



## **Editorial Policies of *Canadian Journal of Pathology***

The *Canadian Journal of Pathology*, published by Canadian Association of Pathologists, has developed a formal Scientific Integrity Policy to more clearly define issues of scientific misconduct in journal publishing. This document defines common issues relating to appropriate scientific conduct as well as the procedures that will be followed should misconduct issues arise. The Instructions to Authors and Instructions to Reviewers also reflect these policies.

Our policies are based on recommendations by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) in their Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals. For any areas unclear or not specifically addressed in our guidelines we defer to the ICMJE recommendations as outlined at <http://www.icmje.org>. We recommend that authors familiarize themselves with these recommendations.

### **Data Sharing**

*Canadian Journal of Pathology* recognizes that sharing research and accomplishments with a wider audience makes an author more visible in their field, helps them be cited more often, enables them to cultivate a stronger reputation, promote their research and move forward in their career. We are committed to sharing research with as wide an audience as possible and our policies ensure that this information is shared responsibly.

We are committed to protecting our authors by ensuring that the appropriate version of their article is published, by allowing authors to review galley proofs and make corrections prior to release of each journal, and by making our journal open-access, through [www.CanadianJournalOfPathology.ca](http://www.CanadianJournalOfPathology.ca) within 6 months of publication.

*Canadian Journal of Pathology* supports responsible sharing and adheres to the voluntary sharing principles of the ICMJE Association.

### **General Authorship Guidelines**

ICMJE defines authorship as:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception and design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; and
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and
3. Final approval of the version to be published; and
4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

All authors should meet the above four conditions and adhere to the following protocol:

- When a large, multi-author, group has conducted the work the group shall agree, in advance of submission, which individuals will be included as authors;
- The group should designate an individual or individuals who accept direct responsibility for the manuscript during the review, editing, and post-publication process on behalf of the group (corresponding author). This author will also be required to agree to our copyright release as outlined in the submission system;
- These individuals should fully meet the criteria above and should disclose conflicts of interest (see below) on behalf of the group;
- All members of the group who meet authorship criteria should be listed as authors with other contributors noted in the Acknowledgements;
- When submitting a manuscript to the Journal the corresponding author takes responsibility, on behalf of all authors, for the authorship, authenticity and integrity of the research being reported.
- Copyright release permission granted by the corresponding/senior author should be done so only with consent from all authors given directly to the corresponding/senior author;
- The corresponding author should be available throughout the submission and peer-review process to respond to editorial queries in a timely way, and should be available after publication to respond to critiques of the work and cooperate with any requests from the Journal for data or additional information should questions about the paper arise after publication;
- The email contact information of ALL authors is required during the submission process so that the Journal may, if needed, contact the authors to verify their involvement or in regard to any aspect of manuscript submission;
- If an author is removed, during the course of revision of the manuscript, written explanation and consent to proceed with publication by the removed author (signed letter or email from a workplace email address) should be provided;
- Any change made to the list of authors (addition, removal, change in order) after manuscript acceptance requires consent of all authors and editorial approval. Authorship disputes must be resolved by the authors, and/or their institutions, and will not be entered in to by the Journal. In the case of these disputes publication will be placed on hold until verification is available;
- Because inclusion in the Acknowledgments may give the appearance of endorsement of the manuscript and its findings, authors should obtain permission from all individuals named in the Acknowledgments who contributed substantially to the work (e.g., data collection, analysis, or writing/editing assistance) but did not fulfill the authorship criteria; and
- Authors should receive permission from all individuals named as sources for personal communication or unpublished data. Such permissions should be affirmed by the corresponding author in the cover letter.

## Non-human Artificial Intelligence

- Nonhuman artificial intelligence, language models, machine learning, or similar technologies do not qualify for authorship.
- If these models or tools are used to create content or assist with writing or manuscript preparation, authors must take responsibility for the integrity of the content generated by these tools. Authors should report the use of artificial intelligence, language models, machine learning, or similar technologies to create content or assist with writing or editing of manuscripts in the Acknowledgment section or the Methods section if this is part of formal research design or methods. This information should be included in the main manuscript file so that it is visible to reviewers (but in a non-identifiable manner).
- The acknowledgment should include a description of the content that was created or edited and the name of the language model or tool, version and extension numbers, and manufacturer. (Note: this does not include basic tools for checking grammar, spelling, references, etc.)
- The submission and publication of content created by artificial intelligence, language models, machine learning, or similar technologies is discouraged by our editorial committee unless it is part of a formal research design or methods. Its use will only be considered for permission with a clear description of the content that was created and the name of the model or tool, version and extension numbers, and manufacturer. Authors must take responsibility for the integrity of the content generated by these models and tools.
- The submission and publication of images created by artificial intelligence, machine learning tools, or similar technologies is discouraged, unless part of formal research design or methods, and is not permitted without clear description of the content that was created and the name of the model or tool, version and extension numbers, and manufacturer. Authors must take responsibility for the integrity of the content generated by these models and tools.

