

Newer Horizons in Human Excellence

Publication Ethics Policy

Publication Ethics Statement

The editors of this journal enforce a rigorous peer-review process together with strict ethical policies and standards to ensure to add high quality scientific works to the field of scholarly publication. Unfortunately, cases of plagiarism, data falsification, image manipulation, inappropriate authorship credit, and the like, do arise. The editors of Awareness take such publishing ethics issues very seriously and are trained to process in such cases with a zero-tolerance policy.

Authors wishing to publish their papers in *Awareness* must abide to the following:

- Any facts that might be perceived as a possible conflict of interest of the author(s) must be disclosed in the paper prior to submission.
- Authors should accurately present their research findings and include an objective discussion of the significance of their findings.
- Data and methods used in the research need to be presented in sufficient detail in the paper, so that other researchers can replicate the work.
- Raw data should preferably be publicly deposited by the authors before submission of their manuscript. Authors need to at least have the raw data readily available for presentation to the referees and the editors of the journal, if requested. Authors need to ensure appropriate measures are taken so that raw data is retained in full for a reasonable time after publication.
- Simultaneous submission of manuscripts to more than one journal is not tolerated.
- The journal accepts exact translations of previously published work. All submissions of translations must conform with our policies on translations.
- If errors and inaccuracies are found by the authors after publication of their paper, they need to be promptly communicated to the editors of this journal so that appropriate actions can be taken.
- Your manuscript should not contain any information that has already been published. If you include already published figures or images, please obtain the necessary permission from the copyright holder to publish under the CC-BY license.

- Plagiarism, data fabrication and image manipulation are not tolerated.
 - o **Plagiarism is not acceptable** in **Awareness** submissions.

Plagiarism includes copying text, ideas, images, or data from another source, even from your own publications, without giving any credit to the original source.

Reuse of text that is copied from another source must be between quotes and the original source must be cited. If a study's design or the manuscript's structure or language has been inspired by previous works, these works must be explicitly cited.

All **Awareness** submissions are checked for plagiarism using the industry standard software *iThenticate*. If plagiarism is detected during the peer review process, the manuscript may be rejected. If plagiarism is detected after publication, an investigation will take place and action taken in accordance with our policies.

• <u>Image files must not be manipulated or adjusted in any way</u> that could lead to misinterpretation of the information provided by the original image.

<u>Irregular manipulation includes</u>: 1) introduction, enhancement, moving, or removing features from the original image; 2) grouping of images that should obviously be presented separately (e.g., from different parts of the same gel, or from different gels); or 3) modifying the contrast, brightness or color balance to obscure, eliminate or enhance some information.

If irregular image manipulation is identified and confirmed during the peer review process, we may reject the manuscript. If irregular image manipulation is identified and confirmed after publication, we may correct or retract the paper.

Our in-house editors will investigate any allegations of publication misconduct and may contact the authors' institutions or funders if necessary. If evidence of misconduct is found, appropriate action will be taken to correct or retract the publication. Authors are expected to comply with the best ethical publication practices when publishing with *Awareness*.

Citation Policy

Authors should ensure that where material is taken from other sources (including their own published writing) the source is clearly cited and that where appropriate permission is obtained.

Authors should not engage in excessive self-citation of their own work.

Authors should not copy references from other publications if they have not read the cited work.

Authors should not preferentially cite their own or their friends', peers', or institution's publications.

Authors should not cite advertisements or advertorial material.

In accordance with COPE guidelines, we expect that "original wording taken directly from publications by other researchers should appear in quotation marks with the appropriate citations." This condition also applies to an author's own work. COPE have produced a discussion document on <u>citation</u> <u>manipulation</u> with recommendations for best practice.

Reviewer Suggestions

During the submission process, please suggest three potential reviewers with the appropriate expertise to review the manuscript. The editors will not necessarily approach these referees. Please provide detailed contact information (address, homepage, phone, e-mail address). The proposed referees should neither be current collaborators of the co-authors nor have published with any of the co-authors of the manuscript within the last three years. Proposed reviewers should be from different institutions to the authors. You may identify appropriate Editorial Board members of the journal as potential reviewers. You may suggest reviewers from among the authors that you frequently cite in your paper.

