

JOURNAL

HOME

PAN AFRICAN JOURNAL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION (AFJED)

JOURNAL OF

**AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ACSBE)
(AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION COUNCIL)**

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

Research in entrepreneurship and small businesses has evolved so much that studies in these areas are abreast with the pace of globalisation and constant advances in technology. PAN AFRICAN JOURNAL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION (AFJED) is a peer-reviewed

and revered journal introduced to advance and sustain research in these areas. AFJED is published by **AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ACSBE)**, and welcomes research papers in Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

PAN AFRICAN JOURNAL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION is a leading scholarly journal in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation. The journal's aim is to publish original papers which contribute to the advancement of entrepreneurship and allied fields.

Objectives

The main objective of AFJED are to establish an effective channel of communication between policy makers, government agencies, academic and research institutions and persons concerned with entrepreneurship and SMEs management in society. It also aims to promote and coordinate international research efforts. The international dimension is emphasised in order to understand cultural and national barriers and to meet the needs of entrepreneurs in the global economy.

Readership

AFJED provides a vehicle to help academics, researchers, policy makers, entrepreneurs and small business managers, working in the field, to disseminate information and to learn from each other's work. This includes indigenous enterprise, and employment creation.

FOCUS AND SCOPE

AFJED publishes conceptual and empirical papers mainly for the interest of scholars, practitioners, consultants, academicians and public policy makers. The journal attracts submissions from academics, focusing upon theoretical, empirical, policy and professional issues within the fields of entrepreneurship and small business. The journal's contents reflect its integrative approach - including primary research articles, discussion of current issues, case studies, reports, book reviews and forthcoming meetings. The journal is dedicated to the formulation, development, implementation and evaluation of enterprise policy. The journal is a peer review journal as such a double-blind review process is followed, supported by a national and international Editorial Review Board to ensure academic integrity.

The mission of the AFJED is to publish empirical and theoretical contributions in the form of fieldwork, case-studies, qualitative, quantitative and conceptual papers. The significance of the findings is applied as relevant and functional in the entrepreneurial and management fields. It is envisaged that the AFJED will serve as a platform in which information central to the concerns of professionals and academics is presented. In this way research not only grows out of the concerns of professionals, but simultaneously shapes theories for future practice.

Scope/Contents

AFJED publishes original papers, literature reviews, empirical studies, theoretical frameworks, case studies, and book reviews. Special theme issues are devoted to essentials of entrepreneurship like:

- Venture Creation
- Small Business Management
- Social Entrepreneurship

- Government policy on entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship in ethnic enclaves
- Self-employment among immigrants
- Entrepreneurship among minority groups
- Indigenous entrepreneurship
- Gender and entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship in developing and transitional countries
- Entrepreneurship and ethics
- Corporate intrapreneurship
- Entrepreneurial marketing, leadership and management
- Knowledge entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial learning organisations
- Social entrepreneurship, family entrepreneurship
- Sustainable entrepreneurship, parallel entrepreneurship
- e-Entrepreneurship, part-time entrepreneurship, home-based entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship education
- Agricultural Entrepreneurship
- Agricultural Mechanization
- Applied Business Entrepreneurship
- Artificial Intelligence
- Biotechnology Entrepreneurship
- Change and Innovation Management
- Corporate Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Creative Entrepreneurship
- Creative Problem Solving
- Creativity and Innovation
- Criminal Entrepreneurship
- Cultural Entrepreneurship
- Design Driven Entrepreneurship
- Design Thinking
- Digital Entrepreneurship
- Edupreneurship/Academic Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurial Accounting and Finance
- Entrepreneurial Economics
- Entrepreneurial Marketing
- Entrepreneurial Mentoring
- Entrepreneurial Opportunity Assessment and Exploitation
- Entrepreneurship Case Studies
- Entrepreneurship Ecosystem
- Environmental Entrepreneurship (Ecopreneurship)
- Ethics in Entrepreneurship
- Family Entrepreneurship
- Healthcare Entrepreneurship/Medical Entrepreneurship/Pharmaceutical Entrepreneurship
- Hospitality and Tourism Entrepreneurship
- International Entrepreneurship
- Management (Business Basics) for Entrepreneurs
- Legal Aspects of Entrepreneurship