## Peer Review Process

The peer review process ought to be completely transparent.

- The Journal takes great care to secure the confidentiality and integrity of the peer-review process;
- It is the practice of the *Canadian Journal of Pathology* to conduct a double blinded peer-review process. Thus, it is considered a violation of this process for authors to identify or attempt to communicate directly with peer-reviewers and peer-reviewers will not disclose their names or identifying information within comments regarding the manuscript;

- All editorial communications should be directed through the Editorial Office of *Canadian Journal of Pathology* using the on-line submission system and email. Editors should not communicate verbally with the authors;
- In order to have a transparent and fair review process, articles should include statements or supporting documents to outline any of the following that are relevant to this article:
  1. Authors' conflicts of interest and/or funding sources for the work, including sponsor names and details of the role of these sources in any study design;
  2. Information about the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and writing of the report;
  3. Involvement by supporting sources in the decision to submit the work for publication or a statement declaring that the supporting source had no such involvement and disclosure of whether authors had access to the study data, with an explanation of the nature and extent of access, including whether access is ongoing; and
- Authors may request that specific reviewers not be used due to prior collaborations, known conflicts of interest, or direct competition. The journal's editorial team will make every effort to respect requests that are well-founded but reserves the right to utilize such a reviewer if it is necessary for expert peer-review;
- The journal will consider reviewer suggestions by authors if the suggested reviewer can be verified as legitimate (with institutional contact information). The journal will not disclose to the author if this suggested reviewer was approached and/or accepted and retains the right to accept or reject the authors' suggestions;
- Reviewers are to follow the Journal's Instructions to Reviewers and are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest in the review of a manuscript;
- To aid the review process authors should be prepared to comply with Editors' requests for copies of any similar works used in preparation, copies of cited manuscripts and/or supporting manuscript data (e.g., data not shown but summarized in the manuscript). Failure to do so may result in rejection of the manuscript without further review;
- Additional necessary information regarding the progress of the peer review can be obtained from the editorial office;
- Incomplete submissions may be removed by our editorial team if the required documents are not supplied to the journal within two weeks;
- Review process records will be archived in our online submission system for a minimum of 2 years following the publication date;
- A final decision will be made and communicated by email via the online submission system.

### **Process and Procedures for handling claims of misconduct**

The *Canadian Journal of Pathology* strongly prohibits all forms of misconduct (referee misconduct, citation manipulation, data fabrication and falsification, etc.) All claims of misconduct will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate repercussions will ensue. Overall, we follow standard COPE policies, as detailed below.

**a) Suspected fabricated data in a submitted manuscript.**

If reviewer expresses suspicion of fabricated data, evidence will be requested and investigation will follow. A second opinion from a subcommittee reporting to Editor in Chief (EIC) will be considered. Author will be contacted to explain concerns. If author fails to respond, author's institution will be contacted and concern will be passed to author's superior.

**b) Suspected fabricated data in a published manuscript.**

If reader expresses suspicion of fabricated data, an investigation will ensue. A second opinion from another reviewer will be considered. Author will be contacted to explain concerns without direct accusations. If author fails to respond, author's institution will be contacted and concern will be passed to author's superior. External experts might be contacted upon request.

**c) Suspected plagiarism in a submitted manuscript.**

If reviewer informs editor about suspected plagiarism, full documentary evidence will be requested and degree of overlap will be checked using Anti-Plagiarism software (e.g. iThenticate). If minor copying of short phrases only, author will be contacted in neutral terms explaining journal's position and author will be asked to rephrase copied text or include as direct quotations with references. If clear plagiarism (unattributed use of large portions of text), corresponding author will be contacted in writing with documentary evidence of plagiarism.

