

# Asian Journal of Tourism Research

## Publishing Ethics Guidelines

*“The publication of an article in a peer-reviewed journal is an essential building block in the development of a coherent and respected network of knowledge. It is a direct reflection of the quality of the work of the authors and the institutions that support them. Peer-reviewed articles support and embody the scientific method.” (Elsevier, Publishing Ethics)*

These guidelines have been developed as means to outline the standards of ethical behavior expected from all parties involved with the Asian Journal of Tourism Research (AJTR), including the authors, the Editor-in-Chief and associate editors, the peer reviewers and the publisher.

### Duties of the Publisher

The AJTR recognizes, and strives to ensure, that the publisher upholds the following duties in all aspects of the publication:

1. **Guardianship of the scholarly record:** The publisher plays an important role in supporting the efforts made by the AJTR editors and the voluntary work performed by peer reviewers to ensure the integrity of the journal. In this way, the publisher plays a supportive and nurturing role throughout the entire process, and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the publication runs according to industry standards and best practices. The AJTR is adopting these guidelines and all of its procedures as means to support its editors, reviewers and authors in performing their duties to the highest level. The AJTR endeavors to engage and learn from other publishers and industry as we perform our ethical duties and maintain up-to-date practices, applying the highest level of standards to all ethical matters, errors and retractions.
2. **Safeguarding editorial independence:** The AJTR is committed to ensuring independent editorial decision making, which is free from the capital influences of potential advertising, reprinting or other commercial revenues.
3. **Collaborate to set industry best practice:** We provide editors with technical, procedural and legal support, encouraging editors to communicate with other journals and publishers where it may be useful. The AJTR educates researchers on publishing ethics by providing this set of guidelines and ensuring all researchers are familiar with them, particularly early career researchers.

# Duties of Editor(s)

The AJTR recognizes, and strives to ensure, that the Editor-in-Chief and associate editors (herewith referred to as “the editor[s]”) uphold the following duties in all aspects of the publication:

- 1. Publication decisions:** The AJTR acknowledges that the editor(s) is solely and independently responsible for the selection of the articles to be published within it. The validation of the work in question, its importance to academia and its readers, and the integrity of the journal, must and will always underwrite these decisions. The editor(s) may consult with other parties, including the journal’s editorial board, and is constrained by legal requirements including libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism.
- 2. Peer review:** The editor(s) of the AJTR will ensure that the blind peer review process is fair, unbiased and timely. All articles will be reviewed by between two to three external and independent reviewers. The editor(s) has the discretion to engage additional opinions if necessary.

The AJTR employs a double-blind peer review process. Thus, both author and reviewer are unknown to one another. Every submitted paper will go through a review process that involves a minimum of two reviewers and a maximum of three reviewers. The number of reviewers is at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief and the review will take around six weeks.

Reviewers will be identified according to their relevant expertise and measures will be taken to avoid the selection of fraudulent peer reviewers, including by following industry best practices. The AJTR editor(s) will review all disclosures of conflicts of interest (although these occurrences are somewhat mitigated by the blind process).

- 3. Fair play:** The editor(s) will evaluate submitted manuscripts for their intellectual content regardless of the race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, citizenship status or political philosophy of the author(s). The editor(s) will ensure that peer reviewers and authors have a clear and complete understanding of what is expected of them, and will encourage a transparent and honest process. The editor(s) will use the AJTR’s online submission system, as well as the emails, for all communications regarding the journal. The editor(s) shall also establish, in partnership with the publisher, a transparent mechanism for any complaints and appeals against editorial decisions.
- 4. Journal metrics:** The editor(s) will not influence the journal’s ranking by falsely increasing any journal metric. In particular, the editor(s) will not request or require that references are included for anything other than genuine scholarly reasons, nor will authors be required to include references to the editor’s own articles, products or services.
- 5. Confidentiality:** The editor(s) will protect the confidentiality of all material submitted to the journal and all communications between reviewers, unless otherwise agreed by all parties involved. In certain circumstance, such as investigating suspected misconduct, the editor(s) may share limited information with editors of other journals.  
The editor(s) will protect reviewers’ identities.  
The editor(s) will not replicate unpublished materials that have been disclosed in a submitted article without written consent by the author(s). Privileged information or ideas obtained through the review process will be kept confidential and will not be used for the personal advantage of any editor(s) or reviewer(s).
- 6. Declaration of competing interests:** Any potential editorial conflicts of interest must be declared to the publisher in writing and it is up to the publisher’s discretion as to whether such declarations are published in the journal.