- Machine Learning
- Management Information System & Entrepreneurial Intelligence
- Mathematics for Entrepreneurs
- Media Entrepreneurship
- New Venture Creation
- Organisational Behaviour, Team Management and Entrepreneurial Leadership
- Political Entrepreneurship
- Professional Business Communication Skills for Entrepreneurs
- Project Management
- Psychology of Entrepreneurship
- Public Entrepreneurship
- Quality Management for SMEs
- Quantitative Techniques for Entrepreneurs
- Risk Management for SMEs
- Rural Entrepreneurship
- Small Business Management
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Sports Entrepreneurship
- Strategic Entrepreneurship
- Supply Chain Management for Entrepreneurs
- Sustainability Entrepreneurship (Sustainopreneurship)
- Technopreneurship
- Theory of Entrepreneurship
- Women Entrepreneurship
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PUBLICATION POLICIES

Copyright and Licensing

Copyright

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Authors

Criteria for publication

To publish with ACSBE the work should generally meet four criteria:

- Provide strong evidence for its conclusions.
- Be important to academics/researchers, professionals and students in the specific field.
- Ideally, be interesting to researchers in other related disciplines.
- Represent an advance in understanding, or provide support for an evolving understanding that is likely to influence thinking in the field.

Corresponding author

Groups of authors must decide on a corresponding author who acts on behalf of all the authors during the submission, review and publication processes. The corresponding author must submit the manuscript, related files and all required information to ACSBE. From submission to publication, all communication related to the manuscript will be directed to, and received from, the corresponding author only.

Before submission, the corresponding author must ensure that all authors are:

- included in the author list;
- appear in an agreed order; and
- are aware of the manuscript's submission, having approved the final version.

After acceptance, a proof is sent to the corresponding author, who circulates it to all co-authors and deals with ACSBE on their behalf. ACSBE will not necessarily correct errors after publication if they result from errors that were present on a proof that was not shown to co-authors before publication. The corresponding author is responsible for the accuracy of all content in the proof, in particular that names of co-authors are present and spelled correctly, and that addresses and affiliations are current.

ACSBE also regards the corresponding author as the point of contact for queries about the published work. It is this author's responsibility to inform all co-authors of matters arising from the published work and to ensure that such matters are dealt with promptly.

ACSBE and its editors treat the submitted manuscripts and all communication with authors and reviewers as confidential. Authors must also treat communication with ACSBE as confidential: correspondence with the publisher, reviewers' reports and other confidential material must not be posted on any website or otherwise publicised without permission from ACSBE or editors, whether the submission is eventually published or not.

Multi-group collaborations

ACSBE assumes that at least one member of each collaboration, usually the most senior member of each submitting group or team, has accepted responsibility for the contributions to the manuscript from that team.

This responsibility includes, but is not limited to:

- ensuring that original data upon which the submission is based are preserved and retrievable for re-analysis;
- approving data presentation as representative of the original data; and
- foreseeing and minimising obstacles to the sharing of data, materials, algorithms or reagents (in some cases in agricultural and technology entrepreneurship) described in the work.

Authorship

Authors should take collective responsibility for submitted and published work. The research literature serves as a record of both what was discovered and who discovered it. The authorship of a research publication should therefore accurately reflect individuals' contributions to the work and its reporting. All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship and be listed.

It is generally accepted that individuals are entitled to authorship of a manuscript when they meet all these criteria:

- Made a substantial contribution to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data;
- Drafted the manuscript or critically revised it for important intellectual content;
- Approved the final version to be published.

N/B: Only acquiring funding, collecting data, or generally supervising the research group do not justify authorship.

If a multi-authored publication draws substantially from a student's dissertation or thesis then that student should preferably be listed as the *Principal Author*.

