total of 189 paper submissions before our firm deadline of January 31, including 48 long papers and 141 regular papers (25.4% long). These were divided into 52 total submissions to the theme of Understanding Touch (7 long + 45 regular, 13.5% long), 68 submissions to Technology and Systems (16 long + 52 regular, 23.5% long), and 69 submissions to Applications and Interaction (25 long + 44 regular, 36.2% long). Several author teams were asked to update their submissions to comply with double-blind review, and one submission was withdrawn by the authors. After the full review process, we conditionally accepted 19 (39.6%) of the 48 long and 56 (40.0%) of the 140 regular submissions on April 16. Authors submitted their final papers, optional videos, and a summary of their revisions by May 16, and final acceptances were confirmed after checking for plagiarism. Based on author preferences and program constraints, the Program Co-Chairs Seokhee Jeon and Gregory Gerling assigned most papers to parallel oral sessions, with the other 15 presented as posters. Eight top submissions were selected as potential candidates for awards, and the authors of 19 top submissions were invited to extend their work for the WHC 2025 Special Issue of the IEEE Transactions on Haptics.



We are grateful to the AEs and external reviewers who helped tremendously with the review process, as well as to IEEE Robotics and Automation Society for its longstanding support of WHC and the haptics research community. Many other individuals were also essential for our work, especially James Stewart from Precision Conference Solutions, the Publication Chairs Hasti Seifi and Sang Ho Yoon, and the Awards Chair and IEEE Transactions on Haptics Editor-in-Chief Jee-Hwan Ryu. We hope you enjoy this year's papers, and we welcome your feedback about our work.

Best wishes,

WHC 2025 Conference Editorial Board  
**Katherine J. Kuchenbecker** (Editor-in-Chief), **Hiroyuki Kajimoto**, **Maud Marchal**, and **Yon Visell**