

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

### **ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND STATEMENTS ON THE PUBLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC WORKS**

The process of publishing a scientific work involves, beside the publisher, many subjects who play a crucial role for the success of the project. Therefore, every person involved is required to comply with ethical standards at every stage of the process. The Publisher aims at enforcing and defending the rules of an ethical behavior, by adopting and promoting the standards indicated in the *Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal* del COPE – Committee on Publication Ethics (*Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors*), available at the link:

[http://publicationethics.org/files/Code\\_of\\_conduct\\_for\\_journal\\_editors\\_Mar11.pdf](http://publicationethics.org/files/Code_of_conduct_for_journal_editors_Mar11.pdf)

Below is a summary of our commitment and our requests to directors, members of the various editorial bodies, peer-reviewers and authors.

### **CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF JOURNALS AND DUTIES OF THE PUBLISHER**

The Publisher adopts internationally shared practices and demands that the Editorial Board of the Journal verifies their application. It only accepts original publications – drawn up in compliance with copyright laws and not simultaneously submitted to other journals for evaluation – that follow high editing standards. Furthermore, in cooperation with the Editorial Board, the Publisher promotes and controls the use of peer-review as method of selecting articles and essays. It favors the independence of research, condemns copyright infringement and plagiarism. Together with the Editorial Board, it further undertakes to make corrections to any errors found in published articles or, where necessary, proceeds to withdraw them. Finally, it declares itself open to all forms of promotion of culture and research, including Open Access publications.

### **DUTIES OF SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR AND EDITORIAL BOARD**

The Editorial Board and the Chief Editor are bound to act in compliance with COPE guidelines. In particular, the Chief Editor and the Editorial Board members of the Journal are solely responsible for the decision to publish an article. In selecting the material for each issue, the Editorial Board, cooperating with the Editor, is guided by the editorial policies of the Journal and is bound by the current legal provisions on defamation, copyright infringement and plagiarism. In making decisions about the publication of the papers invited by or submitted to the Journal, the Editorial Board and the

Editor are supported by at least two reviewers chosen from among academic scholars, external to the Scientific Committee, on the basis of their publications and their disciplinary field. The review is conducted by using the double-blind peer review procedure. The manuscripts received for review are treated as confidential and anonymous (without considering in any way elements such as race, sex, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, scientific, academic or political orientation of the authors). The review, also anonymous, is entrusted to scholars of competence (external to the Scientific Committee of the Journal) and performed according to scientific standards stated in the Review Form for Reviewers adopted by the Journal. The Reviewer express assessment with the help of clear and documented arguments, considering the prerequisites set by the Editor. The assessment obtained by reviewing is transmitted anonymously to authors only, and is not used in any case for personal gain. The Review Forms are stored in a private archive, which is only accessible to the Scientific Director (the Chief Editor) of the Journal and to the National Agency of the University Evaluation and Research (ANVUR).

The Journal publishes each year the list of Reviewers. The members of the Editorial Board are entitled to share information about each manuscript received exclusively with the corresponding author, the Reviewers (or potential Reviewers), the editorial advisors, the Chief Editor and the Publisher, as appropriate. If the Editorial Board, in cooperation with the Editor, detects or receives a report of a significant problem regarding errors or inaccuracies, conflict of interest or plagiarism in a published article, it will promptly notify it to the author and to the Publisher, taking the necessary actions to clarify the matter, as well. After a careful examination of the matter, if an error or an abuse has been committed by the author, the Editorial Board will proceed to withdraw the paper or to publish a retraction or “errata corrige”, according to the COPE guidelines.

