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### **Publication ethics and publication malpractice statement**

Upon a paper submission, all authors are required to make themselves familiar with the **EC3 Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement**.

## **EC3 Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement**

The EC3 Organization and the EC3 Conference Organizers are committed to upholding the highest standards of publication ethics and taking all possible measures against publication malpractices. Our Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement follows the recommendations and best practice principles, as articulated e.g., in COPE's Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors (see <https://publicationethics.org/>). The Statement has been cross-checked to ensure compliance with Elsevier policies; other existing statements have also influenced the development of this Statement.

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Conformance to standards of ethical behaviour is expected of all parties involved: Authors, Reviewers, Editors, and the Publisher.

### **Duties of Authors**

#### **Originality and reporting standards**

Authors of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed and the results, followed by an objective discussion of the significance of the work. The manuscript should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.

Authors should ensure that their work is original, and if the work or works of others have been used, this has been appropriately acknowledged. Publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the work reported in the manuscript should also be cited. Papers describing the same research should not be published in multiple primary publications. Submission of a manuscript to more than one conference constitutes unethical publishing behaviour. Plagiarism in all its forms (e.g., "passing off" another's paper as the author's own, copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of another's paper (without attribution), to claiming results from research conducted by others) constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable. The corresponding author should ensure that there is a full consensus of all co-authors in approving the final version of the paper and its submission for publication. Furthermore, the corresponding author must sign their paper's EC3 Copyright Transfer Agreement form.

#### **Acknowledgement of sources**

Authors should ensure that they have properly acknowledged the work of others and cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work. Information obtained privately (from conversation, correspondence or discussion with third parties) must not be used or reported without explicit, written permission from the source. Authors should not use information obtained while providing confidential services, such as refereeing manuscripts or grant applications unless they have obtained the explicit written permission of the author(s) of the work involved in these services.

All sources of financial support for the work should be disclosed, including the grant or other reference numbers, if any.

### **Authorship and contributorship**

Persons who meet the following authorship criteria should be listed as authors in the manuscript, as they must be able to take public responsibility for the content:

- (i) Made significant contributions to the conception, design, execution, data acquisition, or analysis/interpretation of the study; and
- (ii) Drafted the manuscript or revised it critically for important intellectual content; and
- (iii) Have seen and approved the final version of the paper and agreed to its submission for publication.

Persons who made substantial contributions to the work reported in the manuscript (such as technical help, writing and editing assistance, and general support) but who do not meet the criteria for authorship must not be listed as authors, but should be acknowledged in the "Acknowledgements" section after their written permission to be named has been obtained.

The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors (according to the above definition) and no inappropriate co-authors are included in the list of authors and verify that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the manuscript and agreed to its submission for publication.

### **Disclosure and conflicts of interest**

For EC3 2022 and subsequent events, authors should—at the earliest stage possible (generally by submitting a disclosure form at the time of submission and including a statement in the manuscript)—disclose any conflicts of interest that might be construed to influence the results or their interpretation in the manuscript. Examples of potential conflicts of interest that should be disclosed include financial ones such as honoraria, educational grants or other funding, participation in speakers' bureaus, membership, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, or other equity interest, and paid expert testimony or patent-licensing arrangements; as well as non-financial ones such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge or beliefs in the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript.

### **Hazards and human or animal subjects**

If the work involves chemicals, procedures or equipment that have any unusual hazards inherent in their use, the authors must clearly identify these in the manuscript. If the work involves the use of animals or human participants, the authors should ensure that all procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and that the appropriate institutional committee(s) has approved them; the manuscript should contain a statement to this effect. Authors should also include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human participants. The privacy rights of human participants must always be observed.

### **Engagement in the review process**

The corresponding author, and by extension all authors, must cooperate fully with the Editor in the review process by responding promptly to editors' requests for clarifications in any relevant matter. In the case of a first decision of "revisions necessary", authors should respond to the reviewers' comments systematically, point by point, and in a timely manner, revising and re-submitting their manuscript to the conference by the deadline given.

