

Publication ethics and publication malpractice

The journal [Applied and Computational Mechanics](#) (ACM) adheres to the international standards of publication ethics for authors, editors, reviewers and journal publishers established by the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#) (COPE) and by the [Council of Science Editors](#) (CSE). The ethic statement of the ACM journal is mainly based on the requirements and recommendations outlined in the guidelines published by the COPE, particularly the Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.

Authors

Authors submitting a manuscript to the ACM journal are required to adhere to the following ethical standards:

- **Originality and acknowledgement of sources**

All authors should ensure that their works are entirely original and previously unpublished, i.e., their manuscripts are not under copyright elsewhere (in whole or in part). Authors should also properly acknowledge the work of others, all the more so if it has been influential in determining the nature of the reported study.

- **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. In order to permit others to replicate the work, the manuscript should contain accurate underlying data, sufficient detail and all the necessary references. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements are generally viewed as unethical behaviour and are deemed unacceptable for any publication in the ACM journal.

- **Disclosure and conflicts of interest**

By submitting a manuscript to the ACM journal, authors are bound to disclose any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or their interpretation in the manuscript. This disclosure entails all sources of funding (government, corporate, other) and any products or services (e.g., materials and equipment) provided by third parties in the course of the research, analysis or reporting. Authors should expect editors to publish all relevant disclosures with their accepted manuscript.

- **Multiple and "salami" publications**

In general, it is not acceptable for authors to submit their manuscript to several journals at the same time or submit a paper that has not been formally rejected by another journal. In this context, the editors of the ACM journal reserve the right to reject such a manuscript on the grounds of policy violation, which in retrospect can be also viewed as a violation of copyright. The same applies to so-called "salami publications" characterised by similarity of hypothesis, methodology or results but not text similarity, i.e., when data gathered by one research project is separately reported (wholly or in part) in multiple journals and publications.

To avoid parallel publication of manuscripts describing essentially the same research, authors, who want to submit their article to another journal, while it is under consideration elsewhere, should send a formal notification to the editor of the journal in which it is under consideration, requesting that their study be withdrawn from further consideration.

- **Copyright Assignment**

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author assigns the manuscript copyright ownership to the ACM journal in the event the work is published. The copyright transfer covers the right to reproduce and distribute the paper, including reprints, in all now or hereafter known media forms (electronic media such as CD-ROM, internet etc.). Authors should ensure that the study under consideration is original, i.e., not otherwise under copyright elsewhere (in whole or in part), and does not contain plagiarised content.

- **Hazards and human or animal subjects**

If the work involves chemicals, procedures or equipment that have any unusual hazards inherent in their use, the authors must clearly identify these in the manuscript. If the work involves the use of animal or human subjects, the author should ensure that the manuscript contains a statement that all procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and that the appropriate institutional committee(s) has approved them. Authors should include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects. The privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed.

- **Fundamental errors in already published works**

When authors discover a significant error or inaccuracy in their own published work, it is their obligation to notify the journal's editor and cooperate with him to either retract the paper or to publish an appropriate erratum. When such a significant error is discovered by a third party, it is the obligation of the author to promptly retract or correct the paper or provide evidence of the correctness of the original paper.

Editors

The editors of the ACM journal are required to behave in accordance with the international standards regarding the editing of scientific papers promoted by the COPE and CSE:

- **Confidentiality**

Editors and the publication staff should keep all information about a submitted manuscript confidential, sharing it only with those involved in the evaluation, review, and publication processes. Editors should take reasonable steps to ensure that confidential information is not used inappropriately for the advantage of others.

- **Accountability and publication decisions**

Editors are required to assume responsibility for monitoring and ensuring the fairness, timeliness, thoroughness, and civility of the peer-review editorial process. It is their duty to decide which papers submitted to the ACM journal should be published and which should be rejected. In making these decisions, the editors may be guided by the policies of the journal's editorial board as well as by legal requirements regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The editor may confer with other editors or reviewers when making publication decisions.

- **Impartiality and fairness**

Editors should treat all authors with fairness, courtesy, objectivity, honesty and transparency without regard to their race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship or political philosophy.