Likewise, the supervisor of such a student should be involved as *co-author*. If they explicitly

decline any of the implied co-author responsibilities, their role must be outlined in ‘acknowledgements’ and they must be informed to avoid any misunderstandings.

Contributions that do not meet authorship criteria should be mentioned in the ‘Acknowledgements’ section of the manuscript. This includes the involvement of a professional writer.

Author contributions/affiliations

Authors who collaborated on published work share a degree of responsibility for all or part of the work. Each author should have participated in the work enough to take public responsibility for its content.

The affiliations of authors must reflect their situation during the funding, conducting and completion of the research, i.e. where the research was carried out. If an author has changed affiliation since the completion of the research, the author’s first affiliation must still reflect the institution where the research was conducted, supported and funded.

Authors are required to include a statement in the manuscript that specifies the contribution of every author. The level of detail varies: some disciplines produce manuscripts where different contributions are explicit, while in other fields authors work as a group throughout.

Requests for changes in the list of authors or their affiliations on a manuscript after initial submission, or after publication, will be subject to the guidelines as prescribed by the Publication Ethics Committee (PECom) to resolve the matter. This implies that all initially listed authors need to agree on any such changes in writing.

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Authors have a right to appeal editorial decisions. Our journal/book editors have mechanisms for authors to appeal peer-review decisions. The editor shall mediate all exchanges between authors and peer-reviewers during the peer-review process, i.e. prior to publication. If agreement cannot be reached, editors may invite comments from additional peer-reviewer(s) if they feel that this would help. The editor's decision following such an appeal is final.

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Authors are welcome to suggest suitable independent reviewers when they submit their manuscripts, but these suggested reviewers may not be used to review their manuscript at ACSBE. Authors may also request ACSBE to exclude a few (usually not more than two) individuals. ACSBE and its editors shall consider such exclusion requests sympathetically and usually honour them, but the editor's decision on the choice of peer-reviewers is final.

Competing interests

Any relevant competing interests of authors must be available to editors during the review process and must be declared by authors in the published work. Conflict of interest exists when

an author (or the author's institution) has financial or personal relationships with other persons or organisations that inappropriately influence (bias) their opinions or actions.

Authors must declare:

- all sources of research funding, including direct and indirect financial support, supply of equipment or materials, or other forms of conflict of interest, which may have prevented them from executing and publishing unbiased research;
- the role of the research funder(s) or sponsor (if any) in the research design, execution, analysis, interpretation and reporting; and
- any other relevant financial and non-financial interests and relationships that might be considered likely to affect the interpretation of their findings or which editors, reviewers or readers might reasonably wish to know. This includes any relationship to the journal (for example, if editors wish to publish their own research in their own work).

Publication fees

The Article Processing Charge (APC) or assessment fee is N5000 while publication fee is N15,000. The author/corresponding author will get one print copy. However, the author may order for additional print copy. The charge for each additional print copy is N2500. The publication fee is charged only for accepted paper. The author/corresponding author has to pay the publication as per the method determined by the editor-in-chief. The author will get official receipt of publication fee with proper seal and signature.

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Since no fees are charged for access to articles, ACSBE offsets publication expenses – including those of peer-review management, journal production and online hosting and archiving – by charging a publication fee, also known as an Article Processing Charge (APC), to authors, institutions or funders for each article published.

The APC for each journal is published on the journal website. The author(s) remains ultimately responsible for the payment of the APC, even if the responsibility for the payment has been transferred by them to a third party (e.g. institution of funder). In the event that the article is retracted by the authors after acceptance, they shall be liable for all costs incurred by ACSBE up to the point of retraction.

Authors are encouraged to contact their institution, funder or the Editor-in-Chief of the journal for more details of possible APC funding opportunities. Possibilities are: covering APC in the research grant, utilizing the open access funds of the institution, or a direct APC waiver by the publisher. If the APC was formally waived by the publisher, the authors will not be held responsible for any APC.

ACSBE publication decisions ultimately are based solely on editorial and scientific criteria and are completely independent of APC payments.

