



## ***CSIC Journals - Revistas CSIC***

### ***Good publication practice guidelines***

These *Good publication practice guidelines* are intended to serve as a code of conduct for all stakeholders in the production and publication of research results in CSIC journals: editorial staff, authors and manuscript reviewers.

#### **1 Responsibilities of CSIC journal editors**

The Editorial Boards of CSIC journals, together with the offices of the Director and the Secretary, are responsible for the content that is published, and must therefore ensure its scientific quality, avoid misconduct in the publication of research results, and ensure that submitted manuscripts are published within a reasonable period.

In light of these responsibilities, the following principles should be observed.

##### ***1.1 Impartiality***

The Editorial Board must handle all submitted manuscripts in an impartial manner, and must respect the intellectual independence of all authors, who must be given the right of reply if they receive a negative review.

Manuscripts that report negative research results should not be excluded from consideration.

##### ***1.2 Confidentiality***

Members of the Editorial Board are required to ensure the confidentiality of all manuscripts received and of their content until they have been accepted for publication. Only then may the title and authors of the article be communicated.

In addition, no member of the Editorial Board may use data, lines of reasoning or interpretations in unpublished manuscripts for his or her own research, except with the authors' express written consent.

### **1.3 Manuscript review**

The Editorial Board must ensure that all published research articles have been evaluated by at least two subject specialists, and that the review process has been fair and impartial.

The method of peer review most appropriate for the scientific community that the journal is targeted to must be made public: *double blind* (in which both authors and reviewers are anonymous), *single blind* (in which reviewers are anonymous) or *open* (in which neither authors nor reviewers are anonymous). When one of the two reviews is negative, a third review will be requested.

The Editorial Board must give due consideration to refusals by any author to be reviewed by certain specialists (when peer review is not anonymous) if the justification provided appears reasonable. The Editorial Board is under no obligation to forego review by these specialists if members of the Board believe that their views are fundamental for the accurate evaluation of the manuscript.

Persons who submit a manuscript for review may suggest the names of up to three specialists as peer reviewers. The Editorial Board reserves the right to decide whether to accept or decline these suggestions, and is not required to communicate its decision to the authors.

The Editorial Board must make every effort to ensure, in the peer review process, that all manuscripts are original, that plagiarism and redundant publication are detected, and that data falsification or manipulation are also detected. In addition, the sections of the journal for which the content will undergo peer review must be clearly identified.

The Editorial Board must recognize the value of and acknowledge the input of all those involved in the review of manuscripts submitted to the journal. In addition, the Board should encourage academic authorities to acknowledge peer review activities as part of the scientific process, and should decline to use reviewers who submit reports that are of poor quality, erroneous or disrespectful, or that are delivered after the agreed deadline.

### **1.4 Manuscript acceptance or rejection**

Responsibility for accepting or rejecting manuscripts for publication rests with the Editorial Board, which should base its decision on the reports received about the manuscript. The reports should base their decision on the quality of the manuscript in terms of its relevance, novelty and clarity of writing and reporting.

The Editorial Board may reject a submitted manuscript without external review if the members believe it to be unsuitable for the journal because it does not reach an acceptable level of quality, is outside the journal's scientific aims and scope, or contains evidence of scientific fraud.

## **1.5 Retractions and expressions of concern**

The Editorial Board reserves the right to retract published articles which are subsequently determined to be unreliable due to unintentional error or scientific fraud or misconduct: data fabrication, manipulation or appropriation, text plagiarism and redundant or duplicate publication, omission of references to sources consulted, use of content without permission or without justification, etc. The purpose of retraction is to correct the scientific record of publication and thereby ensure its integrity.

In case of a conflict regarding duplicate publication caused by the simultaneous publication of the same article in two different journals, the date the manuscript was received by each journal will be used to decide which of the two versions should be retracted.

If an error affects only part of a published article, it can be subsequently corrected by publishing a note from the editor, a correction or an erratum notice.

If any conflict arises, the journal will ask the author or authors to provide an explanation and relevant evidence for clarification, and will reach a decision based on this information.

The journal must publish the retraction notice in both its print and electronic editions, and the notice must mention the reasons for the retraction, in order to differentiate between misconduct and unintentional error. The journal will notify the responsible authorities at the authors' institution of the retraction. The decision to retract an article should be reached as soon as possible in order to prevent the misleading article from being cited by other researchers.

