

# Guidelines for Ethical Behavior in Publishing

The INFORMS journal *Organization Science* is a peer-reviewed journal. All parties involved in publishing an article in this journal (editors, peer reviewers, authors, and publisher) must follow appropriate guidelines for ethical behavior. In general, editors and reviewers must maintain objectivity and confidentiality and manage potential conflicts of interest; authors must be honest and disclose their sources and funders. More precisely, to assure high-quality publications, public trust in scientific findings, and proper credit for ideas and results, ethical standards for publication in *Organization Science* include but are not limited to the following:

## 1 General Duties and Responsibilities of Editors

1.1 Appointment: Editors-in-chief are appointed by the INFORMS Board of Directors. Any concerns regarding conduct of the editor-in-chief should be directed to the INFORMS vice president of publications. Area editors and associate editors serve at the will of the editor-in-chief, and any concerns regarding their conduct should be directed to the editor-in-chief.

1.2 Publication Decisions: Based on the peer review of a manuscript, the editor-in-chief and area editor are responsible for determining which manuscripts are best suited for publication.

1.3 Journal Policies and Procedures: The editor-in-chief, area editors, and associate editors may be guided by the policies of the journal's editorial board and subject to INFORMS policies and practices regarding libel, copyright infringement, and plagiarism. The editor-in-chief will continually assess the effects of journal policies on author and reviewer behavior, revising policies as required to encourage responsible behavior and to discourage misconduct.

1.4 Editorial Integrity: Decisions to accept or reject a manuscript for publication are based on importance, originality, clarity, and the study's validity and relevance to the journal's editorial statement. *Organization Science* will never consider an author's race, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy.

1.5 Peer Review: *Organization Science* uses a single-blind process for peer review. Authors' identities are known to the editors and reviewers. Reviewer comments to the editors are strictly confidential, and reviewer comments to authors will be made anonymous. The names of the reviewers will be known only to the editor-in-chief, area editor, associate editor, and editorial staff and will remain strictly confidential to authors and other reviewers.

1.6 Confidentiality: The editor-in-chief, area editor, associate editor, and any editorial staff will not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the authors, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher.

1.7 Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest: To ensure accountability and transparency, the editor-in-chief will establish systems for managing conflicts of interest for him- or herself, staff, authors, reviewers, and editorial board members.

1.8 Fundamental Errors in Published Works: It is the editor's responsibility to promptly investigate accusations of errors in published work and to ensure that corrections and retractions are published in an accurate and timely manner.

## 2 General Duties and Responsibilities of Reviewers

2.1 Punctuality: Any referee who feels unqualified to review an assigned manuscript or unable to provide a prompt review should notify the editor-in-chief, area editor, or associate editor to be excused from the review process.

2.2 Confidentiality: Private information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and must not be used for personal advantage. Manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. Information contained in a submitted manuscript must not be shown to or discussed with others without written permission of the editor-in-chief or area editor.

2.3 Standards of Objectivity: Reviews shall contain no personal criticism of authors. Reviewers should clearly express their views with supporting arguments, and reviews should be conducted objectively and constructively.

2.4 Acknowledgment of Sources: Authors should cite relevant sources. Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. If a reviewer finds any substantial similarity or overlap between the submitted manuscript and any other published works, the editor-in-chief, area editor, or associate editor must be notified promptly. Editors will refer to INFORMS Policies and Procedures regarding plagiarism (INFORMS POLICY AND PROCEDURES, NUMBER 13.8.1 PLAGIARISM) to identify and react to accusations of plagiarism.

2.5 Conflict of Interest: If a reviewer discovers a conflict of interest with an assigned manuscript, for instance, resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions, the editor-in-chief, area editor, or associate editor must be notified promptly for the reviewer to be excused from the review process.

### 3 General Responsibilities of Authors

3.1 Reporting Standards: Authors of original manuscripts should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately, and all data in the article should be real and authentic. A manuscript should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior.

