

Publishing ethics of Toxicological Research

Researchers should conduct their research from research proposal to publication in line with best practices and codes of conduct of relevant professional bodies and/or national and international regulatory bodies.

1. Ethical responsibilities of authors

This journal is committed to upholding the integrity of the scientific record. This journal will follow the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines on how to deal with potential acts of misconduct.

Authors should refrain from misrepresenting research results which could damage the trust in the journal, the professionalism of scientific authorship, and ultimately the entire scientific endeavor.

Maintaining integrity of the research and its presentation can be achieved by following the rules of good scientific practice, which include:

- ♦ The manuscript has not been submitted to more than one journal for simultaneous consideration.
- ♦ The manuscript has not been published previously (partly or in full), unless the new work concerns an expansion of previous work (please provide transparency on the re-use of material to avoid the hint of text-recycling ('self-plagiarism')).
- ♦ A single study is not split up into several parts to increase the quantity of submissions and submitted to various journals or to one journal over time.
- ♦ No data have been fabricated or manipulated (including images) to support your conclusions.
- ♦ No data, text, or theories by others are presented as if they were the author's own ('plagiarism'). Proper acknowledgements to other works must be given (this includes material that is closely copied (near verbatim), summarized and/or paraphrased), quotation marks are used for verbatim copying of material, and permissions are secured for material that is copyrighted.
- ♦ Important note: the journal may use software to screen for plagiarism.
- ♦ Consent to submit has been received explicitly from all co-authors, as well as from the responsible authorities - tacitly or explicitly - at the institute/organization where the work has been carried out, before the work is submitted.
- ♦ Authors whose names appear on the submission have contributed sufficiently to the scientific work and therefore share collective responsibility and accountability for the results.
- ♦ Authors are strongly advised to ensure the correct author group, corresponding author, and order of authors at submission. Changes of authorship or in the order of authors are

not accepted after acceptance of a manuscript.

- ♦ Adding and/or deleting authors at revision stage may be justifiably warranted. A letter must accompany the revised manuscript to explain the role of the added and/or deleted author(s). Further documentation may be required to support your request.
- ♦ Requests for addition or removal of authors as a result of authorship disputes after acceptance are honored after formal notification by the institute or independent body and/or when there is agreement between all authors.
- ♦ Upon request authors should be prepared to send relevant documentation or data in order to verify the validity of the results. This could be in the form of raw data, samples, records, etc. Sensitive information in the form of confidential or proprietary data is excluded.

If there is a suspicion of misconduct, the journal will carry out an investigation following the COPE guidelines. If, after investigation, the allegation seems to raise valid concerns, the accused author will be contacted and given an opportunity to address the issue. If misconduct has been established beyond reasonable doubt, this may result in the Editor-in-Chief's implementation of the following measures, including, but not limited to:

- ♦ If the article is still under consideration, it may be rejected and returned to the author.
- ♦ If the article has already been published online, depending on the nature and severity of the infraction, either an erratum will be placed with the article or in severe cases retraction of the article will occur. The reason must be given in the published erratum or retraction note. Please note that retraction means that the paper is maintained on the platform, watermarked "retracted" and explanation for the retraction is provided in a note linked to the watermarked article.
- ♦ The author's institution may be informed.

2. Compliance with ethical standards

To ensure objectivity and transparency in research and to ensure that accepted principles of ethical and professional conduct have been followed, authors should include information regarding sources of funding, potential conflicts of interest (financial or non-financial), informed consent if the research involved human participants, and a statement on welfare of animals if the research involved animals.

Authors must include the potential conflicts of interest and sources of funding (if applicable) in a separate section entitled "Conflict of interest" or "Acknowledgements", respectively, before the References when submitting a paper: The corresponding author should prepare to collect documentation of compliance with ethical standards and send if requested during peer review or after publication.

The Editors reserve the right to reject manuscripts that do not comply with the above-

mentioned guidelines. The author will be held responsible for false statements or failure to fulfill the abovementioned guidelines.

2-1. Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest

Authors must disclose all relationships or interests that could have direct or potential influence or impart bias on the work. Although an author may not feel there is any conflict, disclosure of relationships and interests provides a more complete and transparent process, leading to an accurate and objective assessment of the work.

Awareness of a real or perceived conflict of interest is a perspective to which the readers are entitled. This is not meant to imply that a financial relationship with an organization that sponsored the research or compensation received for consultancy work is inappropriate.