The editor(s) must not be involved in decisions about papers which they themselves have written, which family members or colleagues have written, or which relate to products or services that the editor(s) has any interest in. Any such submission must follow the AJTR's usual procedures, except the blind peer review process must be handled independently of the relevant author/editor and there must be a clear statement to this effect on any such paper that is published.

- 7. Vigilance over the published record:** The editor(s) will safeguard the integrity of the AJTR by reviewing and assessing reported or suspected misconduct in partnership with the publisher, including research, publication, reviewer and editorial misconduct. Such measures will include contacting the author of the article and giving due consideration to the claims made, and may also include further communication to relevant institutions and research bodies. The editor(s) may make appropriate use of systems that detect misconduct, including plagiarism.

When presented with convincing evidence of misconduct, the editor(s) will coordinate with the publisher to arrange the publication of a correction, retraction, expression of concern or other method as and where relevant.

## Duties of Reviewers

The AJTR recognizes, and strives to ensure, that all reviewers uphold the following duties in all aspects of the publication:

- 1. Contribution to editorial decisions:** The double-blind peer review process supports the editor(s) in making editorial decisions, as well as the author in improving the paper. Peer review is integral to the scientific method and formal scholarly communication. The AJTR expects that our reviewers treat all authors and their work as they would like to be treated, using polite language and good etiquette in all communications. Where a reviewer is unqualified, unfit, or unable to review the manuscript, they should notify the editor and decline to participate in the process.
- 2. Confidentiality:** Any manuscripts submitted for review shall be treated as confidential. Reviewers will not share information about the paper with anyone. The double-blind peer review process shall prevent any direct communication between the authors and the reviewers. The editor(s) may encourage discussion with colleagues and/or co-review exercises, but this should be discussed to ensure confidentiality is observed and that all participants in such activities receive relevant credit. Unpublished materials that are cited in a submitted paper must not be used in a reviewer's own research without the explicit written consent of the author(s). Furthermore, privileged information obtained through the double-blind peer review process must be kept confidential and not used for any party's personal advantage.
- 3. Alertness to ethical issues:** A reviewer shall be aware of and bring any ethical issues to the attention of the editor(s), including substantial overlap between the reviewed manuscript and any other published paper. Any observation, derivation or argument that has been previously published must be accompanied by the relevant citation (refer to Author's Guidelines for more information).
- 4. Standards of objectivity and competing interests:** Reviewers should maintain objectivity at all times and be aware of any personal bias when reviewing a paper. Personal criticism of the

author is inappropriate in this setting, and will not be an acceptable form of communication. Reviewers must articulate their views clearly and with supporting arguments where necessary.

Reviewers should consult with the editor(s) if they have potential conflicts of interest with any of the authors, companies or institutions connected to the papers. Furthermore, the reviewer can only suggest that the author includes citations to their own work for genuine scientific reasons, and not for the intention of increasing their own citation count or visibility of their work.

## Duties of Authors

The AJTR recognizes, and strives to ensure, that authors uphold the following duties in all aspects of the publication:

- 1. Reporting standards:** Authors submitting original research should portray an accurate account of the work performed, and an objective discussion of its results. All data must be represented accurately and the paper must include enough detail and references to permit others to replicate their work. Fraudulent or purposefully inaccurate statements constitutes unethical behavior which is unacceptable.

All titles, including working titles, should be accurate and objective, clearly representing the content of the article.

- 2. Data access and retention:** Authors may be requested to provide the data which supports their paper for review and to comply with the open data requirements of the AJTR. As such, authors should be prepared for this request for access and should retain such data for a reasonable number of years after publication.

- 3. Originality and acknowledgement of sources:** All works must be entirely original, and if the work or words of others have been used, then this must be appropriately cited or quoted, with permission obtained where necessary.

Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must be given, and authors should cite any publications that have influenced their reported work in the Acknowledgments section. Only resources and publications that have been directly cited in the main body of the manuscript shall be listed in the Reference List, and likewise, anything appearing in the Reference List must be cited in the main body.

Where an author has obtained information privately, via conversation, correspondence or discussion, this information can only be used with the written permission from the source.

Plagiarism in all its forms – including, passing off another’s paper as the author’s own, copying or paraphrasing without reference, and/or claiming results from research conducted by others – is unethical and unacceptable.

- 4. Multiple, redundant or concurrent publications:** An author should not publish manuscripts which describe the same research in more than one journal. Submitting the research to more than one journal constitutes unethical behavior and is unacceptable. Furthermore, an author should not submit a paper which has already been published, except in the form of an abstract or as part of a lecture or academic thesis.

However, the publication of some kinds of articles can be justifiable (clinical guidelines, translations etc.) if certain conditions are met, including when the authors and editors of the journals concerned agree to secondary publication. In this case, the primary reference must be cited in the second publication.

5. **Confidentiality:** The author must possess written permission if using information obtained in the course of confidential services, such as referencing manuscripts or grant applications.

6. **Authorship of the paper:** Authorship must be limited to those who have made significant contribution to the conception, execution or interpretation of the submitted study. Anybody who meets this criterion should be listed as a co-author.

Where others have also participated but in less substantive aspects, they should be recognized in the Acknowledgements section.

The lead author should ensure that all co-authors are appropriate, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper for publication.

Authors are expected to carefully consider the list and order of authors before submission, as only under exceptional circumstances will the editor(s) consider addition, deletion or rearrangement of authors after the manuscript has been submitted. All authors must agree to any additions, removals or rearrangements.

In the event of co-authorship of a manuscript, authors will take collective responsibility. Each individual author is accountable for the accuracy and integrity of any and all parts of the work.

7. **Hazards and human or animal subjects:** The author(s) must clearly identify any hazardous chemicals, procedures or equipment that was used in the research.

If animal or human subjects were used in the research, the author(s) must include a statement that procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and guidelines, and that the relevant institutional committee(s) have approved them. This should also include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained from all human subjects and that the privacy rights of these subjects are observed.

The author should ensure that work with human subjects has been carried out in accordance with The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association (Declaration of Helsinki); and work with animals should comply with the ARRIVE guidelines, in accordance with the U.K. Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 or EU Directive 2010/63/EU or the U.S. Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the Animal Welfare Act where applicable.

Where an author(s) includes case details, personal information or images of patients, appropriate consent, permission and releases must be obtained. Written consents must be retained by the author and copies provided to the AJTR on request.

8. **Declaration of competing interests:** A conflict of interest can arise when there is “a divergence between an individual’s private interests (competing interests) and his or her responsibilities to scientific and publishing activities, such that a reasonable observer might wonder if the individual’s behavior or judgment was motivated by considerations of his or her competing interests” (World Association of Medical Editors). In order to ensure transparency, all authors should disclose financial and personal relationships that could be viewed as potentially influencing their work. Furthermore, all sources of financial support or sponsorship for the research must be disclosed, as well as any decision-making role these sources played in the design, collection, analysis and interpretation of data, in the writing of the report and/or the decision to submit it for publication.

Some common conflicts of interest arising in publish include: employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/ registrations and grants or other funding. All such conflicts, as well as others not stated, must be disclosed as early as possible in the publishing process.

9. **Notification of Fundamental Errors:** If an author(s) discovers any significant error or errors in their work, it is their obligation to notify the editor(s) or publisher as soon as possible and to then work with them to retract or correct the paper if necessary. If a third party notifies the

journal that there is an error, it is the obligation of the author to cooperate with the editor(s) to resolve the issue, including providing relevant evidence if appropriate.

**10. Image integrity:** Enhancing, obscuring, moving, removing, or introducing new features within an image submitted as part of a manuscript is unacceptable. Certain adjustments are acceptable, as long as they do not obscure or eliminate any information that is present in the original, including altering the brightness, contrast and/or color balance, and improving clarity. Any additional manipulations will be considered as unethical and will be dealt with accordingly.

Author(s) need to comply with the AJTR's specific policy for supplying images and tables, as outlined in the Authors Guidelines.