## **Contribution to peer review**

EC3 believes that anybody or institution that wish to contribute to the scientific process is also obligated to do a fair share of reviewing. Authors should thus expect that they may be requested to participate in the peer review process and abide to EC3's ethical principles.

## **Duties of Reviewers (EC3 Scientific Committee)**

### **Contribution to editorial decisions**

Peer review assists editors in making editorial decisions and, through editorial communications with authors, may assist authors in improving their manuscripts. Peer review is essential to formal scholarly communication and lies at the heart of the scientific endeavor. EC3 is committed to ensuring integrity in the peer review process. Peer reviewers are expected to comply with the COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers in several aspects described below, including respecting the confidentiality of peer review and not revealing any manuscript details or communications related to it during or after the peer review process.

### **Review acceptance and standards of objectivity**

When approached to review, the reviewers should only agree to review if they have the necessary expertise to assess the manuscript and can be unbiased in their assessment; otherwise, the Editor should be promptly notified. If the reviewers feel qualified to judge a particular manuscript, they should agree to review only if able to return a review within the proposed or mutually agreed time frame (which is very important for conference proceeding publications). Any invited referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should immediately notify the editors (EC3 Program Chair and Area Chairs) and decline the invitation to review, so that alternative reviewers can be contacted. If circumstances change during the review process and the reviewer cannot fulfil your original agreement or requires an extension, the Editor should also be promptly notified.

Reviews should be conducted accurately, objectively, and constructively, providing observations and feedback that assist editors in evaluating and authors in improving their manuscript. The review should be specific in critique, provide a fair, honest, and unbiased assessment of the strengths and weaknesses, and deliver supporting evidence with appropriate references to substantiate general statements. The review report should follow the format provided by the Publisher and explicitly respond to the review questions.

Personal criticism of the authors is considered inappropriate. The reviewer should refrain from making unfair negative comments or including unjustified criticisms of any competitors' work that is mentioned in the manuscript. The reviewer should also refrain from suggesting that authors include citations to the reviewer's or associates' work merely to increase citation counts or enhance the visibility of their work; suggestions must be based on valid academic or technological reasons.

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Any manuscript received for review must be treated as a confidential document. As such, it must not be shown to or discussed with others except if authorized by the Editor (who would only do so under exceptional and specific circumstances). This applies also to invited reviewers who decline the review invitation. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal or another's advantage, or to disadvantage or discredit others. The reviewer should not involve anyone else in the review of a manuscript without permission from the Editor.

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Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that is an observation, derivation or argument that has been reported in previous publications should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also notify the editors of any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other manuscript (published or unpublished) of which he/she have personal knowledge.

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Reviewers should not consider manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected to the papers and the work described therein. In such cases, the reviewer should immediately notify the editors to declare their conflicts of interest and decline the invitation to review so that alternative reviewers can be contacted.

Further, a reviewer should not agree to review a manuscript just to gain sight of it with no intention of submitting a review or agree to review a manuscript that is very similar to an own one in preparation or under consideration for another primary publication.

### **Bias and competing interests**

It is important that the reviewer remain unbiased by considerations related to the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender or other characteristics of the authors, origins of a manuscript or by commercial considerations. If a competing interest that might prevent you from providing a fair and unbiased review is discovered, the reviewer should notify the editors and seek advice. Similarly, prompt notification should be directed to the editors in case that the reviewer finds out that he/she does not have the necessary expertise to assess the relevant aspects of a manuscript.

### **Suspicion of ethics violations**

Suppose the reviewer comes across any irregularities concerning research and publication ethics concerns (e.g., misconduct has occurred during either the research or the writing and submission of the manuscript, or substantial similarity appears between the manuscript and a concurrent submission to another primary publication). In that case, they should contact the Editor directly and not attempt to investigate independently. It is appropriate for the reviewer to cooperate confidently with the editors, but not personally investigate further, unless the editors ask for additional information or advice.