Examples of potential conflicts of interests that are directly or indirectly related to the research may include but are not limited to the following:

- ♦ Research grants from funding agencies (please give the research funder and the grant number)
- ♦ Honoraria for speaking at symposia
- ♦ Financial support for attending symposia
- ♦ Financial support for educational programs
- ♦ Employment or consultation
- ♦ Support from a project sponsor
- ♦ Position on advisory board or board of directors or other type of management relationships
- ♦ Multiple affiliations
- ♦ Financial relationships, for example equity ownership or investment interest
- ♦ Intellectual property rights (e.g. patents, copyrights and royalties from such rights)
- ♦ Holdings of spouse and/or children that may have financial interest in the work

In addition, interests that go beyond financial interests and compensation (nonfinancial interests) that may be important to readers should be disclosed. These may include but are not limited to personal relationships or competing interests directly or indirectly tied to this research, or professional interests or personal beliefs that may influence your research.

The corresponding author collects the conflict of interest disclosure forms from all authors. In author collaborations where formal agreements for representation allow it, it is sufficient for the corresponding author to sign the disclosure form on behalf of all authors.

2-2. Research involving human participants and/or animals

1) Statement of Human Rights

When reporting studies that involve human participants, authors should include a statement

that the studies have been approved by the appropriate institutional and/or national research ethics committee and have been performed in accordance with the ethical standards as laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

If doubt exists whether the research was conducted in accordance with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration or comparable standards, the authors must explain the reasons for their approach, and demonstrate that the independent ethics committee or institutional review board explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study.

The following statements should be included in the text of the Materials and methods section: "All procedures were approved by the institutional research ethics committee, and performed in accordance with the recommendations of the Declaration of Helsinki on biomedical research involving human subjects."

2) Statement on the Welfare of Animals

The welfare of animals used for research must be respected. When reporting experiments on animals, authors should indicate whether the international, national, and/or institutional guidelines for the care and use of animals have been followed, and that the studies have been approved by a research ethics committee at the institution or practice at which the studies were conducted (where such a committee exists).

For studies with animals, the following statement should be included in the text of the Materials and methods section: "All procedures were approved by the institutional ethics committee for the care and use of animals."

3) Informed consent

All individuals have individual rights that are not to be infringed. Individual participants in studies have, for example, the right to decide what happens to the (identifiable) personal data gathered, to what they have said during a study or an interview, as well as to any photograph that was taken.

Hence it is important that all participants gave their informed consent in writing prior to inclusion in the study. Identifying details (names, dates of birth, identity numbers and other information) of the participants that were studied should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, and genetic profiles unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the participant (or parent or guardian if the participant is incapable) gave written informed consent for publication. Complete anonymity is difficult to achieve in some cases, and informed consent should be obtained if there is any doubt.

For example, masking the eye region in photographs of participants is inadequate protection of anonymity. If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, such as in genetic profiles, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort scientific meaning.

The following statement should be included: "Written informed consent was obtained from

all subjects.”

3. Appeals and complaints

The below procedure applies to appeals to editorial decisions, complaints about failure of processes such as long delays in handling papers and complaints about publication ethics. The complaint should in first instance be handled by the Editor-in-Chief(s) responsible for the journal and/or the Editor who handled the paper.

Complaint about scientific content, e.g. an appeal against rejection

The Editor-in-Chief or Handling Editor considers the authors' argument, the reviewer reports and decides whether

- The decision to reject should stand;
- Another independent opinion is required
- The appeal should be considered.

The complainant is informed of the decision with an explanation if appropriate.

Decisions on appeals are final and new submissions take priority over appeals.

Complaint about processes, e.g. time taken to review

The Editor-in-Chief together with the Handling Editor (where appropriate) and/or in-house contact (where appropriate) will investigate the matter. The complainant will be given appropriate feedback. Feedback is provided to relevant stakeholders to improve processes and procedures.

Complaint about publication ethics, e.g., researcher's author's, or reviewer's conduct

The Editor-in-Chief or Handling Editor follows guidelines published by the Committee on Publication Ethics of Springer-Nature. The Editor-in-Chief or Handling Editor may ask the publisher via their in-house contact for advice on difficult or complicated cases. The Editor-in-Chief or Handling Editor decides on a course of action and provides feedback to the complainant. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the handling of their complaint, he or she can submit the complaint to the Committee on Publication Ethics of Springer-Nature.