Retracted articles will remain available in the electronic edition of the journal, and will be identified clearly and unambiguously as retracted in order to distinguish retractions from other corrections or commentaries. In the print edition, retractions will be reported as promptly as possible as an editorial or note from the editor with the same wording as in the electronic edition.

Prior to final retraction, the journal may issue an expression of concern in which the necessary information is provided with the same wording as used for a retraction. The expression of concern will be used for as brief a period as possible and will be withdrawn or superseded, if appropriate, by formal retraction of the article.

## **1.6 Application of Editorial Board guidelines**

The person who serves as Editor in Chief of the journal is responsible for ensuring that the guidelines that regulate the operation of the Editorial Board are implemented appropriately, and that all members of the Board are familiar with these guidelines. The functions of the Editorial Board are as follows: to promote and represent the journal in different bodies and organizations; to suggest and advocate potential improvements; to obtain the collaboration of

experts in different subject areas; to perform initial review of submitted manuscripts; to write editorials, reviews, commentaries, news items, book reviews, etc. for the journal; and to attend Editorial Board meetings.

### **1.7 Guidelines for authors**

The instructions for manuscript preparation for each journal (regarding the word limits for the abstract and main text, figure preparation, reference formats, etc.) must be publicly available.

### **1.8 Conflict of interest**

Conflict of interest arises when an author of the manuscript is a member of the Editorial Board, has a direct personal or professional relationship with the journal, or is closely related with previous or current research carried out by a member of the Editorial Board. Those members of the Editorial Board with any of the relationships described above should recuse himself or herself from participation in the peer review process for the submitted manuscript.

## **2 Responsibilities of authors publishing in CSIC journals**

### **2.1 Publication guidelines**

Manuscripts submitted for publication must be based on original, unpublished research. They must include the data obtained and used, as well as an objective discussion of the results. They must supply enough information to allow any specialist to replicate the research and confirm or refute the interpretations defended in the manuscript.

All authors must appropriately reference the sources of all ideas or phrases taken verbatim from previously published articles, in accordance with the journal's instructions and guidelines.

When illustrations are used as part of the research, the methods used to create or obtain them must be explained appropriately whenever this information is needed to understand the images. If any graphic material (e.g., figures, photographs, maps, etc.) has been partially reproduced from other publications, the authors must cite the source and obtain permission, if needed, to reproduce the material.

The unnecessary subdivision of articles should be avoided. If the research report is very long, it can be published in two or more parts; each part should deal with a particular aspect of the overall study. Different articles relating to the same research should be published in the same journal to facilitate readers' interpretation of the work.

## **2.2 Originality and plagiarism**

All authors must ensure that the data and results reported in the manuscript are original and have not been copied, fabricated, falsified or manipulated.

Plagiarism in all forms, multiple or redundant publication, and data fabrication or manipulation constitute serious ethical failings and are considered scientific fraud.

Authors must not submit to a CSIC journal any manuscript that is simultaneously under consideration by another journal, and must not submit their manuscript to another journal until they are notified that it has been rejected or have voluntarily withdrawn it from consideration. However, an article that builds upon an item published previously as a short report, brief communication or conference abstract may be published as long as it appropriately cites the earlier source it is based on, and as long as the new manuscript represents a substantial modification of the previous publication.

Secondary publication is also acceptable if the later manuscript is targeted at completely different readers – for example, if the article is to be published in different languages or if one version is intended for specialists whereas the other version is intended for the general public. These circumstances must be specified and the original publication must be cited appropriately.

## **2.3 Authorship of manuscripts**

If the manuscript has more than one author, the author responsible for correspondence with the journal must ensure appropriate recognition of all persons who contributed significantly to the conception, planning, design and performance of the study, to obtaining the data, and to the interpretation and discussion of the results. All persons named as authors share responsibility for the work reported in the manuscript. Likewise, the person responsible for communications with the journal must ensure that all persons named as authors have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and have agreed to its possible publication.

The corresponding author must ensure that no person responsible for the manuscript and who meets the criteria for scientific authorship noted above has been omitted from the list of authors. This will avoid *ghost authorship* and *gift authorship*, which constitute scientific misconduct.

