

# Statement on Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement

*Journal of Competitiveness Studies* (ISSN 2330-4103) and *Competition Forum* (ISSN 1545-2581) and their publisher, American Society for Competitiveness, are dedicated to upholding the best practices when considering ethical matters. The prevention of malpractice is our editorial board's responsibility, and, as such, unethical behavior is not tolerated.

## Publication Integrity

We believe in holding ourselves, our authors, and our reviewers to a high standard. In order to do so, we ask for:

1. Ethical approach in all stages of research,
2. Transparent and clear communication between all involved,
3. Accountability within all stages of the publication process; including post-publication edits, revisions, and/or concerns.

If one believes that any publication, author, editorial or office staff has failed to meet or exceed these standards, they should file a complaint with our office: [office.asc@gmail.com](mailto:office.asc@gmail.com). Concerns will be documented and forwarded to the appropriate editor or office member for review. Concerns will be addressed following COPE guidelines, or further policies depending on the severity of the issue.

## Conflict of Interests/Declarations

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) states in its Guidelines on Good Publication Practice (2003) that:

“Conflicts of interest arise when authors, reviewers, or editors have interests that are not fully apparent and that may influence their judgments on what is published. They have been described as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived.”

Authors, Editors, and Reviewers must notify the Editors of **any conflicts of interest**, such as financial connections, professional/personal affiliations or beliefs that impact the work.

Conflicts include, but are not limited to:

- Research funding (commercial, governmental, private)
- Employment or stockholding in related company

- Family or personal relationship to person's involved

*Any potential conflicts should be expressed clearly*

For authors, conflicts should be communicated clearly in their initial submission email, as well as in their manuscript under the “Conflict of Interest” or “Declaration of Interactions” section at the end of a manuscript.

Reviewers should provide the editor-in-chief with anticipated/potential conflicts when first joining the editorial board and as needed if presented with an issue. If presented with items where one's judgements could be influenced by these interests, reviewers **should decline the review**.

## Plagiarism

We recognize that plagiarism is an issue of intellectual property *and* integrity. Our editors and reviewers recognize that there are different types of plagiarism. COPE Council (2011) states that plagiarism should be considered by the “type and extent of the copying,” in addition to the intention and context. Plagiarism is no longer limited to textual recreation, we assess the originality of images, data, cope, multimodal medias, and unpublished materials (such as lectures, presentations, personal correspondence).

Being a journal with international authorship, we realize that there are different cultural understandings of intellectual property, as well as a number of accepted citation practices. Understanding this we believe in initially addressing issues by providing educational materials and resources for cases that do not indicate *purposefully deceptive*.

Editors and Reviewers who suspect plagiarized material should contact the office staff to initiate an investigation. We ask that, if possible, the concerned party provide us with the piece(s) they suspect and any resources (such as the original source) to reference. Our journals recognize that plagiarism is a *serious* accusation in the publication world, so we believe in thorough, respectful, and transparent review of these issues.

If a piece is determined to be plagiarized, we follow the suggested response of COPE Good Publication Practices (1999). This is, but not limited to:

- A letter of explanation (containing resources to better educate oneself on the issue)
- A formal warning and rejection of one's submission
- A formal letter to the head or governing bodying of relevant institutions (such as the department head or dean of an author's institution)

- Refusal to accept *all* future submissions from the individual, organization, or affiliated institution for a stated period

## **Duties of Editor/Copy Editor**

### *Publication Decisions:*

Based on the review report of the **Editorial Review Board**, the editor-in-chief has complete responsibility and authority to accept, reject, or request modifications to the manuscript.

Editors evaluate submitted manuscripts exclusively on the basis of their academic merit (importance, originality, study's validity, clarity) and its relevance to the journal'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 governments or any other agencies outside of the journal itself.

### *Review of Manuscripts:*

Reviewers must ensure that each manuscript is initially evaluated by the editor-in-chief for originality. Following desk review, an anonymized manuscript is sent to members of the editorial review board who will make a recommendation [[insert review sheet]] to accept, reject, or modify the manuscript. Those who oversee the peer review process will recognize any warning signs of fraudulent or manipulated peer review, and to raise any concerns with the office. We support our editors and peer reviewers in the investigation and reporting of suspected cases of manipulated or fraudulent peer review.

### *Confidentiality:*

The editor must ensure that information regarding manuscripts submitted by the authors are kept confidential, only to be made available when necessary.

The editor of this journal, nor any person involved in this publication process, **shall use** unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript for their own research without the written consent of the author.

### *Errors in Information:*

The editor, when discovering or being notified of errors, will make the necessary changes to uphold our ethical responsibilities.

### *Retractions, Corrections, Expressions of Concerns*

Editors retain the right to retract and correct pieces as needed. If an author has made an error, the journal will issue a corrigendum and notify the corresponding authors. If the journal has made a mistake, we will issue an erratum.

Retractions are typically reserved for pieces with serious flaws (plagiarism, misrepresented data/significance, inappropriate content, etc). If a full article is removed, we will communicate with the corresponding author and publish a note clearly stating our reasons for removal.

## **Duties of Authors**

### *Publication guidelines:*

Authors are required to follow the submission guidelines as they are listed on the website

### *Original Work:*

Authors must ensure that they have written entirely original work. In submitting work, authors certify that their manuscript has not been previously published nor is it being considered for publication elsewhere.

Included under the umbrella of “original” is duplicate or “self-plagiarism.” This reflects pieces that have been published previously in our journals *or* in others. The only exceptions that will be considered are: significant addition/revision to original piece, appropriate cross-referencing, or clear approval from original publication.

### *Authorship of the Paper:*

*Each author* of the paper must have significantly contributed to the research. While this may look different within various disciplines and contexts, we ask the authors consider the following:

- Contribution to design of research, collection and/or analysis of data
- Labor of drafting and critical revision of content

The corresponding author is responsible to act on behalf of all co-authors in every query and should also ask questions pertaining to publication ethics, reuse of content, or the availability of data, materials, or resources. Unless otherwise noted, correspondence should be through [office.asc@gmail.com](mailto:office.asc@gmail.com) or by phone, 724-357-7787.

*Data Access and Retention:*

Authors should provide raw data related to their manuscript for editorial review and must retain such data. Authors must identify all sources used in the creation of their manuscript.

*Fundamental Errors:*

Authors are responsible and obligated to report and correct errors in the paper or fully retract one's article.

Errors can include:

- Misreporting or miscommunication of data or significance
- Inaccurate citations/incorrect attribution to original source
- Incorrect authorship/contributions
- Missing relevant conflict of interest/affiliation statements

## **Duties of Reviewers**

*Confidentiality:*

Reviewers should keep information from the manuscript confidential.

*Strong Review of Works:*

Reviewers must ensure that authors have acknowledged all sources of data used in the research; they should provide the author with relevant work not cited in the manuscript if need be. Reviewers must ensure that all sources of data have been acknowledged by the author. In addition, reviewers should offer clear and supported critiques of each article, avoiding personal criticism.

*Plagiarism, Fraud and Other Ethical Concerns:*

Reviewers should let the editor know if they suspect/find that a manuscript is a substantial copy of another work, providing the other work as evidence. Plagiarism of any kind—be it text, illustration, or otherwise—will not be tolerated.

*Prompt Review:*

If a reviewer is unable to complete a review within the projected timeline, we ask that they decline review as soon as possible.