

PUBLICATION ETHICS AND MALPRACTICE STATEMENT

Stochastic Modelling and Computational Sciences (SMCS) follows the COPE's ethical guidelines for research and publication (<https://publicationethics.org>). Any form of research misconduct, such as fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism, carried out with the purpose of deceiving will not be tolerated. This is essential in order to uphold a high level of ethical awareness. Also, compliance with publication ethics ensures the integrity of academic research. Hence, It is mandatory for all stakeholders engaged in the publication of a peer-reviewed academic journal, including authors, journal editors, reviewers, and publishers, to uphold the underlying ethical principles of publication. This Journal has put forth a number of ethical duties and responsibilities guided by COPE's guidelines as mentioned below:

Duties / Responsibilities of Authors

By submitting a manuscript to the Stochastic Modelling and Computational Sciences, as an author you have agreed to comply with the following Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement.

- All manuscripts are the original work of authors and not plagiarized.
- All authors of the manuscript have made significant contributions to be eligible for its authorship.
- Authors have properly and accurately acknowledged the work of others.
- Any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might influence the results or interpretation of their manuscripts is disclosed in the declaration section of the manuscript.
- Authors have acknowledged individuals or organizations that have provided financial research support.
- Authors are ready to provide the raw data in connection with manuscripts for editorial review and should prepare to provide public access to such data, if possible.
- The submitted manuscripts are unpublished, and not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Authors and co-authors of the paper

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. The corresponding author ensures that all contributing co-authors and no uninvolved persons are included in the author list. The corresponding author will also verify that all co-authors have approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

Possible circumstances leading to violation of ethical practices by authors can be understood as per COPE's discussion on authorship (<https://publicationethics.org/authorship>).

Duties / Responsibilities of Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Board Members

“Code of Conduct and best practice guidelines for journal editors”

(https://publicationethics.org/files/Code_of_conduct_for_journal_editors_Mar11.pdf) forms the basis for elucidating the duties and responsibilities of Journal editors.

1. Editor-in-Chief or the assigned editorial board members from time to time are responsible for making decisions on the size and content of the manuscripts submitted to the journal.
2. The journal utilizes a double-blind peer review process. The Editor in Chief and members of the Editorial Board ensure the integrity of the publication review process by not revealing either the identity of authors of manuscripts to the reviewers, or the identity of reviewers to the authors.
3. The members of the Editorial Board receive all manuscripts for review in confidence and should not disclose any information about submitted manuscripts to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, other external referees sought from time to time, and the publisher.
4. Any of editorial board members must not use materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript (published or unpublished) for their research without the author's written authorization.
5. Editors shall conduct a proper and fair investigation into ethical complaints and shall avoid participating in the investigation in case they have a potential conflict of interest with the authors involved.

6. Editors are responsible for certifying the validity and accuracy of publications, and for helping authors to improve the quality of their research.
7. Being an editor, He or she should devote their time to their duties as an editor in order to raise the calibre of the publication. It is advisable to periodically review the journal's policies and support the publisher in keeping the journal's standards high for the benefit of the scientific community.

Responsibility of Reviewers

Reviewers' responsibilities in the peer review system include assessing the value, accuracy, and applicability of academic research. The goal of the peer-review process is to give authors constructive criticism from knowledgeable specialists so they may enhance their work and ensure it is of the highest calibre. Peer reviewers perform a pivotal role within the peer-review system, however, usually work in the absence of proper guidance regarding their ethical duties. The COPE Guidelines offer guidance to reviewers concerning the ethical standards expected in the publication process briefly described here

1. Who are reviewers?: Authors who have published their papers and intend to contribute to the publication processes as part of their professional responsibility.
2. Reviewers must provide accurate personal and professional information, including verifiable contact details. Impersonation during the review process is serious misconduct.
3. Though editors choose reviewers after matching their reviewer's research areas and that of the manuscript, still reviewers must only accept the review if they think that they have the desired expertise to review that paper.
4. It is the responsibility of reviewers to declare potential conflicts of interest, if any.
5. Reviewers must work under strict time schedules as set forth by the journal to avoid any unnecessary delay.

The Peer-Review Process Involves the Following:

- Accept the invitation letter,
 - Review the manuscript report,
 - Submit your review.
6. The reviewers must uphold the confidentiality of peer review and refrain from disclosing any information about a manuscript or its review during or after the peer-review process, other than what is made public by the reviewers. For enhanced comprehension of ethical considerations in the review process, it is advisable to consult the following COPE resource (<https://publicationethics.org/peerreview>).

Responsibility of Publisher

The publisher has a crucial part to play in the scholarly communication process, providing support, making investments, and fostering growth. However, the publisher must also bear the ultimate responsibility for upholding best practices in its publications.

- Publishers should provide practical support to the editor and editorial board, so they can follow the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) Code of Conduct to ensure the autonomy of editorial decisions and protect intellectual property copyright.
- Always be willing to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies when needed.
- Maintain the integrity of the academic record and preclude business needs from compromising intellectual and ethical standards.
- Committed to the permanent availability and preservation of scholarly research and ensures accessibility by partnering with organisations and maintaining archives.
- Ensure that good practice is maintained to the standards defined above.

PUBLICATION ETHICS

Editorial Policies

SMCS is committed to upholding the integrity of the Scientific record, Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement. It is based on the Code of Conduct and Best Publishing Practice in Scientific publications under the guidelines of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)

Plagiarism

Whether intentional or not, plagiarism is a serious violation. Plagiarism is the copying of ideas, text, data and other creative work (e.g. tables, figures and graphs) and presenting it as original research without proper citation. We define plagiarism as a case in which a paper reproduces another work with similarity and without citation.

