

PREFACE

The Fifth (2003) International Conference on Creationism (ICC), as in the cases of the two most recent ICCs (1994, 1998) is devoted to the *Development and Systemization of the Creation Model of Origins*. The ICCs are sponsored by the Creation Science Fellowship (CSF), Inc., of Pittsburgh, and provide the only "international forum" for the rigorous development of the young-earth, young-universe Creation Model of Origins. The ICCs are divided into five general research areas with detailed subcategories for which papers are submitted. These areas are:

(1) Astro-Sciences

- Astro-chronometry
- C o s m o g o n y a n d
Cosmology
- Atmospheric Sciences

(2) Earth and Planetary Sciences

- Geochemistry
- Geophysics
- Physical Geology
- Sedimentary Geology
- Paleontology

(3) Foundations of Science

- Biblical Models and
Hermeneutics
- Mathematical and Logical
Models
- Philosophy of Science

(4) Life Sciences

- Cell and Molecular
Biology
- Organismal Biology
- Biogeography
- Systematics
- Genetics
- Ecology

(5) Social Sciences and Humanities

- Philosophy of History
- Linguistics
- Archeology
- Psychology
- Economics and Political
Science
- Education

The ICC Peer Review Process

The current peer review process of the ICCs was designed and developed in the Summer of 1991 by the Conference's Technical Review Committee (TRC) and detailed in the *ICC Technical Review Process and Procedures Manual*. This manual is provided to each Liaison, Editor, and Author whose Summary is accepted into the peer review process. The ICC peer review process can be broken into three phases.

Liaison Evaluation Phase

Phase one consists of potential authors submitting 500 word Summaries to the Liaison Board of the Technical Review Committee as outlined in the Conference's Call for Papers. At least one Technical Liaison is assigned to a major research area as enumerated above. These Liaisons review the submitted Summaries based upon at least the following criteria:

- (1) Is the topic of the Summary formulated within a young-earth, young-universe framework?
- (2) Is the topic of this Summary important to the development of the Creation Model?
- (3) Does the topic of the Summary provide an original contribution to the Creation Model?
- (4) If the topic of the Summary is polemical in nature, does it deal with an issue(s) rarely discussed in the origins debate?
- (5) If applicable, does the Summary provide evidence of faithfulness to the grammatico-historical / normative interpretation of Scripture?

With the exception of criterion one, each of these criteria is numerically evaluated by the Liaison ranging from one to five (one being the lowest, five being the highest). For the Summary to be included into the peer review process it must receive an average score of 3.0 or higher. Upon the Liaison's acceptance, the Summary is assigned an Editor based on the major area and subcategory for which the Summary was originally submitted. The Liaison has the authority to reclassify the Summary if needed.

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Editorial Phase

Phase two represents the “fulcrum” of the ICC peer review process. The first draft of the paper is sent to the Editor six months after the Summary submission deadline. The Editor sends the paper out for review to at least three Referees (if possible). These Referees are to be experts in the field of the paper’s topic and are to evaluate scientific content of the paper. The editorial process is a **double blind** process: The author is unknown to his/her Referees and the Referees are unknown to the Author.

The Referees evaluate the paper based upon the following criteria:

- (1) Does the paper make an original contribution to the Creation Model?
- (2) Is the paper well documented with respect to the relevant literature?
- (3) Does the paper consider alternative explanations?
- (4) Does the paper demonstrate an awareness of its own limitations?
- (5) Does the paper provide a basis for further research in its area/subcategory or related areas/subcategories?
- (6) Does the paper exhibit sound methodology?
- (7) Does the paper properly present sufficient data to address its stated aims?
- (8) Does the paper properly interpret its data?
- (9) If applicable, does the paper properly develop and use its mathematical models?
- (10) If #9 above is applicable, are the paper’s mathematical models applied to appropriate and/or important examples?
- (11) Is the paper tightly and coherently reasoned?
- (12) If applicable, is the paper faithful to the grammatico-historical / normative interpretation of Scripture?

As with the Liaison review procedure, the Referees’ evaluation procedure is based upon assigning numerical values to each of the criteria above. Along with the above evaluation, Referees provide detailed suggestions and additional Bibliographical data for the Author to incorporate in his/her paper. Also included in this process is the recommendation of the Referee to accept, accept with modification, or reject the paper.

Based upon the careful evaluations of the Editor and Referees (according to the above criteria and procedure), the Editor has authority to accept or reject the paper. Often papers go through several rounds in the editorial process before the status of the paper is decided by the Editor.

Appeal Process Phase

Phase three is the Appeal process phase. In the event that an Author believes his/her paper has been treated prejudicially or unfairly by his/her Editor and/or Referees that Author may contest an editorial decision.

- (1) The Author must inform both his/her Liaison and Editor in writing outlining the specifics of his/her objections to the decision against the paper.
- (2) Immediately upon the reception of the Author’s letter of appeal, the Editor is to submit a copy of all correspondence related to the paper including Referee evaluations and Editor’s assessment of the appeal to the Liaison.
- (3) Immediately upon the reception of the Editor’s package (#2 above), the Liaison will assess the matter consulting with the Editor and Author if necessary.
- (4) The Liaison has the authority to only **affirm** the Editor’s decision.
- (5) In the event that the Liaison is unable to concur with the Editor, the Liaison is to select three other TRC Liaisons from among the Technical Review Committee Proper upon which each of the four Liaisons evaluate the matter. In the event of a tie, the TRC Chairman casts the deciding vote.
- (6) After the Liaison Committee evaluation, this Committee either upholds or overturns the Editor’s decision. The Author’s Liaison informs both the Editor and Author of the Committee’s decision.

This somewhat “bureaucratic” process has been developed to maintain the integrity and quality of the ICCs and forces **accountability** at all levels of the review process. The Liaisons are accountable to the Editors and the Editors are accountable to the Technical Review Committee.

Summary

It is believed that this rigorous peer review process provides the means to safeguard further development of the Creation Model of Origins within the ICC format. The Technical Review Committee encourages organizations and forums within the Creation community to adopt comparably rigorous peer review procedures, both as a manner of honor and because the Creation Model deserves nothing less.

Robert E. Walsh
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