

The CRRC Ethical policy

(Last updated June 2021)

Ethical Guidelines for CRRC Publications

The CRRC is dedicated to integrity in scientific research. To safeguard that our publications' contribution to the scientific community is dependable and meets the highest ethical standards expected by the global scientific community, we have developed these codes of ethics to guide editors, authors and peer reviewers in understanding the standards they should follow in the publishing process.

Investigating cases of misconduct

If anyone has any concerns about potential misconduct within CRRC publications, they should immediately notify the Director's office via email on directorcrcc@africau.edu or the Dean's office on deancssthe@africau.edu.

The CRRC requests that suspicions or allegations of misconduct are reported directly and not solely by posting comments on blogs, social media or other third party websites. The identity of whistle-blowers is protected.

Diversity and inclusion principles

The CRRC requires the equal and respectful treatment of all people. The CRRC will not stand discrimination or bias based on sex or gender, disability, age, nationality, race, sexual orientation, belief system, political philosophy or economic status.

Behaviour contrary to these principles, where it can reasonably be interpreted that the individual is acting in the capacity of an Author, Reviewer or member of the Editorial Board will be judged misconduct and treated as a violation of our codes of ethics.

Author code of ethics

Authors must:

- present an accurate, original account of research performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance;
- when human subjects are investigated authors should seek approval from a named independent ethical committee (or include a statement that approval was not required from the committee, and why);

- ensure that any identifiable participants are shown the manuscript to be published before being asked to give informed consent if there is any doubt that anonymity can be maintained;
- accurately represent underlying data in the paper;
- present sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work;
- cite all relevant references;
- identify any hazards inherent in conducting the research;
- declare any conflicts of interest;
- ensure they have written and produced entirely original work and **ensure that where they have used the work, words and/or figures of others, this has been properly attributed and accurately quoted;**
- ensure that consent to use images has been given;
- not submit the same or similar article or substantially similar material, concurrently to any other journal or primary publication, nor do so until the outcome of their submission to the journal is known;
- avoid self-plagiarism, i.e. not submit the same or substantially similar material (data or text) as contained in any article, including review articles, that the author(s) have published previously;
- avoid fragmenting research to maximise the number of articles for publication;
- avoid libellous or defamatory statements in their work;
- limit authorship to, and include all, those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution or interpretation of the submitted work;
- ensure all contributors have approved the final version of the manuscript and its submission;
- provide in writing the complete agreement of all authors upon any changes to the authorship of manuscripts during the peer-review process;
- ensure research involving human subjects complies with the [Declaration of Helsinki](#) and, in particular, include a statement in the manuscript itself that the subjects have given their informed, written consent;
- report any significant error or inaccuracy in the work to the publisher as soon as it is discovered.

Should any author be found to be in breach of this code of ethics or guilty of research misconduct, the CRRC reserves the right to reject/retract or withdraw the paper and inform all interested parties including relevant editors and authors, the author's department head and/or institutional office of scientific misconduct.

Research misconduct

"Research misconduct" means fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.

- Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
- Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit.

- Research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion.

Source: *Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Research Integrity Annual Report 2006.*

Plagiarism includes self-plagiarism. Self-plagiarism (auto-plagiarism) is the publication of (or submission of) the same content in (or to) different journals. Plagiarism is not acceptable in Bioscientifica submissions. Plagiarized content will not be considered for publication.

Reviewer/referee code of ethics

The peer review process lies at the heart of academic publishing. The CRRC shares the view of many that all scholars wishing to publish in scholarly journals have an obligation to do a fair share of reviewing of submitted work of others.

Reviewers must:

- disclose any competing interests before agreeing to review a submission;
- evaluate each manuscript for its intellectual content without regard to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, political philosophy, citizenship, domicile or institutional affiliation of the authors;
- review manuscripts with reasonable speed and efficiency;
- treat the manuscript as a confidential document;
- conduct the review objectively and avoid any personal criticism of the author;
- express views clearly with supporting arguments
- inform the Editor of any substantial similarity between the manuscript and any other paper of which they have personal knowledge, whether published or concurrently under review elsewhere;
- comment on ethical standards concerning protection of patients or animals;
- inform the editor of suspected research misconduct (e.g. data fabrication).

Should any reviewer be found to be in breach of this code of ethics, the CRRC reserves the right to cease working with that contact and inform interested parties including relevant journal editors and authors, the author's department head and/or institutional office of scientific misconduct.

Editorial Board code of ethics

The Editor-in-Chief of a peer-reviewed journal is solely and independently responsible for deciding which articles should be accepted for publication. Where a journal has multiple co-Editors-in-Chief, the co-Editors-in-Chief are collectively responsible for deciding which articles should be accepted for publication. The Editor(s)-in-Chief may be guided by the policies of the Editorial Board and, while seeking guidance via peer review, may still reject a manuscript without review if considered inappropriate for the journal.

All Editors (including the Editor(s)-in-Chief) must:

- evaluate each manuscript for its intellectual content without regard to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, political philosophy, citizenship, domicile or institutional affiliation of the authors;
- not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than those involved in the publishing process as appropriate;
- disclose any potential conflict of interest;
- pass manuscripts in which they have potential conflicts of interests to another member of the editorial board to review and consider;
- not use privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review for personal advantage;
- on receiving a challenge to the authenticity/integrity of an article, consult the publisher and contribute to the investigation and responsive measures which follow;
- treat other members of the Editorial Board equally, and with dignity and respect.

Where a member of the Editorial Board has submitted a manuscript to the journal, the peer review process will be handled entirely independently from that Editor; they will not know who the handling editor or reviewers are. The Editor will declare their membership of the board in the declaration of interest section for any published manuscript.

Should any member of the Editorial Board (including an Editor-in-Chief) be found to be in breach of this code of ethics, they may be dismissed from the Editorial Board by the owner(s) of the journal.