Online Ethics Center
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Publication Ethics Subject Aid

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Description

A short guide to some key resources and readings on the topic of publication ethics, including authorship, peer review, and collaboration.

Body

Publication ethics includes issues such as who gets to be an author, the correct presentation of data in a published paper, attributing credit for the ideas of others, authorship questions in collaborative research, peer review, and ethics for editors.

An author’s central obligation is to present an accurate and complete account of the research being performed, including the data collected or used, as well as an objective description of the significance of the research. Authors whose names appear on the paper are responsible for the paper’s contents, and should be ready to answer questions raised about the validity and significance of the work being presented to the best of their ability.

Questions of authorship often arise because of the important role publication has in advancing a researcher’s career. While there are no universally agreed definitions of authorship, authors should have taken a significant role in the conception, design, analysis and writing of the study. To avoid distributes over attribution of academic

credit, it is helpful to decide early on in the planning of research project who will be credited as authors and who will be acknowledged.

Editors are the stewards of journals, and must consider and balance the interests of readers, authors, editorial board members, owners and others in the papers they choose to accept or reject. Their decisions should be based only on the paper's importance, originality, or clarity and the study's relevance to the remit of the journal.

Peer reviewers are external experts chosen by editors to provide written opinions with the aim of improving a publication submitted for review. Peer reviewers have the duty of confidentiality in the assessment of a manuscript. Reviewers should not make any use of the data, arguments, or interpretations of their paper being reviewed without the authors' permission.

Many journals provide guidelines and advice to authors, peer reviewers and editors that can be useful in resolving common questions that arise.

Committee on Publication Ethics. 1999. "Guidelines on Good Publication Practice." In "Code of Conduct. Last accessed June 8, 2016. http://publicationethics.org/files/u7141/1999pdf13.pdf

Subject Overviews

Albert, Tim and Elisabeth Wagner. 2003. "How to handle authorship disputes: A Guide for New Researchers." *COPE Report*. http://publicationethics.org/files/2003pdf12_0.pdf

> This document seeks to help new researchers prevent and resolve authorship problems by providing suggestions on good authorship practice, a glossary of key concepts in authorship, and some reading lists and websites on this topic.

"Authorship and Allocation of Credit", and "Sharing of Research Results" 29-38, in *On Being a Scientist : A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research* National Academies. Committee on Science Engineering and Public Policy. 2009. 3rd ed. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press. http://www.nap.edu/read/12192/chapter/11

The third edition of this publication is designed to supplement the informal lessons in ethics provided by research supervisors and mentors. The book describes the ethical foundations of scientific practices and some of the personal and professional issues that researchers encounter in their work. It applies to all forms of research—whether in academic, industrial, or governmental settings—and to all scientific disciplines.

Authorship Project, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

An excellent site that includes educational modules on authorship that can be included in RCR courses, as well as resources for students and faculty about implementing ethical authorship policies and collaborative authorship.

"Reporting and Reviewing Research," in *ORI Introduction to RCR*, Nicholas Steneck, 129-158. Office of Research Integrity, 2007.
http://ori.hhs.gov/part-iv-reporting-and-reviewing-research

This booklet introduces the reader to the nine RCR core instructional areas in four sections that follow research from inception to planning, conducting, reporting, and reviewing research. The publication features case studies, text-box inserts, discussion questions, and electronic and printed resources.

Rockwell, Sarah. 2005. *Ethics of Peer Review: A Guide for Manuscript Reviewers,* Office of Research Integrity.
http://ori.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/prethics.pdf

A good introduction to some responsibilities involved in peer reviewing a paper, including if you have the expertise to do the review, exploring possible conflicts of interest, and issues to think about after you have reviewed the paper, including confidentiality.

Policy and Guidance

American Chemical Society. 2015. "Ethical Guidelines to Publication of Chemical Research by the American Chemical Society" from ACS Publications.
http://pubs.acs.org/userimages/ContentEditor/1218054468605/ethics.pdf

Provides detailed guidelines for authors, editors, and peer reviewers to help ensure the advancement of science through good publication practices.

Committee on Publication Ethics. 2016. "Guidelines from the Committee on Publication Ethics" from Committee on Publication Ethics. http://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines

A collection of guidelines for editors, peer reviewers, and authors.

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. 2016. "Recommendations." From the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. http://www.icmje.org/

Made up of a dedicated group of medical journal editors, the ethical guidelines set by ICMJE are used by scholarly journals in many difference disciplines.

"Reporting Research Results" in *Doing Global Science: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise*, 81-92. Princeton University Press, 2016. https://www.interacademies.org/publication/doing-global-science-guide-responsible-conduct-global-research-enterprise

This concise introductory guide explains the values that should inform the responsible conduct of scientific research in today's global setting. Featuring accessible discussions and ample real-world scenarios, includes a substantial section on reporting research results.

Bibliography

"Publication Ethics." In Online Ethics Center for Engineering and Science. Last modified June 2016. https://onlineethics.org/cases/publication-ethics-bibliography

Includes a list of websites, books and journal articles that cover issues related to authoring and reviewing scientific publications.

Notes

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Rights

Use of Materials on the OEC

Resource Type

Bibliography

Parent Collection

OEC Subject Aids

Topics

Authorship
Peer Review
Publication Ethics

Discipline(s)

Research Ethics
Authoring Institution
Online Ethics Center