If evidence of plagiarism is found before/after acceptance or after the publication of the paper, the author will be offered a chance for rebuttal. If the arguments are not found to be satisfactory, the manuscript will be retracted.

All the articles will be checked through Turnitin Software before their publication in the journal.

Peer Review

SMCS uses a double-blind review process. Before being sent to reviewers, manuscripts are pre-screened by the editorial office to check if the manuscript is in accordance with the aims and scope of the journal, Nature of the study, originality of the results, quantity and quality of data, general conclusions and presentation of the work is also checked. It is also verified if the manuscript is written in the proper English language or not.

If the paper does not fulfil these criteria, it may be rejected at this stage without review. If the Manuscript is suitable for consideration, then the editor/ editorial team will assign the manuscript to a minimum of two peer reviewers to review the manuscript. For more details about the review process click here <https://romanpub.com/resources/review-process.pdf>

Conflicts of Interest

SMCS requires the authors to sign a disclosure form at the time of manuscript submission. Authors are expected to disclose any conflict or financial interest impacting the outcome of the study in which authors or any employment, consultation, ownership, honorarium, patent application, testimony, etc. are involved. Any project funded by the industry must pay special attention to the full declaration of funder involvement. If there is no role, please state sponsors has no role in the design, execution, recognition, or writing of the study. If the manuscript is accepted, the Conflict-of-Interest information will be communicated in a published statement. Authors may refer to the COPE guidelines on Conflict of Interest/Competing Interests (<https://publicationethics.org/competinginterests>).

Retraction Policy

Papers found to have ethical misconduct or methodological issues will be retracted in a timely manner. Retractions will be openly published, detailing the reasons for the retraction. The journal follows the COPE Retraction Guidelines (<https://publicationethics.org/retraction-guidelines>).

Journal policy on In-House Manuscript Submissions

In-house manuscript submission process which contains the work of any editorial board member, is not allowed to be reviewed by the editorial board member and all decisions regarding this manuscript are assigned to an independent editor. In addition, these manuscripts are reviewed by the two external reviewers.

Article Withdrawal

We give options to the author for making a request to withdraw the article after submission or during the review process only if the author has valid reasons and provides valid proof or statement for withdrawing the article. Requests are considered by the Journal editorial team, and may be discussed with the Editor, Editorial Board Members, and/or with an article's external reviewer.

Request for withdrawing the article after acceptance or after generating DOI will not be considered as per the guidelines of the journal.

Duplicate Submission

If a duplicate submission is found or noticed from other sources, the editorial board will check the status. If the duplicate submission is confirmed as an internal thing, then the following actions will be imposed. The review process will be terminated, the reason should be sent to reviewers, editorial board, authors and corresponding authors and all authors' names will be marked as blacklisted, and these authors cannot submit any manuscript to this journal for another three years.

Fabricated data

Please refer to the Committee on Publication Ethics flowcharts for the processes that the journal follows in cases of fabricated data in submitted or published articles. As the research is conducted before the paper is submitted to the journal, it is not possible for a journal or the editors to adjudicate in all cases. We will endeavour to facilitate a resolution and will refer the matter to the authors' institutions when appropriate. COPE Guidelines for Fabricated Data (<https://publicationethics.org/sites/default/files/fabricated-data-published-article-cope-flowchart.pdf>).

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSPARENCY AND BEST PRACTICES

Stochastic Modelling and Computational Sciences (SMCS) follows the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing (<https://publicationethics.org/node/19881>) as formulated by scholarly organisations such as the **Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)**, the **Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)**, the **Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association (OASPA)**, and the **World Association of Medical Editors (WAME)**. These principles should apply to all published content in the journal. These principles acknowledge that publishers and editors are responsible for promoting accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusivity in all aspects of the publication. Editorial decisions should be based on scholarly merit. They should not be affected by the origins of the manuscript, including the nationality, ethnicity, political beliefs, race, or religion of the authors.

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS AND ANIMALS

Ethical Approvals

All studies involving human subjects should be in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration and seek approval to conduct from an independent local, regional or national review body (e.g., ethics committee, institutional review board, etc.). Such approval, including the name of ethics committee, institutional review board, etc., should be listed in a declaration statement of Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate in the manuscript. If the study is judged exempt from ethics approval, related information (e.g., the name of the ethics committee that granted the exemption, and the reason for the exemption) should also be listed. Further documentation on ethics should also be prepared, as Editors may request more detailed information. Manuscripts with suspected ethical problems would be investigated according to COPE Guidelines.

Informed Consent

For all research involving human subjects, informed consent to participate in the study should be obtained from participants, or their parents or legal guardians for children under 16. Statements regarding consent to participate should be included in the Consent for participation under the declaration section in the manuscript. If any ethical violation is found at any stage of publication, the issue will be investigated seriously based on COPE Guidelines. Hence, the authors are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Describing clearly the methods used to take informed consent is mandatory along with ensuring that participants fully understand the study aims, procedures, any risks and benefits.
- Ensuring voluntary participation with the right to withdraw at any time without consequences.
- Ensuring informed consent from the legal guardians in cases of minors or participants who are unable to provide informed consent
- In cases where the study involves certain sensitive topics/activities, authors should describe in detail the strategies used to reduce potential harm to participants.

Participant Anonymity and Confidentiality

The anonymity and confidentiality of participants must be protected by authors by:

- Ensuring that all personal information, including names, contact details and other direct identifiers, is removed or anonymized in publication.
- Avoiding any details or descriptions that could potentially indirectly reveal the identity of the participants.