## **Duties of the Editors (EC3 Program Chair and Area Chairs)**

### **Fair play and editorial independence**

Editors, led by the EC3 Program Chair, evaluate submitted manuscripts exclusively based on their academic merit (importance, originality, clarity and study's validity) and relevance to the conference's scope, without regard to the authors' race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, citizenship, religious belief, political philosophy or institutional affiliation. Decisions to edit and publish are not determined by the policies of other parties outside of the editors. The editors have full authority over the entire editorial content of the conference.

### **Confidentiality**

Editors and editorial staff will not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the Publisher, as appropriate.

## **Disclosure and conflicts of interest**

Editors and editorial board members must not use unpublished information disclosed in a submitted manuscript for their research purposes without the authors' explicit written consent. Privileged information or ideas obtained by editors as a result of handling the manuscript will be kept confidential and not used for their personal advantage.

Editors will recuse themselves from considering manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships/connections with any of the authors, companies or institutions connected to the papers. Instead, they will ask another editorial board member to handle the manuscript.

## **Publication decisions**

The editors ensure that all submitted manuscripts being considered for publication undergo peer-review by at least two expert reviewers. The EC3 Program Chair and Area Chairs are responsible for deciding which of the manuscripts submitted to the conference will be published, based on the validation of the work in question, its importance to researchers and readers, the reviewers' comments, and such legal requirements as are currently in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism when ethical concerns are raised concerning a submitted manuscript or published paper. The Program Chair may confer with other editors or reviewers in making this decision.

## **Involvement and cooperation in investigations**

Editors (in conjunction with the Publisher, EC3) will take responsive measures when ethical concerns are raised concerning a submitted manuscript or published paper. Every reported unethical publishing behavior will be looked into, even if discovered years after publication. EC3 Program Chairs, in collaboration with EC3, will follow the COPE Flowcharts when dealing with cases of suspected misconduct. If, on investigation, the ethical concern is well-founded, a correction, retraction, expression of concern or other note as may be relevant will be published in the conference proceedings online.

## **Duties of the Publisher (EC3)**

### **Handling of unethical publishing behavior**

In cases of alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication or plagiarism, the Publisher, EC3, in close collaboration with the Editors, led by the EC3 Program Chair, will take all appropriate measures to clarify the situation and to amend the article in question. This includes the prompt publication of an erratum, clarification or, in the most severe case, the retraction of the affected work. The Publisher and the Editors shall take reasonable steps to identify and prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred, and under no circumstances encourage such misconduct or knowingly allow such misconduct to occur.

### **Access to EC3 content**

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## **Publication ethics issues and handling**

### **Policies on authorship and contributorship**

The EC3 policies on authorship and contributorship are presented in the "Duties of authors" section above.

### **Handling of complaints and appeals**

Complaints and appeals may refer to several elements of the submission, review, and publication process, such as authorship, duplicate publications, plagiarism, review and publishing practices, or editor's and publishing contact's tasks. Everyone involved in authoring, editing, or publishing manuscripts in EC3 must carefully follow the guidelines about authorship, data management, review process editor decisions, or other potentially problematic issues. In any case, EC3 Publisher and Editors will take any reasonable step to identify and prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred and identify and prevent ethics issues related to the review process and the Editor's decision about paper acceptance for publication.

It is essential that all involved in the publication process, and particularly in complaints, carefully stick to the facts of the situation, refer to standards and policies (e.g., COPE guidance), and follow established processes (e.g., COPE flowcharts). This needs to be carefully documented and articulated to the Editor (or the Publisher) at the time of the complaint. The editors should first handle the complaint (EC3 Area Chair, who handled the paper with the Program Chair). If the Area Chairs are the subject of the complaint, the complaint must be directed directly to the EC3 Program Chair or the in-house publishing contact. All communications regarding ethical concerns will be kept confidential. EC3 will approach any complaint or appeal with systematic questions, clarifying the situation, and attempting to help understand and resolve the publication ethics problem.