Preprints and Conference Papers

Awareness may consider submissions that were previously made available as preprints provided that they have not undergone peer review. A preprint is a draft version of a paper made available online before submission to a journal.

Expanded and high-quality conference papers can be considered as articles if they fulfill the following requirements: (1) the paper should be expanded to the size of a research article; (2) the conference paper should be cited and noted on the first page of the paper; (3) if the authors do not hold the copyright of the published conference paper, authors should seek the appropriate permission from the copyright holder; (4) authors are asked to disclose that it is conference paper in their cover letter and include a statement on what has been changed compared to the original conference paper. Except in the Inaugural Issue or Special Issues, *Awareness* will not publish pilot studies or studies with inadequate statistical analysis.

Authorship

Awareness follows the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (<u>ICMJE</u>) guidelines which state that, in order to qualify for authorship of a manuscript, the following criteria should be observed:

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the work or reviewing it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Those who contributed to the work but do not qualify for authorship should be listed in the acknowledgments. More detailed guidance on authorship is given by <u>the International Council of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)</u>.

Any change to the author list should be approved by all authors including any who have been removed from the list. The corresponding author should act as a point of contact between the editor and the other authors and should keep co-authors informed and involve them in major decisions about the publication. We reserve the right to request confirmation that all authors meet the authorship conditions.

Editorial Independence

Lack of Interference with Editorial Decisions

Editorial independence is of utmost importance and MDP| does not interfere with editorial decisions. All articles published by *Awareness* are peer reviewed and assessed by our independent editorial boards, and *Awareness* staff are not involved in decisions to accept manuscripts. When making an editorial decision, we expect the academic editor to make their decision based only upon:

- The suitability of selected reviewers;
- Adequacy of reviewer comments and author response;
- Overall scientific quality of the paper.

In our journal, in every aspect of operation, *Awareness* policies are informed by the mission to make science and research findings open and accessible as widely and rapidly as possible.

Editors and Editorial Staff as Authors

Editorial staff or editors shall not be involved in processing their own academic work. Submissions authored by editorial staff/editors will be assigned to at least two independent outside reviewers. Decisions will be made by other Editorial Board Members who do not have a conflict of interest with the author. Journal staff are not involved in the processing of their own work submitted to *Awareness*.

Conflicts of Interest Policy

According to the ICJME, "Authors should avoid entering into agreements with study sponsors, both forprofit and non-profit, that interfere with authors' access to all of the study's data or that interfere with their ability to analyse and interpret the data and to prepare and publish manuscripts independently when and where they choose."

All authors must disclose all relationships or interests that could inappropriately influence or bias their work. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include but are noted to financial interests (such as membership, employment, consultancies, stocks/shares ownership, honoraria, grants or other funding, paid expert testimonies and patent-licensing arrangements) and non-financial interests (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, personal beliefs).

Authors can disclose potential conflicts of interest via the online submission system during the submission process. The corresponding author must include a summary statement in the manuscript in a separate section "Conflicts of Interest" placed just before the reference list. The statement should reflect all the collected potential conflicts of interest disclosures in the form.

See below for examples of disclosures:

Conflicts of Interest: Author A has received research grants from Company A. Author B has received a speaker honorarium from Company X and owns stocks in Company Y. Author C has been involved as a consultant and expert witness in Company Z.

Author D is the inventor of patent X.

If no conflicts exist, the authors should state:

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Promoting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness within the Awareness Journal

Our Managing Editor and other Editors are committed to appointing a diverse expert Editorial Board. Active promotion of Equity, Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Justice are also reflective in our multi-national and inclusive workplace. We are proud to create equal opportunities without regard to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, socio-economic status, or national origin. There is no place for discrimination in our workplace all stakeholders of the *Awareness* journal are required to uphold these principles in high regard.