- **Disclosure and conflicts of interest**

Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used by anyone involved in the publication process in his or her own research without the express written consent of the author(s). Editors should preclude business needs from compromising intellectual and ethical standards and ensure that advertising, reprint or other commercial revenue has no impact or influence on editorial decisions. In cases, where editors have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors or companies connected to the papers, it is their duty to recuse themselves from the peer review process.

- **Involvement and cooperation in investigations**

Editors should maintain the journal's internal integrity by issuing corrections and retractions when needed. It is also their duty to act if they suspect misconduct or if an allegation of misconduct is brought to them, extending to both published and unpublished papers. In this regard, editors should take reasonably responsive measures such as contacting the author(s) of the manuscript or paper and giving due consideration of the respective complaint or claims made.

Reviewers

In accordance with the international ethical standards that the ACM journal upholds, the responsibilities of peer reviewers are stated as follows:

- **Competence**

Reviewers should accept an assignment only if they have adequate expertise to provide an authoritative assessment of a manuscript's content in a timely manner. Those who realise that their expertise is limited have a responsibility to make their degree of competence clear to the editor, avoiding so the risk of recommending acceptance of a submission with substantial deficiencies or rejection of a meritorious paper.

- **Disclosure of conflict of interest**

If reviewers have any interest that might interfere with an objective review, they should either decline the role of reviewer or disclose the conflict of interest to the editor and ask how best to address it. Privileged information or ideas obtained through the peer review must be kept confidential and not used for their own or any other person's or organization's advantage, or to disadvantage or discredit others.

- **Confidentiality**

Any manuscript received for review should not be shared or discussed with anyone outside the review process unless necessary and approved by the editor. Material submitted for peer-review is a privileged communication that should be treated in confidence, taking care to guard the identity and work of the author(s). Reviewers should not retain copies of submitted manuscripts and should not use the knowledge of their content for any purpose unrelated to the peer review process. It should be clearly noted that impersonation of another individual during the review process is considered serious misconduct.

- **Constructive critique**

Reviewers have the responsibility to identify strengths and provide constructive comments to help the author(s) resolve weaknesses in the work. In order for the editor and author(s) to understand the basis of the comments, reviewers should explain and support their judgement clearly. The review should be objective and not be influenced by the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender or other characteristics of the author(s), or by commercial considerations. Despite the confidential manner of the review process, reviewers should refrain from being hostile or inflammatory and from making libellous or derogatory personal comments.

- **Impartiality and integrity**

Reviewer comments and conclusions should be based on an objective and impartial consideration of the facts, exclusive of personal or professional bias. All comments by reviewers should be based solely on the paper's scientific merit, originality, and quality of writing as well as on the relevance to the journal's focus and scope.

- **Acknowledgement of sources**

Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the author(s). Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation. The editor should be alerted immediately when reviewers become aware of any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper of which they have personal knowledge.

- **Timeliness and responsiveness**

Reviewers are responsible for acting promptly, adhering to the instructions for completing a review, and submitting it in a timely manner. Failure to do so undermines the review process. If the reviewers are unable to meet the deadline for the review, they should notify the editor and either excuse himself from the review process or should inquire whether some accommodation can be made to resolve the problem.

Publisher

The publisher of the ACM journal follows the Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers set by the COPE, and as such, agrees to

- respect privacy for authors and reviewers,
- protect intellectual property and copyright,
- foster editorial independence.

In co-operation with the journal editors, the publisher commits itself to the following obligations to:

- set journal policies appropriately and aim to meet those policies, particularly with respect to editorial independence, authorship, peer review, transparency and integrity,
- maintain the integrity of the published academic record,
- publish content on a timely basis,
- publish corrections, clarifications and retractions when needed.

The duties of the publisher also entail the duty to ensure that advertising, reprint or other commercial revenue has no impact or influence on publication decisions and that the journal cannot be used for personal or commercial interests.

References

- [1] Committee on Publication Ethics: COPE. <http://publicationethics.org/>
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- [3] Council of Science Editors: CSE (2012) CSE's White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications. http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/files/public/entire_whitepaper.pdf
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