While there are several types of potential complaints and appeals with different actors and responders, and different steps and procedures for resolving them, the handling of complaints and appeal will be in line with COPE guidelines on complaints and appeals and Elsevier's Publishing Ethics Resource Kit for editors.

If an author or a reviewer disagrees with the decision of the Area Chair or the Program Chair, they may appeal the decision. Upon receiving an appeal, the Program Chair shall convene an ad hoc Appeals Committee consisting of the Program Chair (as chair) and four members of the Scientific Committee. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal and decide based on a majority vote.

### **Conflicts of interest / competing interests**

Conflicts of interest or competing interests may be encountered among authors, reviewers, editors, and the Publisher. The EC3 policies on handling these issues are presented in the corresponding "duties" sections above.

### **Data sharing and reproducibility**

Data sharing enables others to reuse the results of experiments and supports the creation of new science built on previous findings, making the research process more efficient. Data sharing also supports transparency and reproducibility.

This policy concerns research data that often underlies the research work but exists outside research articles. Data may be numerical, descriptive, aural, or visual and can include but are not limited to raw data, processed data, software, algorithms, protocols, methods, materials, and qualitative information like interview data or field notes.

EC3 follows a minimum standard which encourages authors, where relevant and subject to ethical and legal considerations, to openly share, cite, and link to their research data. In particular, the policy encourages authors to share their research data in a relevant public data repository and make the data underlying their published article publicly available when it does not violate the protection of human subjects or other valid subject privacy concerns. Authors are further encouraged to cite any data referenced in their paper. Whether this has been created by the author or someone else, cited data sets should be included in the reference list.

### **Ethical oversight**

Per the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), ethical oversight should include, but is not limited to, policies on consent to publication, publication on vulnerable populations, ethical conduct of research using animals, ethical conduct of research using human subjects, handling confidential data and ethical business/marketing practices.

EC3 is committed to detecting and preventing publication misconduct through its peer review and editing process. Peer reviewers and editors are expected to perform routine checks for the following:

- Authorship misconduct: (see authorship and contributorship policy above).
- Plagiarism (i.e. using the ideas or work of others): A dedicated software (Turnitin) is used for such purpose. Reviewers should check for proper and adequate citations.
- Data Fabrication/Falsification (i.e. making up or modifying data, manipulating research): Reviewers and editors should be cautious of "impressive" research results and be aware of potential conflicts of interest. Raw data should be reviewed for signs of fabrication. Reviewers should also check for unusual research or analysis methods.
- Citation Manipulation (see COPE guideline): Reviewers and editors will check for excessive self-citation, excessive citation of a single journal, and citations that do not support the research topic.
- Peer review manipulation (see COPE statement): Peer reviewers are qualified per a screening process, and the editors monitor reviewer performance.

Dealing with any suspected ethical problem in the whole publication process are with the general guidelines provided by the COPE flowchart on suspected ethical problem.

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which has oversight of all EC3 publications, and is mandated to ensure all EC3 publications adhere to the highest ethical principles as articulated in this document.

Suppose authors discover significant errors or inaccuracies in their own published work. In that case, they are obligated to promptly notify the editors and cooperate with them to correct the paper in the form of a corrigendum, erratum, or retract the paper. If the editors or Publisher learns from a third party that a published work contains a significant error or inaccuracy, then the authors must promptly correct or retract the paper or provide evidence to the Editors of the correctness of the paper.

For significant concerns that potentially impact the reliability of the research, the Editor will initiate an investigation to determine how the concern will be addressed. Original authors and reviewers will be included in the investigation as needed. Potential outcomes of the investigation may include (a) no change, (b) expression of concern, (c) correction, and (d) retraction. All significant corrections may need to undergo a complete peer review as per EC3 policy.

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