## **DUTIES OF REVIEWERS**

Reviewers assist the Editorial Board in decisions regarding the publication of the papers and can indirectly help an author improving his/her manuscript through a specific section provided in the evaluation form. The selected Reviewer, who does not feel qualified to review the assigned manuscript, or who knows that s/he is unable to perform the review within the required time, must notify the Editorial Board of his/her inability to take part in the process. Received manuscripts must be treated as confidential documents. They must not be shown to or discussed with anyone who has not been previously authorized by the Editorial Board. The review must be conducted according to objective parameters, strictly observing what is required in the evaluation form. Reviewer’s personal criticism is not permitted. Reviewers must support each opinion expressed with clear and documented arguments. Particularly important, during the review process, is to ascertain that there is no bibliographic material relevant to the paper that the author failed to mention. Each declaration, observation or argument of the Reviewers should preferably be accompanied by a corresponding quotation, by way of example, from the evaluated text. Reviewers must report to the Editorial Board any substantial or partial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under examination and another published work of which s/he has personal awareness. Information or ideas drawn from the review of a manuscript must be kept confidential and not used for personal benefit. Reviewers must not, under any circumstances, accept to conduct a review when they recognize in the manuscript the presence of elements that could cloud their judgment, such as relationships of competition,

collaboration, or any other type of connection with authors, companies or authorities related to the object of the manuscript.

The double-blind review process requires the author identity to be concealed from the Reviewer, and vice-versa, throughout the review process. If, due to any accidental circumstance, a Reviewer becomes aware of the identity of the author during the review process, s/he must promptly report it to the Editorial Board, which will intervene in the appropriate ways to ensure the objectivity and impartiality of the judgment, possibly entrusting another scholar with the review of the manuscript in question. In order to protect the Reviewers, the Editorial Board undertakes, for its own part, to maintain an absolute confidentiality regarding their identity even once the review process is completed.

## **DUTIES OF AUTHORS**

Authors must ensure that their works are completely original and that, if the work and/or words of other authors are used, they are appropriately paraphrased or quoted literally and accompanied by a precise bibliographic reference. More broadly, Authors are obliged to cite any publication that has influenced the proposed work. Authors of papers based on original research must present an accurate account of their work, as well as an objective discussion of its meaning. The data presented by the research should be illustrated precisely, in detail and with accurate references in order to allow others to verify the arguments. Fraudulent or intentionally incorrect declarations constitute unethical behavior and are deemed unacceptable.

Manuscripts submitted for publication must not have been published as copyrighted material in other journals. Unpublished translations of one's own works published in another language are allowed, if compatible with the copyright and economic exploitation rules agreed by the Author with the publisher of the first edition of the text. During the review process, manuscripts must not be submitted to other journals for publication. By sending a manuscript, authors accept that, if the paper is approved, all the rights of economic exploitation, without space limits and with all the methods and technologies currently existing and/or developed in the future, are transferred to the Scientific Director (Chief Editor) of the Journal – who in turn will transfer them to the Publisher. The intellectual property of a manuscript is limited to those who have contributed significantly to it, i.e. those who have actively participated in its conception, development and drafting or who have intervened decisively in the interpretation of the data behind the research. These people must be listed as “co-authors”. Anyone who has contributed to other important aspects of the research project must be indicated in the acknowledgments.

The Author is responsible for communications with the Editorial Board and, therefore, s/he must ensure that all co-authors are included in the manuscript, that they have seen and approved its final version and that they all agree on submitting it for publication. Each Author will be asked to complete and sign a consent form. Authors must indicate in the manuscript any financial conflicts or other types of conflict of interest that may have influenced the results or the interpretation of the data behind the research. All sources of financial support to the project must be indicated. If an Author finds significant errors or inaccuracies in the published manuscript, s/he has the duty to promptly notify it to the Editorial Board or the Publisher and cooperate with them in order to retract or correct it.

## **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

A conflict of interest occurs when Reviewers or members of the Editorial Board have personal or economic relationships with an author (or his institution), which may inappropriately influence their behavior and decisions. This conflict occurs even if they believe that such relationships do not affect them. The Scientific Director (Chief Editor) of the Journal, who supervises the process of selection and acceptance of the papers, is entrusted with the evaluation and management of similar situations. In order to guarantee the correctness and transparency of the publication process, the Scientific Director (Chief Editor) must intervene either by rejecting the contribution or by requesting its evaluation, or re-evaluation, via the double-blind peer review process. Furthermore, Authors might be asked for a declaration on the matter, as a further precautionary measure.