**d) Suspected plagiarism in a published manuscript.**

If reader informs editor of suspected plagiarism, full documentary evidence will be requested and check degree of copying will be checked using Anti-Plagiarism software. If minor copying of short phrases only, author will be contacted in neutral terms explaining journal's position and author will be asked to rephrase copied text or include as direct quotations with references. A corrigendum will be issued. If clear plagiarism (unattributed use of large portions of text), corresponding author will be contacted in writing with documentary evidence of plagiarism. This might result in paper retraction.

**e) Suspected citation manipulation**

Research Articles must cite applicable and pertinent literature to support claims made. Excessive and inappropriate citation or coordinated efforts between numerous authors to cooperatively self-cite is discouraged. If reviewer informs editor about suspected citation manipulation, full documentary evidence will be requested and a second opinion from a sub-committee reporting to EIC will be considered. Author will be contacted to explain concerns. If author fails to respond, author's institution will be contacted and concern will be passed to author's superior.

The journal will consider any deliberate ethical violation, in either the reported research or the manuscript preparation and review, to be actionable misconduct, the potential results of which may be manuscript rejection or public article retraction, reporting of conduct to the authors' governing institutions, and/or the denial to consider any future submissions to the Journal;

## Appeal and Complaints

Appeals of, or complaints regarding, editorial decisions must be submitted within 60 days to be considered. The process will be as follows:

- Authors may submit an informal appeal following a rejection of their paper if the s/he feels the explanation is not clear or sufficiently detailed or if there has been a conflict of interest. The Editor-in-Chief will respond within 60 days and provide a response to the author outlining the reasoning behind the decision;
- In the case of a formal appeal the paper, and all relevant information, will be provided to a member of the International Editorial Board who was not involved in the peer-review or decision-making process. The Board member may review the case on the existing record or may seek additional expert opinion from additional Board members or outside experts. The Board member will present an advisory opinion to the Editor-in-Chief, within 90 days, which will be sent to the authors with the Board member's name;
- Authors may suggest those Board members they feel are appropriate (or not appropriate) to conduct the review but the Editor-in-Chief is not bound by such suggestions;
- If there is no suitable Board member available the Editor-in-Chief may appoint an appropriate scientist to consider a paper under appeal as an *ad hoc* Board member;
- Appeals must be based on the fairness of the procedures followed and must not be a request for another scientific review. The Journal's content is accepted based on the Journal's needs, relevancy to readers, and to ensure fresh and balanced content. Content decisions cannot be appealed. The only questions to be answered in an appeal review are: "Were our procedures followed appropriately and did the paper receive a fair hearing?"; and
- A decision by the Editor in Chief is the final level of review.

## Conflicts of Interest

- All authors must disclose any current or former relationships held by the author or an immediate family member (e.g., employment, consultancies, board membership, stock ownership, funding, honoraria, expert testimony, patents or royalties, travel reimbursements, industry-supplied free reagents, etc.) with any organization or entity having a direct financial or personal interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript;
- Authors should err on the side of full disclosure and should contact the Editorial Office if they have questions or concerns;
- This information should be provided at the time of submission (for new and revised manuscripts); and
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest may result in manuscript rejection or editorial retraction of the article.
- The Journal reserves the right to require authors of a study sponsored by a funder with a proprietary or financial interest in the outcome declare, in writing, to the journal's editorial office, a statement declaring that "I/We had full access to all of the data in this study and I/We take complete responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis."

## Reproducibility

- The Journal conforms to the NIH Principles and Guidelines for Reporting Preclinical Research (found at [www.nih.gov/about/reporting-preclinical-research.htm](http://www.nih.gov/about/reporting-preclinical-research.htm));
- We require that authors describe experimental and statistical methods in enough detail that other researchers can replicate results and evaluate claims;
- The sequences of oligonucleotides, if not previously published, should be provided. Novel DNA or protein sequences should be deposited to an appropriate database (e.g., Genbank, EMBL, SWISS-PROT), with the accession numbers included in the manuscript;
- When providing supplier information for materials sources, company name and location (city and state, or city and country) should be provided;
- When describing reagents (antibodies, cell lines, animal strains, bacteria, and viruses), authors should include all the information necessary for repetition of the experiments. This includes, but is not limited to, the source, characteristics, dilutions, strain, species, sex and authentication of materials used;
- All novel materials and the procedures to prepare them should be described in sufficient detail to allow their reproduction (e.g., DNA constructs, analytical software);
- Materials that are approved for investigational-use only should be clearly indicated;
- Methods should state whether sample size was determined statistically prior to experimentation, whether samples were randomized (and how), whether data acquisition was blinded (particularly for subjective scoring methodologies), and what criteria were used to include/exclude data points or subjects;

