

Peer Review – Why and How Should You Become a Reviewer

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Dear Readers,
Greetings from the Editor's desk!

Our Journal has been around for quite some time. We have been receiving numerous manuscripts for publication for the past few years.

One of the strengths of any medical journal is its peer review process. It is fundamental in selecting high quality articles to be published, besides helping our journal indexed. One of the most important tasks at hand, besides having a stellar Editorial Board; is to set up a robust peer review process and pool of reviewers.

What is Peer Review and how does it work?

Journals use peer review to validate the research reported in submitted manuscripts, and to help inform their decisions about whether or not to publish that article in their journal. The editor usually sends a manuscript to two or more experts in the field to review it. The experts—called “peer reviewers”—will then prepare a report that assesses the manuscript for propriety, accuracy, originality, research question, methodology, ethics etc. and return it to the editor.

After reading the peer reviewer's report, the editor will decide to do one of three things: reject the manuscript, accept the manuscript, or ask the authors to revise and resubmit the manuscript after responding to the peer reviewers' feedback.

Why is Peer Review so important?

Peer review is the gold standard for ensuring the integrity and quality of scholarly manuscripts. It is a collaboration between experts, with critical feedback to improve research and help propel it forward.

Why become a Reviewer?

Being asked to review a manuscript is a great honour. It is a recognition of your authority/ expertise in your field. It is a great opportunity to keep abreast of research, learn new and best-practice methods, and start examining your own research from a critical vantage point. Peer reviewing helps you in turn to become a better writer. Peer review work is evidence of your standing and contributions in your field, which can boost your CV and help you get ahead. Writing a thorough, thoughtful review is a time consuming task. But by taking the time to write a good review, you will be providing a service to the scientific community. More importantly, peer review improves research. If you are keen on helping advancing research through sound science, then peer reviewing is one of the most rewarding things you can do. You will get to read some of the latest science in your field well before it is in the public domain.

Becoming a peer reviewer will improve your critical thinking skills, which will help you in your own

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research and writing.

What to do when you are invited to review a manuscript?

Before you accept or decline an invitation to review, consider the following questions:

- Does the article match your area of expertise? Accept only if you feel you can provide a high-quality review.
- Do you have a potential conflict of interest? Disclose this to the editor when you respond.
- Do you have time? Reviewing can be a lot of work – before you commit, make sure you can meet the deadline.
- If you are new to the reviewing process, there are several online resources to help you learn about the peer review process.

Timely reviews are of utmost importance to authors. Please respond to the invitation as soon as you can (even if it is to decline) – a delay in your decision slows down the review process and means more waiting for the author. If you do decline the invitation, it would be helpful if you could provide suggestions for alternative reviewers.

What are the types of Peer Review?

There are three main types of peer review:

1. Closed peer review—where the reviewers are aware of the authors' identities but the authors' are never informed of the reviewers' identities.
2. Double-blind peer review—where neither author nor reviewer is aware of each other's identities.
3. Open peer review—where authors and reviewers are aware of each other's identity. In some journals with open peer review the reviewers' reports are published alongside the article.

I sincerely hope that with this Editorial will encourage you to consider becoming a peer reviewer for the Journal of Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery, and help us further the cause of the Journal.

Best regards,

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