



## **GUIDELINES ON BEST PRACTICES FOR STRENGTHENING ETHICS IN SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION**

This document serves as standard for all journals of the SciELO Network collections.

The SciELO program follows standards and recommendations of ethics standards and accountability in scholarly communication established by national and international institutions, among which stand out: [COPE<sup>\(2\)</sup>](#), [CSE<sup>\(3\)</sup>](#), [Equator Network<sup>\(4\)</sup>](#), [ICMJE](#), [CNPq](#), [FAPESP<sup>\(5\)</sup>](#) and the Manual of Best Practices for Strengthening Ethics in SciELO Scientific Publication.

This guideline promotes integrity and transparency in the manuscript evaluation process and in research reproducibility, on the occurrence of data manipulation or fabrication, the unreferenced copy of data or the text of another author, duplication of publication of the same text or research, conflicts of interest or authorship.

Everything that is published in the journal, as well as corrective actions that are necessary, is the editor in chief's responsibility. In this sense, this guide explains concepts and actions that promote integrity in the publication process and referrals in cases of suspected or proven misconduct.

### **Responsibilities of the editor-in-chief**

The responsibility of the editor-in-chief includes editorial policy implementation, oversight the editorial process, and journal relations with authors, reviewers, readers, indexers, funding agencies, the scientific community, and the general public<sup>(2)</sup>. Particularly, transparency and quality control are essential aspects of the editorial process under the editor-in-chief's responsibilities.

### **Identification of scientific misconduct**

Regarding best practices for strengthening the ethics in scientific publication, the editorial process, after complying with the formal aspects required, ensures that all

authors review and take accountability for the content and record the contribution of each one at the end of the manuscript<sup>(7)</sup>. Proof may be provided by digital signature or confirmation, including whether there is any conflict of interests, which should be explicated in the publication<sup>(4)</sup>.

When there is any questioning regarding authorship, contact is to be first established with the corresponding author and, if necessary, with all authors. In case of impasse, the authors' affiliation institutions or funding agencies involved in the research development should be contacted.

As far as the subjects involved in the research are concerned, the editorial process requires authors to present antecedents, such as the position of the corresponding ethics committee, authorization of the subjects involved, and clinical trial records, among others. When there is doubt or questioning, the editor-in-chief should contact the corresponding author and, if necessary, all authors requesting completeness of the data.

In order to promote the predominance of originality of the texts, the journal should adopt software for duplicity verification with already published texts. The journal informs the authors on the software in use during the article submission process.

When there is doubt or questioning, the editor-in-chief should contact the corresponding author and, if necessary, all authors. If duplicity is proven, the authors' affiliation institutions or funding agencies involved in the [research development are to be contacted](#) <sup>(2)</sup>.

When there is doubt about the inclusion of citations and their references, the cited document is checked or requested. When there is doubt or questioning, the editor-in-chief should contact the corresponding author and, if necessary, all authors.

When in the evaluation process, editors or reviewers identify excess self-citing by authors and/or the journal, the corresponding author and, if necessary, all authors are contacted for clarification to support decision making.

Editors and reviewers should privilege impartiality, integrity and confidentiality in their evaluation, prioritizing constructive criticism and the time frame agreed with the journal. When there is doubt or questioning, the editor-in-chief should contact the corresponding editor and/or peer reviewers.

The fabrication or falsification of data and images are serious cases of misconduct. The evaluation process should be judicious in identifying such misconducts. In case there are any doubts, the authors are requested to provide supporting evidence of the methodology and results. In case of proven misconduct, the editor should inform the authors' affiliation institutions or funding agencies involved in the development of the research.

### **Support mechanisms on decisions regarding misconduct**

The journal should inform in the Instructions to Authors how it receive reports of suspected misconduct.

In cases of doubts or questioning considered previously, the journal should follow the COPE flow diagrams<sup>(2)</sup> for identification and guidance on misconduct. Eventually, in case the journal's decision is challenged, a committee of members of the editorial board, and external to the journal, should be assembled.

### **Guidance on decision making on retractions and errata**

The already published article in which misconduct is identified remains indexed in the SciELO database in the retracted condition. The retraction substantiate the reason for the withdrawal duly referenced, through a communication by the author, editor or another authorized agent, and published in the same journal. [Retraction](#) may be partial when the misconduct applies to a specific part of the article, without, however, compromising the set of published research<sup>(9)</sup>. The article may not ever be “unpublished”.

Cases of errors or failures, regardless of nature or origin, that do not constitute misconduct, are corrected by [errata](#)<sup>(10)</sup>.

The journal should publish as promptly as possible errata, corrections or retractions.

## References:

1. ABEC BRASIL. Diretrizes do CSE para promover integridade em publicações de periódicos científicos, 2012 [viewed 12 April 2018]. Available from: [https://www.abecbrasil.org.br/arquivos/whitepaper\\_CSE.pdf](https://www.abecbrasil.org.br/arquivos/whitepaper_CSE.pdf)
2. COPE - Committee on publication ethics, 2018 [viewed April 2018]. Available form: [www.publicationethics.org](http://www.publicationethics.org)
3. CSE - Council of Science Editors, 2018 [viewed April 2018]. Available from: <https://www.councilscienceeditors.org/resource-library/editorial-policies/white-paper-on-publication-ethics/>
4. Equator Network, 2008? [viewed April 2018]. Available from: [www.equator-network.org](http://www.equator-network.org)
5. FAPESP. Código de boas práticas científicas, 2014 [viewed 12 April 2018]. Available from: [www.fapesp.br/boaspraticas/](http://www.fapesp.br/boaspraticas/)
6. ICMJE - International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, 2018 [viewed April 2018]. Available from: [www.icmje.org](http://www.icmje.org)
7. SciELO - Critérios, políticas e procedimentos para admissão e a permanência de periódicos científicos na Coleção SciELO Brasil, 2017 [viewed April 2018]. Available from: <http://ref.scielo.org/np7ms5>
8. WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM - Code of ethics for researchers, 2018 [viewed April 2018]. Available from: <https://widgets.weforum.org/coe/>
9. SciELO - Guia para o registro e publicação de retratação, 2017 [viewed April 2018]. Available from: <http://ref.scielo.org/zgrrv8>
10. SciELO - Guia para o registro e publicação de Errata, 2017 [viewed April 2018]. Available from: <http://ref.scielo.org/b7mqcj>

## Links Externos

ABEC BRASIL – Associação Brasileira de Editores Científicos- <https://www.abecbrasil.org.br>

COPE - Committee on Publication Ethics - [www.publicationethics.org](http://www.publicationethics.org)

CSE - Council of Science Editors - <https://www.councilscienceeditors.org>

Equator Network - [www.equator-network.org](http://www.equator-network.org)

FAPESP – Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo - [www.fapesp.br](http://www.fapesp.br)

ICMJE - International Committee of Medical Journal Editors - [www.icmje.org](http://www.icmje.org)

SciELO – Scientific Electronic Library Online- <http://www.scielo.br/>

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM - Code of ethics for researchers -

<https://widgets.weforum.org>

CNPq - Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico - <http://cnpq.br/>