Invoicing and payment

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Galley Change Fees (GCF)

Authors will be given the opportunity to revise and approve the text of the accepted manuscript in the final phase of copy-editing. After author approval, the manuscript will go to design layout. The author will be asked to proofread the final galley before going to publishing. Proofreading is intended to correct typesetting mistakes and not to introduce new changes to the text; such changes will require new layout of the pages. If new changes are introduced in this final proofreading stage, the publisher will charge Galley Change Fees (GCF) to the author, based on the cost incurred to make such changes.

Reimbursement policy

In order to ensure that ACSBE does not charge twice for the same article, we will fully refund the APC where alternative funding is provided for an open access article. For example, when an open access article is part of a Special Issue which is later made available in its entirety on an open access basis, such as through sponsorship by an organisation, we will fully refund individual APCs paid by an author or on their behalf.

However, no refunds or credits on APCs will be offered in the following circumstances:

- **Article retraction:** ACSBE has provided a full publishing service and uses the APCs in order to recoup this investment. If an article that has been worked on by ACSBE is later retracted, this does not negate the fact that publishing services have been provided, including on-going maintenance of the scientific record (e.g. archiving in perpetuity).
- **Article removal:** In the rare occurrence of an article being removed entirely after having been accepted for publication, we will not refund or credit an APC. This is because ACSBE has provided publishing services, for which the APCs help cover the costs. Such removal of the article does not negate the fact that such services have been provided, and is usually for reasons beyond our control.
- **Delays due to editorial decisions or author changes:** These are a standard part of the publishing process.
- **Circumstances beyond our control:** This may include, for example, where natural or other disasters prevent ACSBE from fulfilling its obligations.

E-Publication First

E-Publication First is a feature offered through our journal platform. It allows PDF version of manuscripts that have been peer-reviewed and accepted, to be hosted online prior to their inclusion in a final printed journal. Readers can freely access or cite the article. The accepted papers are published online within one week after the completion of all necessary publishing steps.

DOI number

Each paper published in PAN AFRICAN JOURNAL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION is assigned a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) number, which appears beneath the author's affiliation in the published paper.

Submission

The author should submit the paper via e-mail to the editor-in-chief at AFJED@ACSBE.org and editorinchief@ACSBE.org

Manuscript Preparation Guidelines

The author(s) must follow the Manuscript Preparation Guidelines in preparing the manuscript before submission.

1. Language

The language of the manuscript must be English (British standard).

2. Length of paper

The length of the paper should not exceed 30 pages (Times New Roman, 12 Font) excluding tables, figures, references and appendices (if any). Paper containing more than 30 pages will be returned to the author(s) to abridge. Articles should be typed in double-space (including footnotes and references) on one side of the paper only (preferably A4) with wide margins. Authors are urged to write as concisely as possible, but not at the expense of clarity.

3. Title Page

The title page should include:

(i) The name(s) of the author(s) (ii) A concise and informative title (iii) The affiliation(s) and address (es) of the author(s) (iv) The e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers of the corresponding author

4. Abstract

Please provide an abstract of 150 to 200 words. The abstract should not contain any undefined abbreviations or unspecified references.

5. Keywords

Please provide 4 to 6 keywords which can be used for indexing purposes.

6. Acknowledgement

The author may use acknowledgement section in the title page of the paper (if any).

7. Subdivision of the article

Divide your article into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 1, 2. (then 1.1, 1.1.1, 1.1.2), 1.2, etc. The abstract is not included in section numbering.

8. Table and Figures

Present tables and figures within the article, not at the end of the article. Please note that the article will be published in black and white (print), although online version will contain the colourful figures (if any). However, the colour print will be available in extreme cases as per the request of the author.

9. References

Author(s) should follow the latest edition of APA style in referencing. Please visit www.apastyle.org to learn more about APA style

Citations in the text

Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Avoid citation in the abstract. Unpublished results and personal communications should not be in the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text. Citation of a reference as 'in press' implies that the item has been accepted for publication.

Reference List

References should be arranged first alphabetically and then further sorted chronologically if necessary.

