



Internet Policy Review Publication code of ethics and conduct

Version 2.0, 14 July 2022

All parties involved in the publication process – authors, editors, peer reviewers and the [Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society \(HIIG\)](#) as publishing institution and legal entity hosting the journal – are requested to abide by common standards of ethical behaviour and be clear on the conflict resolution mechanism in place at *Internet Policy Review*. This publication code of ethics and conduct includes:

1. General ethical principles
2. The journal's complaint mechanism
3. Considerations on the conduct of editors, peer reviewers and authors

1. General ethical principles

Internet Policy Review's publication code of ethics and conduct adheres to the [Core Practices](#) and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, 2017).

COPE's Core Practices are:

- (a) [Allegations of misconduct](#)
- (b) [Authorship and contributorship](#)
- (c) [Complaints and appeals](#)
- (d) [Conflicts of interest / Competing interests](#)
- (e) [Data and reproducibility](#)
- (f) [Ethical oversight](#)
- (g) [Intellectual property](#)
- (h) [Journal management](#)
- (i) [Peer review processes](#)
- (j) [Post-publication discussions and corrections](#)

Beyond the general terms, to which we adhere, *Internet Policy Review* has put a mechanism in place to handle complaints. Complaints can be related to possible misconduct (see a), conflict of interest (see d) or any other malpractice.

2. Complaints mechanism

Step 1

In case of alleged or proven malpractice, misconduct or conflict of interest, and after having ensured that the Managing editor has been consulted and is not in a position to resolve the matter, contact *Internet Policy Review's* academic ombudsperson.

The academic ombudsperson for the term 2022-2023 is [Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schulz](#), Leibniz Institute for Media Research | Hans-Bredow-Institut (HBI), Hamburg. E-mail address: w.schulz@leibniz-hbi.de, tel. +49 (0)40 450 21 70.

If the academic ombudsperson has links to the subject of the complaint, either via the journal, or complainant, the Managing board of the Publishing institution will promptly name a replacement.

Step 2

The ombudsperson checks that the complaint:

- is against a party to the publication process
- is within the remit of the present 'Publication code of ethics and conduct'
- includes all required information

Step 3

The ombudsperson listens to all parties involved, negotiates a compromise and publishes a succinct report including actionable steps to resolve the matter. The report is sent to the Managing editor and complainant. In cases where no compromise is found, the ombudsperson has the authority and obligation to impose a decision.

Step 4

The Managing editor has the duty to ensure that the decision is implemented promptly.

3. Conduct

This section is an adaptation of De Gruyter's (2013) [Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement](#)¹ to the specificities of *Internet Policy Review*.

3.1. Conduct of Editors

Fair play

Submitted manuscripts are evaluated for their intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors. The Publishing institution does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, gender, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or sexual orientation in its publishing programmes, services and activities.

Confidentiality

The Managing editor 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 Publishing institution, as appropriate.

Disclosure and conflicts of interest

Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in an Editor's own research without the explicit written consent of the author(s).

Publication decisions

The Academic or Guest editor is responsible for deciding if a submitted article should be published. The Academic editor confers with the Managing editor, and may confer with other editors or reviewers in making this decision.

3.2. Conduct of Peer reviewers

Contribution to editorial decisions

Peer review assists the Editors in making editorial decisions and, through the editorial communication with the author, assists the author in improving the manuscript.

Promptness

Any invited referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its timely review will be impossible should immediately notify the Editor so that alternative reviewers can be contacted.

¹ We express our gratitude to the De Gruyter publishing group for accepting to grant us the right to adapt their statement to the *Internet Policy Review's* needs.

Confidentiality

Any manuscripts received for review are treated as confidential documents. They are not shown to or discussed with others except if authorised by the Managing editor.

Standards of objectivity

Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is unacceptable. Referees should express their views clearly with appropriate supporting arguments.

Acknowledgement of sources

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 data of which they have personal knowledge.

Disclosure and conflict of interest

Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Reviewers should not consider evaluating manuscripts in which they have overt conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected to the submission. Reviewers should be transparent about any link they might have to the author of the submission under review.

3.3. Conduct of Authors**Reporting standards**

Authors reporting results 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 manuscript. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour. They are unacceptable and need to be reported to the Managing editor or Ombudsperson by any party involved.

Originality and plagiarism

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.

Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication

An author should not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Parallel submission of the same manuscript to more than one journal constitutes unethical behaviour. It is unacceptable and will be reported.

Acknowledgement of sources

Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should also cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.

Authorship of a manuscript

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 coauthors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be named in an acknowledgement section.

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

Hazards and human subjects and personal information

If the work involved human subjects and personal information, the author must follow data protection standards and clearly identify these in the manuscript. Particular attention should be given to ensure informed consent, especially when personally identifiable information and/or sensitive information is collected and processed. This includes the various ways of data dissemination when research findings are published in broader publics (such as via social media). See the Association of Internet Researchers AoIR (2019) [ethics guidelines](#) for a detailed discussion.

Disclosure and conflicts of interest

All authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or their interpretation in the manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed.

Fundamental errors in published works

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's Managing editor or publisher and cooperate with them to either retract the paper or to publish an appropriate erratum.

Publisher's confirmation

In cases of alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication or plagiarism the Managing editor will take all appropriate measures to clarify the situation and to amend the article in question. This includes the prompt publication of an erratum or, in the most severe cases, the complete retraction of the affected work.

References

Association of Internet Researchers AoIR (2019). *Internet Research: Ethical Guidelines 3.0* (unanimously approved by the AoIR membership October 6, 2019). <https://aoir.org/ethics/>

Committee on Publication Ethics COPE (2017). *Core Practices*.
<https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>

De Gruyter (2013). Publication ethics and publication malpractice statement. *European Journal of Nanomedicine*, 5(4), 169-171. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ejnm-2013-0037>