

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

The mission of FrancoAngeli is to promote learning, knowledge and research. In order to pursue this aim, the publishing house requires accuracy, but adopts a neutral stance on the topics debated in the articles published in its journals.

In addition to the publisher, many other subjects are involved in the publishing process, each of them playing a vital role. It follows, therefore, that all of them – authors, editors-in-chief, board members, reviewers, owners – must comply with ethical standards at every stage of the process.

FrancoAngeli undertakes to defend the rules of ethical behavior in every stage of the process by adopting and promoting the standards set by [COPE](#) in the [Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors](#).

Below is a summary of our commitment and of all the duties expected from editors-in-chief, editorial board members, peer-reviewers and authors.

### **Decision to publish and publisher's duties**

FrancoAngeli's decision to publish a journal is exclusively based on its publishing policy. If required, every source of funding is declared.

The publisher demands the adoption of international best practices, overseeing their application.

The publisher accepts only original papers drawn up in compliance with copyright law, meeting high standards of writing and editing quality and not under review for publication elsewhere.

Moreover, FrancoAngeli promotes and oversees the use of peer review as a method of selection, providing a platform for tracking the review process.

The publisher enhances the independent scientific research and condemns the violation of copyright and plagiarism. It requires and promotes original papers based on rigorous data, even providing, when necessary, rectification or the withdrawal of the printed issue.

Finally, the publisher is open to all forms of promotion of culture and research, including Open Access.

### **Editor-in-chief's and editorial board members' duties**

The editorial board members of the Journal (editor-in-chief and co-editors) are responsible for deciding which of the articles submitted to the Journal should be published. The editorial board is guided by the policies of the Journal's publisher and constrained by such legal requirements as shall then be in force regarding defamation, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The editorial board seeks the support of at least two members of the scientific advisory board or other reviewers in making this decision, according to a double-blind peer review procedure.

An editor, at any time, must be evaluating manuscripts for their intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, as well as scientific, academic, or political orientation of the authors.

In case of sponsored issues, the review of the papers will be based solely on the scientific value of the contents.

The editors and any editorial staff must 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. Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in an editors' own research without the expressed written consent of the author. When

the editorial board is notified or discovers a significant problem regarding errors/ inaccuracy, undisclosed conflict of interest, plagiarism, in a published article, the editorial board will promptly notify the corresponding author and the publisher and will undertake the necessary actions to clarify the issue and in case of need to retract the paper or publish an *Erratum*, following the [COPE Guidelines](#).

### **Peer reviewer's duties**

Peer reviews assist the editor in making editorial decisions and through the editorial communications with the author may also assist the author in improving the paper. Any selected referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should notify the editor and excuse himself from the review process. Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. They must not be shown to or discussed with others except as authorized by the editor. Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Referees should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also call to the editor's attention any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper of which they have personal knowledge. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. 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.

### **Author's duties**

The authors should ensure that they have written entirely original works and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others, that this has been appropriately cited or quoted. Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.

Authors of reports of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the paper. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.

Manuscripts submitted must not have been published as copyrighted material elsewhere. Manuscripts under review by the Journal should not be submitted for consideration by another publication as copyrighted material. By submitting a manuscript, the author(s) agree that, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, the exclusive right to use the article for any editorial exploitation, without space limits and with every modality and technology, will be transferred to the Journal who will transfer it to Franco Angeli Editore.

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors.

The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included on the paper and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper, having agreed to its submission for publication. All authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflicts of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be dis-

closed. When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal editor or publisher and cooperate with the editor to retract or correct the paper.

The description of clinical material must be extremely careful, so that it is absolutely impossible to identify patients unless the information is essential for scientific purposes. For example, the following are items that should be changed or omitted: patients' name or initials, cities' or hospitals' names, patients' age and possibly patients' sex, type of employment, family's characteristics, etc. If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort scientific meaning and editors should so note. Patients have a right to privacy, and if there is any risk that their privacy could be infringed, informed consent for publication should be signed by the patient (or parent or guardian), and in such case the patient who is possibly identifiable must see the manuscript to be published. However, informed consent is not sufficient: it is necessary that the patient swears that he or she will never reveal to anybody that the clinical material refers to him or her (otherwise there is an indirect infringement of his or her privacy, and ultimately the responsibility for this infringement belongs to the author). When informed consent has been obtained, it should be indicated in the published article. Authors should identify individuals who provide writing assistance and disclose the funding source for this assistance.

When reporting experiments on human subjects, authors should indicate whether the procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of the responsible committee on human experimentation (institutional and national) and with the Helsinki Declaration of 1975, as revised in 2000. If doubt exists whether the research was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration, authors must explain the rationale for their approach, and demonstrate that the institutional review body explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study.

When reporting experiments on animals, authors should be asked to indicate whether the institutional and national guide for the care and use of laboratory animals was followed. (From: International Committee of Medical Journal Editors [ICMJE], "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals", February 2006).

### **Conflict of Interest**

Conflict of interest exists when an author (or his/her institution), referee, or editor have financial or personal relationships that inappropriately influence (bias) their actions. The potential for conflict of interest can exist whether or not an individual believes that the relationship affects his or her scientific judgment. The editors' duty is to handle in the best possible way any conflict of interest (for example with the peer review process based on double-blind referees' review system), and authors may be requested to sign a specific statement. (...)