Examples:

Reference to a journal publication:

Van der Geer, J., Hanraads, J. A. J., & Lupton R. A. (2000). The art of writing a scientific article. *Journal of Scientific Communications*, 163, 51-59.

Reference to a book:

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (1979). *The elements of style*. (3rd ed.). New York: Macmillan, (Chapter 4).

Reference to a chapter in an edited book:

Mettam, G. R., & Adams, L. B. (1994). How to prepare an electronic version of your article. In B. S. Jones, & R. Z. Smith (Eds.), *Introduction to the electronic age* (pp. 281-304). New York: E-Publishing Inc.

Reference to a web source:

Smith, Joe, (1999), One of Volvo's core values. [Online] Available: <http://www.volvo.com/environment/index.htm> (July 7, 1999)

Publication frequency

The journal publishes at least one issue each year. Articles are published online when ready for publication and then printed in an end-of-year compilation. Additional issues may be published for special events (e.g. conferences) and when special themes are addressed.

Types of articles published

The following types of articles are accepted by the journal:

- ***Original research:*** An original article provides an overview of innovative research in a particular field within or related to the focus and scope of the journal, presented according to a clear and well-structured format (3500-7000 words with a maximum of 60 references).
- ***Review articles:*** The review article presents a critical review of the literature on a topic that has both social and scientific value, and which is within the focus and scope of the journal (between 2500–4000 words with a maximum of 60 references). Systematic reviews are considered under original research.
- ***Editorials:*** Editorials are by invitation only and are intended to provide expert comment on relevant topics within the focus and scope of the journal. (Less than 800 words with a maximum of 10 references).

Review Policy

The journal follows double blind peer-review policy. The Manuscripts are initially examined by editorial staff and are sent by the Editor-in-Chief to two reviewers (the experts in respective field) to review the paper in the light of journal's guidelines and features of a quality research paper. For papers which require changes, the same reviewers will be used to ensure that the quality of the revised paper is acceptable.

Review and Publication Process

The journal follows a systematic review and publication policy.

Step - 1: The submitted manuscript is acknowledged within 24 hours upon receipt.

Step – 2: The manuscript/paper is sent to two reviewers (paper without the name and affiliations of the author(s)). The review process takes maximum of two weeks.

Step – 3: The review reports are collected from the reviewers and the editor-in-chief will send the review reports to the authors including all terms and conditions of the publication.

Step - 4: If the paper is accepted, the editor-in-chief will ask the author/corresponding author to pay the publication fee of the journal within the specified time. If the paper is accepted subject to modification, the editor-in-chief will send the review reports to the author/corresponding author including a formal request to modify the paper in seven days as per the suggestions of the reviewers. The executive author will send the modified paper to the same reviewers of the said paper to justify the modifications. If the paper is again returned by the reviewers, the paper is said to be finally rejected. The journal will not proceed with the said paper. However, in case of very minor changes, the editorial board may consider the paper for further modifications.

Step – 5: The accepted paper is processed for publication (soft copy) upon the successful completion of the journal's terms and conditions (It takes maximum of three days after receiving the publication fee). The author may ask for acceptance letter after making the payment of publication fee. The acceptance letter is issued within two days of publication fee receipt.

Step – 6 : Proof Reading. The editor-in-chief will send the processed paper for publication (MS Word) to the author/corresponding author for proof reading.

Step – 7: The paper is published online first. The editor-in-chief will notify the author/corresponding author about online publication with necessary download link. The author/corresponding author may request for any correction in published paper (in case of extremely important changes) within three days of online publication.

Step – 8: The journal is published in print within two weeks of online publication.

Step - 9: The editor-in-chief will ask the authors of the published papers to send their correct and complete mailing address within three days after print publication.

Step - 10: The editor-in-chief will send the hard copy of the journal to the authors within one month after print publication.

MARKETING

ACSBE has a number of ways in which we promote publications.

CORRECTING THE RECORD

ACSBE is committed to preserving the historical accuracy of all its publications. In principle, no published work should be altered or removed from the print or electronic platforms after it has been published.

