

## **Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement**

For all parties involved in the act of publishing (the author, the journal editor(s), the peer reviewer and the publisher) it is necessary to agree upon standards of expected ethical behavior. The ethics statements for our journal are based on the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.

### **1. Duties of the Editors-in-Chief**

**1.1** Fair play: Submitted manuscripts are evaluated for their intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.

**1.2** Confidentiality: The Editor-in-Chief and any editorial staff must not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher, as appropriate.

**1.3** Disclosure and conflicts of interest: Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in an Editor's own research without the explicit written consent of the author(s).

**1.4** Publication decisions: The handling Editor-in-Chief of the journal is responsible for deciding which of the submitted articles should be published. The Editor-in-Chief may be guided by the policies of the journal's Editorial Board and constrained by such legal requirements as shall then be in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The Editor-in-Chief may confer with other editors or reviewers in making this decision.

### **2 Duties of peer reviewers**

**2.1** Contribution to editorial decisions: Peer review assists the Editor-in-Chief in making editorial decisions and, through the editorial communication with the author, may also assist the author in improving the manuscript.

**2.2** Promptness: Any invited referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its timely review will be impossible should immediately notify the Editor-in-Chief so that alternative reviewers can be contacted.

**2.3** Confidentiality: Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. They must not be shown to or discussed with others except if authorized by the Editor-in-Chief.

**2.4** Standards of objectivity: Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is unacceptable. Referees should express their views clearly with appropriate supporting arguments.

**2.5** Acknowledgement of sources: Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also call to the Editor's attention any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published data of which they have personal knowledge.

**2.6** Disclosure and conflict of interest: Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Reviewers should not consider evaluating manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected to the submission.

### **3 Duties of authors**

**3.1 Reporting standards:** Authors reporting results of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the manuscript. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.

**3.2 Originality and Plagiarism:** The authors should ensure that they have written entirely original works, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others that this has been appropriately cited or quoted.

**3.3 Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication:** An author should not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Parallel submission of the same manuscript to more than one journal constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable.

**3.4 Acknowledgement of sources:** Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should also cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.

**3.5 Authorship of a manuscript:** Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as coauthors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be named in an Acknowledgement section. The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors (according to the above definition) and no inappropriate co-authors are included in the author list of the manuscript, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

**3.6 Hazards and human or animal subjects:** If the work involves chemicals, procedures or equipment that have any unusual hazards inherent in their use, the authors must clearly identify these in the manuscript.

**3.7 Disclosure and conflicts of interest:** All authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or their interpretation in the manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed.

**3.8 Fundamental errors in published works:** When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal's Editor-in-Chief or publisher and cooperate with them to either retract the paper or to publish an appropriate erratum.

### **4 Publisher's confirmation**

In cases of alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication or plagiarism the publisher, in close collaboration with the Editors-in-Chief, will take all appropriate measures to clarify the situation and to amend the article in question. This includes the prompt publication of an erratum or, in the most severe cases, the complete retraction of the affected work.

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