

## Ethics Policy for Urban India

Urban India journal is a double blind peer-reviewed journal published bi-annually by NIUA since 1981. This policy details out ethical behaviour of all stakeholders involved in the process of publishing articles in this journal, which include author, editors and peer-reviewers. This policy is adapted from COPE's Best Practice Guidelines.

### Duties of Editor/s

**Decision on the Publication of Articles:** The editor, managing editor and associate editor of Urban India journal will decide which articles will be published based on the report of peer review. The validation of the work in question and its importance to researchers and readers will always underwrite such decisions. The editor, managing editor and associate editor should abide to the policies of the journal while deciding on inclusion or exclusion of an article. They have no authority to influence the reviewers who are conducting the blind peer review of the article.

**Fair Play:** Manuscripts shall be evaluated solely on their intellectual merit without regard to authors' race, gender, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy.

**Peer Review:** The editor/managing editor shall ensure that the peer review process is fair, unbiased, and timely. The editor shall select reviewers who have suitable expertise in the relevant field. The editor/managing editor shall review all disclosures of potential conflicts of interest and suggestions for self-citation made by reviewers in order to determine whether there is any potential for bias.

**Confidentiality:** The editor, managing editor, associate editor and any other editorial staff must not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers and other editorial advisers.

**Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest:** Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used by anyone who has viewed/read the manuscript (while handling it) in his or her own research without the written consent of the author.

**Journal Metrics:** The editor/managing editor/associate editor must not attempt to influence the journal's ranking by artificially increasing any journal metric. In particular, the editor shall not require that references to that (or any other) journal's articles be included except for genuine scholarly reasons and authors should not be required to include references to the editor's own articles or products and services in which the editor has an interest.

**Vigilance over the Published Record:** The editor should work to safeguard the integrity of the published record by reviewing and assessing reported or suspected misconduct. An editor presented with convincing evidence of misconduct should arrange the prompt publication of a correction, retraction, expression of concern, or other correction to the record, as may be relevant.

## **Duties of Reviewers**

**Contribution of Double Blind Peer Review:** Double blind peer review assists the editors to make decisions, and also assist the author in improving the article. The reviewers should not know the author's identity, as any identifying information will be removed from the manuscript before sending for review. Reviewers' comments to the editors are confidential, while comments to the authors will be made anonymous. The names of the reviewers remain strictly confidential; with their identities known only to the editor, managing editor and associate editor.

**Alertness to Ethical Issues:** Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that had been previously reported elsewhere should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also bring to the notice of the editor/managing editor any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published article of which they have personal knowledge.

**Confidentiality:** 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. Privileged information or ideas obtained through double blind peer review must be kept confidential and should not be used for personal advantage.

**Promptness:** Any selected reviewer who feels unqualified to review the assigned manuscript or unable to provide a timely review should convey the same to the editor/the managing editor. If possible, the reviewer should suggest an alternate.

**Standards of Objectivity:** Reviews should be conducted objectively. There shall be no personal criticism of the author. Reviewers should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

**Conflict of Interest:** Reviewers should not review manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors or institutions connected to the articles.

## **Duties of Authors**

**Reporting Standards:** Authors 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 article. An article should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.

**Data Access and Retention:** Authors may be asked to provide the raw data in connection with an article for editorial review, and should retain such data for a reasonable time after publication.

**Originality and Plagiarism:** Authors should ensure that they have written entirely original work, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others, it should be appropriately cited or quoted.

**Multiple Publications:** An author should not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical publishing behaviour and is unacceptable.

**Authorship of the Article:** 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. A student is usually listed as principal author on any multiple-authored publication that substantially derives from the student's dissertation or thesis. Individuals who provided writing assistance, e.g. from a copy editor or specialist communications company, do not qualify as authors and should be included in the acknowledgements section.

**Corresponding Author:** The corresponding author is responsible for communicating with the journal for publication. The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors are included in the article, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the article and have agreed to its submission for publication.

**Acknowledgment:** Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be mentioned. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, or a department chair who provided only general support. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.

**Acknowledgment of Funding Sources:** Sources of funding for the research reported in the article should be duly acknowledged at the end of the article and before the references.

**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 interpretation of their 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 Editor/Managing Editor and cooperate with the editors to retract or correct the article.

## Duties of Editorial Board Members

**Journal Ambassadors:** Editorial board members should act as ambassadors for the journal, sourcing potential authors, readers and subscribers in their region. They should also encourage their students and colleagues to read and cite the journal.

**Identifying new topics:** Editorial board members will help in identification of new topics for the journal and special editions. They should provide direction to the journal by giving feedback on past issues and giving suggestions on both subject matter and potential authors.

**Contributing Editorials:** Editorial board members can contribute by writing occasional editorials, short articles and also do book review.

**Outreach:** They will approach potential contributors and endorse the journal to authors, readers and subscribers.

**Peer Review:** They should act as a ready team of potential reviewers. They should help to identify peer reviewers and provide second opinions on articles (i.e. where there is a conflict between reviewers).

**Competing interests:** Editorial board members should declare all competing/conflicting interests, if any. If they are unsure about a potential competing or conflicting interest they should raise it to the editor. Competing interests may be personal, financial, intellectual, professional, political or religious in nature.

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