ACSBE considers the online version of an article/manuscript/work published as the final and complete version. Even though it may be possible to correct this version, the policy is not to do so, except in very specific circumstances. The editors will make the final decision whether to correct a published work.

Authors of published works must inform ACSBE promptly if they become aware of work needing correcting. Any correction requires the consent of all co-authors, so time is saved if requests for corrections are accompanied by a signed agreement by all authors. In cases where one or some authors do not agree with the correction statement, the coordinating author must provide the correspondence to and from the dissenting author(s).

Errata

An erratum is a correction of an important error (one that affects the publication record, the scientific integrity of the work, or the reputation of the authors or of the work) that has been introduced during the production of the work, including errors of omission such as failure to make factual proof corrections requested by authors within the deadline provided by ACSBE and within the ACSBE policy.

Errata for typing or grammatical errors will not be published, except where an apparently simple error is significant (for example, an incorrect unit). A significant error in a figure or table is corrected by publication of a new corrected figure or table as an erratum only if the editor considers this necessary for a reader to understand it.

Corrigenda

A corrigendum is a correction of an important error made by the authors of the work. Corrigenda are judged on their relevance to readers and their importance for the published record. Corrigenda are published after discussion among the editors, often with the help of peer-reviewers.

All co-authors must sign an agreed wording for the corrigendum. Corrigenda submitted by the original authors are published if the scientific accuracy or reproducibility of the original work is compromised; occasionally, on investigation by the editors, these may be published as retractions.

In cases where some co-authors decline to sign a corrigendum or retraction, ACSBE in consultation with the editors, reserves the right to publish it with the dissenting author(s) identified. ACSBE may publish a corrigendum if there is an error in the published author list, but not for overlooked acknowledgements.

Addenda

An addendum is a notification of a peer-reviewed addition of information to work (for example, in response to a reader's request for clarification). Addenda should not contradict the original publication, but if the author inadvertently omitted significant information available at the time, this material can be published as an addendum after peer-review and after discussion among the editors.

Addenda are published rarely and only when the editors decide that the addendum is crucial to the readers' understanding of a significant part of the published contribution.

Retractions

A retraction may be made with respect to *invalid results*, when the conclusions of a work are seriously undermined as a result of honest miscalculation or error.

A retraction may also be made as a *sanction applied to scientific misconduct*, such as a serious infringement of publishing ethics or a breach of author warranties, which can include breaches of third-party copyright. Infringements of publication ethics may include multiple submissions, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, and fraudulent use of data.

All co-authors will be asked to agree to a retraction. In cases where some co-authors decline to sign a retraction, ACSBE, in consultation with the editors reserves the right to publish the retraction with reference to the dissension among authors.

Retracted work will be clearly indicated and bear a 'retracted' watermark throughout. However, in rare circumstances it may be necessary to remove work completely from the online location. This will occur only where the published work infringes on others' legal rights, or is clearly defamatory, or where the work is (or clearly may be) the subject of a court order, or where the work's information might pose a serious health risk. In these circumstances, while some of the metadata will be retained online, the text will be replaced with a notice that the content has been removed for valid reasons.

Expression of concern

If conclusive evidence about the reliability or integrity of a published work cannot be obtained, e.g. if authors produce conflicting accounts of the case, or authors' institutions refuse to investigate alleged misconduct or to release the findings of such investigations, or if investigations appear not to have been carried out fairly or are taking an unreasonably long time to reach a conclusion, then the editor may issue an expression of concern rather than retracting the publication immediately.

Such expressions of concern, like retraction notices, shall be clearly linked to the original publication, i.e. in electronic databases and by including the author and title of the original publication as a heading, and shall state the reasons for the concern. If more conclusive evidence about the publication's reliability becomes available later, the expression of concern shall be replaced by a notice of retraction (if the article is shown to be unreliable) or by an exonerating statement linked to the expression of concern (if the article is shown to be reliable and the author is exonerated).

