



Publication Ethics for Editorial Board Members

Applies to all PLOS journals.

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Research integrity and publication ethics at PLOS

PLOS has a dedicated [Publication Ethics Team](#) with specialized expertise in research integrity. In collaboration with the journal teams, they develop ethics-related policies and workflows, address concerns raised about PLOS content, and help to protect PLOS journals from large-scale integrity issues such as paper mills and peer review and citation rings. PLOS is a member of the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#) (COPE) and PLOS journals abide by COPE's [Code of Conduct](#) and aim to adhere to its [Best Practice Guidelines](#).

[Read more](#) about research integrity and publication ethics at PLOS.



Your role in publication ethics as a PLOS Editorial Board member

Because we have a dedicated Publication Ethics Team, you are not expected to follow up directly on publication ethics issues yourself. That being said, we do expect you to uphold our [Code of Conduct for Editorial Board members](#), be familiar with our [policies](#), and [notify](#) the journal office of any publication ethics concerns.

Additionally, we appreciate your contributions to specific cases when consulted by a member of our Publication Ethics Team.

If you notice a publication ethics concern

Pause peer review and [contact](#) the journal office.

What to look out for

What to look out for	Definition	Who may be doing this? A = Authors R = Reviewers EB = Editorial Board members
Authorship disputes	PLOS Authorship policy	A
Citation manipulation	Behaviors intended to inflate citation counts for personal gain, such as excessive self and/or collaborators' citations	A, R, EB
Dual/Redundant publication	The whole or substantial parts have already been published elsewhere	A

Dual Use Research of Concern (DURC)	Biosecurity and Dual Use Research of Concern policy There is a risk the study could be misused for harmful purposes	A
Duplicate submission	The manuscript is simultaneously under consideration at another journal	A
Fake reviewers	Impersonation of reviewers or otherwise fraudulent accounts	R, EB
Fraudulent, fabricated or manipulated presentation of data	Misrepresentation of or fraudulent experimental data or findings	A
Image integrity	Manipulation, duplication, or altering of images	A
Salami slicing or derivative research	Dividing data or research findings to increase publication output, or replicating previously published research without sufficient justification	A
Violations of Animal Research policy	PLOS Animal Research policy	A
Violations of Artificial Intelligence policy	PLOS AI Tools and Technologies policy (authors)	A, R, EB

	<p>Artificial intelligence (AI) tools in peer review policy (editors and reviewers)</p> <p>Editorial board members and reviewers should not upload submissions to web platforms, databases, generative AI tools, or other services. Any use of AI tools in peer review must be clearly disclosed in the review form or decision letter.</p>	
<p>Violations of Competing Interests policy</p>	<p>PLOS Competing Interests policy</p> <p>It is your responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● check reviewers for competing interests before inviting them to evaluate a manuscript ● declare your own competing interests, and if necessary, disqualify yourself from involvement in the assessment of a manuscript ● consider authors' competing interests when assessing the strength of the methodology and 	<p>A, R, EB</p>



	conclusions	
Violations of Human Subjects Research policy	PLOS Human Subjects Research policy	A
Violations of Manipulation of Publication Process policy	PLOS Manipulation of the Publication Process policy Also referred to as “paper mill” activity	A, R, EB
Violations of Plagiarism policy	PLOS Plagiarism policy PLOS uses Crossref Similarity Check , powered by iThenticate, to screen submitted content for originality. Plagiarism is checked for by the journal office , but if you notice something of concern please contact us.	A, R

Artificial Intelligence

Use by authors

While we do not prohibit use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, we do require that any use of AI tools must be fully declared and described. Please see our [Artificial Intelligence Tools and Technologies policy](#) for full details.

If you suspect undeclared AI tools were used to generate submission content, [contact](#) the journal office as soon as possible.



Use by reviewers and Editorial Board members

PLOS does not approve or condone the use of AI tools to generate peer review reports or write decision letters. AI tools can be used as a supplement to original content, for example in language editing or translation, and to help find reviewers by entering general search terms. However, **no whole or parts of submissions should be uploaded to AI tools** as noted in our [Ethical Peer Review policy](#).

The use of AI tools in peer review must be clearly disclosed in your decision letter. Below is a disclosure statement you could insert into a decision letter:

“AI tools were used in this decision letter for language editing. In accordance with journal policies on [Artificial Intelligence tools in peer review](#), no AI tool has been used for editorial evaluation of the submission content and no submission content has been uploaded to an AI tool by the handling editor.”

Links to more resources for Editors:

[PLOS Aging and Health](#) | [PLOS Biology](#) | [PLOS Climate](#) | [PLOS Complex Systems](#) | [PLOS Computational Biology](#) | [PLOS Digital Health](#) | [PLOS Ecosystems](#) | [PLOS Genetics](#) | [PLOS Global Public Health](#) | [PLOS Mental Health](#) | [PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases](#) | [PLOS One](#) | [PLOS Pathogens](#) | [PLOS Sustainability and Transformation](#) | [PLOS Water](#)

Need help? Contact customercare@plos.org