

Code of Ethics

ContactZone is committed to the publication of high standard and original papers. The Ethical Code describes *ContactZone*'s policies for ensuring the ethical treatment of all participants in the peer review and publication process. The guidelines of the Ethical Code involve all parties: Editor, Guest Editors, Reviewers, Authors and Publisher. These guidelines apply to all manuscripts submitted to *ContactZone*. Everyone involved should behave responsibly and ethically. The following duties outlined for editors, authors, and reviewers are based on the COPE – Core practices, See https://publicationethics.org/files/u2/Best_Practice.pdf (last accessed October 2022).

Authors

Authors should submit an original work, based on research. It should not have been published elsewhere. When using or referring to the work or words of others, they must ensure that the authors and the sources are adequately quoted. Authors should submit to the journal unpublished material, which is not currently being considered for publication in another journal. Where there are others who have participated in substantial aspects of the research, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors. Authors should ensure they have permission for the use of tables, software, visual images in their article, and should be ready to prove so.

The peer-review process

ContactZone is based on peer-review in order to preserve the high quality of papers. The manuscripts go through an initial review by the Editor-in-Chief, who evaluates the submitted manuscripts to decide if they respond to the journal's criteria and, in case of special issues, to the proposed topic. Manuscripts which do not pass the initial review will not be considered for publication.

Manuscripts that pass the initial review are assigned to reviewers. The Guest Editors should choose them according to their expertise in the given field of the issue. Guest Editors should provide the Journal with the reviewers' academic information (e-mail address) and affiliation. The review process is double-blind. The blind peer-review guarantees the integrity of the scholarly research publication, in a process in which the identities of the potential authors and the reviewers are concealed from each other.

The reviewers should be objective and specific in their comments, providing feedback when necessary. They should remain unbiased in relation to nationality, political beliefs, gender or religion. The reviewers evaluate manuscripts according to: originality, overall structure, methodology used and its proper application, updated bibliography on the topic, academic language used, soundness of conclusion, and contribution to the field. The reviewers then recommend that the manuscript be "Accepted", "Accepted with minor revisions", "Accepted with major revisions", or "Declined". The Guest Editors inform the authors and send them the reviewers' comments without revealing their names. Based on the reviewers' comments, the Guest Editors decide which of the articles submitted to the Journal should be published. The Chief Editor is responsible for approving the Guest Editors' decisions and may confer with the Journal's Advisory Board for further advice.

Confidentiality

All the participants involved in the process (Chief-Editor, Guest Editors, Reviewers, Publisher), must not disclose any information about submitted contributions to anyone other than the submitting author, reviewers, other editorial advisers and the publisher, as appropriate. Editors and reviewers must respect the confidentiality of the peer-review process and refrain from using information obtained during the peer-review process for their own advantage.

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