- Experimental procedures should include the number of replicates performed and the number of samples in each experimental condition;
- Special care should be taken to assure that statistical methods are appropriate, with clearly defined statements of the statistical test(s) used, sample size, and measures reported (e.g., mean, median, SD, SEM, confidence intervals). The Editors will seek the assistance of statistical experts as necessary to fully evaluate the validity of statistical methods reported;
- Authors, upon submitting research to our journal, agree to, upon reasonable request, share any materials or data that are integral to the results presented in the article, including whatever would be necessary for a skilled investigator to verify or replicate the claims. This may include original software code used in the data analysis. Agreement to share reagents or software code does not preclude the authors from implementing a Data Use Agreement;
- Authors must disclose, upon submission, any restrictions on the availability of materials or information, such as for patented or dual-purpose materials; and
- Clinical study registration numbers shall be included at the end of the Abstract.

## **Intellectual Property**

In order to ensure protection for our readers and authors we have:

- Adopted systems for detecting plagiarism (e.g. software, searching for similar titles) in submitted items (either routinely or when suspicions are raised); and
- Committed to supporting authors whose copyright has been breached or who have been the victims of plagiarism.

## **Ethical Oversight on Research Subjects**

- Reporting guidelines for specific study designs (e.g., randomized controlled trials) can be found online via the Enhancing the Quality and Transparency Of health Research (EQUATOR) network (see <http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines>);
- Clinical trial registration numbers shall be disclosed at the end of the Abstract;
- We require registration of clinical trials in a public trials registry at or before the time of first patient enrollment as a condition of consideration for publication. Clinical Trial Registration Numbers are to be included at the end of the Abstract;
- If human subjects or samples were used, authors must affirm that the research protocol was approved by the appropriate institutional review boards or ethics committees for human (including use of human cells or tissues) experiments and that all human subjects provided appropriate informed consent;
- To protect patient privacy, identifying information such as names, initials, or hospital numbers should not be published unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the patient (or parent or guardian) gives written informed consent for publication;
- If race/ethnicity is reported, authors should state who determined race/ethnicity, how the options were defined, and why race/ethnicity was important in the study. Authors should be prepared to provide study protocol number(s) if requested;

- Ethical treatment of animals, if animal experiments were performed, authors must affirm that the research protocol was approved by the appropriate institutional review boards or ethics committees for animal experiments and those regulations concerning the use of animals in research were adhered to;
- Authors should be prepared to provide study protocol number(s) if requested;
- We require that all clinical trials published in *Canadian Journal of Pathology* conform to all other ICJME as outlined at <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf> (section L, Clinical Trials).

## Copyright

- Non-exclusive copyright of published manuscripts is held by the Canadian Association of Pathologists – Association canadienne des pathologistes and the assignment of copyright from the authors must be provided on submission of manuscripts (with copyright becoming effective at time of acceptance);
- This permission will allow our journal to publish the manuscript, tables, and figures and to include the manuscript in any promotion of the journal.
- For Canadian government employees the above assignment applies only to the extent allowable by law; and
- Requests to republish content for which we hold non-exclusive copyright should be directed to [info@ClockworkCanada.com](mailto:info@ClockworkCanada.com).

## Guidelines for Handling Papers Submitted by Editors and Editorial Board Members

- Members of the editorial board are allowed to submit up to two manuscripts per year which will undergo peer-review (managed by associate editors with no conflict of interest and conducted by two reviewers with no conflict of interest). Editorial board members will be treated like any other author.

## Editorial Discussion and Corrections

- All correspondence concerning editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief at *Canadian Journal of Pathology*, 4 Cataraqui Street, Suite 310, Kingston, ON, K7K 1Z7 or by email to [editor@cap-acp.org](mailto:editor@cap-acp.org);
- Corrections are published upon request and after editorial review. Retractions are published upon request of authors or their institutions and may also be published following a determination of scientific misconduct;
- Notes of Concern are published in response to editorial concerns relating to scientific or publishing misconduct by authors or reviewers or to alert the scientific community of an ongoing investigation; and
- The editors will consider all refutations of previously published work, according to our usual standards of quality, with the original authors given the opportunity to respond to such criticisms.