In addition, an acknowledgment must be included in the article to note the contributions of other collaborators who are not authors and are not responsible for the final version of the manuscript.

If the journal or the authors so request, a brief description of the individual contributions of each member of the group of coauthors may appear in the published article.

## **2.4 Sources of information**

All publications that have influenced the research should be acknowledged in the manuscript; accordingly, all original sources upon which information in the manuscript is based should be identified and cited in the reference list. However, references that are not relevant to the research or that refer to similar examples should not be included, and overreliance on references to research that forms part of the common body of scientific knowledge should be avoided.

Authors should not use information obtained privately through conversations, correspondence or informal discussions with colleagues, unless they have obtained explicit written permission from the source of the information, and the information was provided in the context of a scientific consultation.

## **2.5 Significant errors in published articles**

When authors discover a serious error in their work, they must report this to the journal as soon as possible in order to modify their article, withdraw it, retract it, or publish a correction or erratum notice.

If the Editorial Board detects the potential error, the authors must then demonstrate that their work is free from error.

The process to be used to resolve conflicts that may arise is described above in section 1.5.

## **2.6 Conflict of interest**

Any commercial, financial or personal relationship that might influence the results and conclusions of the study, or its review process, must be declared at the time of the submission of the manuscript. In addition, all sources of financial support for the study must be reported. This information will be published in the article if the manuscript is accepted.

## **3 Responsibilities of reviewers of CSIC journals**

External experts who participate in manuscript review play an essential role in the process that guarantees the quality of published material. They assist the journal's editorial bodies in reaching their decisions, and help to improve articles.

### **3.1 Confidentiality**

Peer reviewers must consider all manuscripts as confidential documents both during and after the peer review process, until after they are published.

Under no circumstances should the reviewer divulge or use any information, details, lines of reasoning or interpretations in the material to be reviewed for his or her own benefit or that of any other persons, or with the intent to harm any third parties. Only under exceptional circumstances may the reviewer obtain advice from other specialists in the subject of the manuscript, and the reviewer must inform the Editor's office of this measure.

### **3.2 Objectivity**

Experts who evaluate manuscripts must judge the quality of the whole report objectively, i.e., they must consider the background information used to formulate the hypothesis of the study, the theoretical and experimental data and their interpretation. Attention must also be given to the presentation and writing/reporting of the text.

They must be specific with their criticisms and provide their comments in an objective, constructive manner. They must justify their judgments with reasoning, avoid hostility and respect the authors' intellectual independence.

Peer reviewers must notify the Editor's office of any substantial similarities between the manuscript under review and any other published article or manuscript undergoing review at another journal (redundant or duplicate publication). In addition, they must alert the editor to any plagiarized, falsified, fabricated or manipulated text or data.

### **3.3 Timely response**

Peer reviewers must act promptly and provide their report by the agreed deadline, and must notify the Editor's office of possible delays.

In addition, they must notify the Editor's office as soon as possible if they do not feel qualified to evaluate the manuscript or if they are unable to complete their review within the agreed deadline.

### **3.4 Acknowledgment of sources of information**

Peer reviewers must verify that previously published studies relevant to the topic have been properly cited. To do so they must review the literature cited in the manuscript with a view to suggesting the removal of superfluous or redundant references, or the addition of references that were not cited.

### **3.5 Conflict of interest**

Peer reviewers must decline to review when they have any professional or personal relationship with any of the authors of the manuscript that might influence their judgment of the work.

Conflict of interest may arise when the manuscript is closely related with work the reviewer is currently performing or has previously published. In such cases, and if any doubts should arise, the reviewer should decline to review the manuscript, with an explanation of the reasons for his or her decision.

Sources:

COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics): <http://www.publicationethics.org>

EASE Guidelines (European Association of Science Editors): <http://www.ease.org.uk>

Ethical Guidelines for Journal Publication: <http://sjss.universia.net/codigo-etico.jsp>

*Código de buenas prácticas científicas del CSIC*. Madrid, CSIC, 2011.

Norma Reguladora de las Publicaciones del CSIC, 17 de septiembre de 2012:  
<http://editorial.csic.es/publicaciones/portal/la-editorial/normativa-general-de-publicaciones/c6321842-ae8a-49b2-b742-1f64e1e02bde>