3.2 Peer Review: Peer review is the foundation of the journal publication process. By submitting a manuscript, an author agrees to be an active and responsive participant by responding promptly and appropriately to reviewer comments.

3.3 Data Access and Retention: Authors may be asked to provide the raw data in connection with a manuscript for editorial review, should be prepared to provide access to such data, and should retain such data for a reasonable time after publication.

3.4 Originality and Plagiarism: It is essential that editors and reviewers be told by the authors when any portion of a manuscript is based heavily on previous work, even if this work has been written by one or more of the authors. It is the responsibility of the author not only to cite the previous work, including his or her own, but to provide an indication of the extent to which a manuscript depends on this work. The editor-in-chief will refer to INFORMS Policies and Procedures regarding plagiarism (INFORMS POLICY AND PROCEDURES, NUMBER 13.8.1 PLAGIARISM) to identify and react to accusations of plagiarism.

3.5 Acknowledgment of Sources: Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.

3.6 Manipulation of Citations: Including citations in a submitted manuscript with the primary purpose of increasing the number of citations to a given author's work or to articles published in a particular journal constitutes unethical behavior.

3.7 Falsification and Fabrication: Falsifying or fabricating numerical or experimental data or results in a submitted manuscript constitutes unethical behavior.

3.8 Authorship: Authorship must 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 co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors.

3.9 Corresponding Author: The corresponding author is the author responsible for communicating with the journal for publication. The corresponding author is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included on the manuscript and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the manuscript and have agreed to its submission for publication.

3.10 Acknowledgment of Funding Sources: Funding sources for the research reported in the manuscript should be duly acknowledged. It is the responsibility of the authors to follow any publishing mandates outlined by their funding organizations.

3.11 Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest: All sources of financial support for the project or any substantive conflict of interest that might be interpreted to influence the results must be disclosed.

3.12 Fundamental Errors in Published Works: It is the author's responsibility to promptly notify the editor-in-chief or area editor if a significant error or inaccuracy is discovered in a published work so that the journal can retract or correct the paper as quickly as possible.

3.13 Redundant, Concurrent, or Multiple Publications: An author should not publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. If authors have used their own previously published work, or work that is currently under review, as the basis for a submitted manuscript, they are required to cite the previous work and indicate how their submitted manuscript offers novel contributions beyond those of the previous work. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical behavior. Redundant publications involve the inappropriate division of study outcomes into several articles. Manuscripts that are found to have been published elsewhere, to be under review elsewhere, or to have been published or submitted with undisclosed redundant data will be subject to the procedures and penalties outlined in INFORMS Policies and Procedures regarding plagiarism.

#### 4 Sanctions

4.1 In the event of documented violations of any of these ethical guidelines, the editor-in-chief of the INFORMS journal *Organization Science* (acting independently or in consultation with the INFORMS publications committee) may

- Immediately reject the infringing manuscript.
- Immediately reject every other manuscript submitted to an INFORMS journal by any of the authors of the infringing manuscript.
- Prohibit all the authors from submitting new manuscripts to an INFORMS journal, either individually or in combination with other authors of the infringing manuscript, as well as in combination with any other authors.
- Prohibit all authors from serving on the editorial board of *Organization Science* or any INFORMS journal.

4.2 In cases where the violations of the ethical guidelines are deemed particularly outrageous, INFORMS reserves the right to impose additional sanctions.

#### 5 General Responsibilities of the Publisher

5.1 The editor-in-chief of *Organization Science* is responsible for editorial content and for managing the content-related processes.

5.2 Fundamental Errors in Published Works: It is the publisher's responsibility to promptly release corrections and retractions when a significant error or inaccuracy is discovered in a published work.

5.3 Ultimate authority over *Organization Science* rests with the INFORMS Board. General supervision of *Organization Science* is delegated to the vice president of publications with the advice of the publications committee.

5.4 The INFORMS business office is responsible for publishing the content provided by the editor-in-chief and the day-to-day business aspects of publishing.

5.5 Complete publication policies and procedures can be found in Section 13 of INFORMS Policies and Procedures.

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