Publishing corrections

Corrections will be done in the following manner:

- The title will include the words 'Erratum', 'Corrigendum', 'Addendum', 'Retraction', or 'Expression of concern', as applicable.

- It will be published as a separate document, with a unique DOI, and be included in the work's table of contents.
- It will cite the original publication.
- It will enable the reader to identify and understand the correction in the context of the errors made, or explain why the work is being corrected, or explain the editor's concerns about the contents of the work.
- It will be linked electronically with the original electronic publication, wherever possible.
- It will be in a form that enables indexing and abstracting services to identify and link corrections to their original publications.

PEER-REVIEW

General Policy

ACSBE supports peer-review, since it allows research to be evaluated and commented upon by independent experts who work within the same academic field as the authors. It also helps to improve manuscripts and allows the editor to assess a work's suitability for publication. The following types of contributions to ACSBE are specifically peer-reviewed:

- Original research
- Review articles
- Case studies
- Research letters
- Monographs
- Collections of essays
- Conference proceedings.

Other works published outside these categories, particularly if they present technical information, may be peer-reviewed at the discretion of the editors.

The review process

The peer-review of scholarly journals functions on the basis that the manuscript is initially examined by editorial staff and, if selected, is sent by the Editor-in-Chief to two expert independent reviewers for formal review, either directly or by a Section Editor. Each journal's policy may vary slightly, so we encourage readers to visit journal portfolio for a list of our journals to assist in finding the applicable policy.

The peer-review of scholarly books functions on the basis of a chief editor (for scholarly books) supported by international Editorial Boards and expert review panels appointed by the chief editor in consultation with the relevant editorial board members.

To save time for authors and peer-reviewers, only work that seems most likely to meet our editorial criteria is sent for formal review. Those manuscripts judged by the editors to be of insufficient interest or otherwise inappropriate for ACSBE are rejected (desk rejected) promptly without external review. These decisions may also be based on advice from specialists in the field.

Manuscripts judged to be of potential interest to our readership are sent for formal review, typically to two or three reviewers but sometimes more if special advice is needed. The editors then make a decision based on the reviewers' advice, from among several possibilities:

- **Accept submission** – with or without editorial revisions.
- **Invite author revision** – addressing specific concerns before a final decision is reached.
- **Reject** – but indicate to the authors that further work might justify a resubmission.
- **Reject outright** – typically on the grounds of specialist interest, lack of novelty, insufficient conceptual advance or major technical and/or interpretational problems.

Reviewers are required to recommend a particular course of action, but should bear in mind that the other reviewers of a particular manuscript may have different technical expertise and/or views, and the editors may have to make a decision based on conflicting advice. The most useful reports, therefore, provide the editors with the information upon which a decision should be based, setting out the arguments for and against publication.

Editorial decisions are not a matter of counting votes or numerical rank assessments, and we do not always follow the majority recommendation. We try to evaluate the strength of the arguments raised by each reviewer and by the authors, and may also consider other information not available to either party. Our primary responsibilities are to our readers and to the scientific community at large, and in deciding how best to serve them we must weigh the claims of each manuscript against the many others also under consideration.

We may return to reviewers for further advice, particularly in cases where they disagree with each other, or where the authors believe they have been misunderstood on points of fact. We therefore ask that reviewers should be willing to provide follow-up advice as requested. We are very aware, however, that reviewers are usually reluctant to be drawn into prolonged disputes, so we try to keep consultation to the minimum as we judge necessarily to provide a fair hearing for the authors.

When reviewers agree to assess a manuscript we consider this a commitment to review subsequent revisions. However, editors will not send a resubmitted manuscript back to the reviewers if it seems that the authors have not made a serious attempt to address the criticisms.

We take reviewers' criticisms seriously. In particular, we are very reluctant to disregard technical criticisms. In cases where one reviewer alone opposes publication, we may consult the other reviewers as to whether the opposing reviewer is applying an unduly high critical standard. We occasionally bring in additional reviewers to resolve disputes, but prefer to avoid doing so unless there is a specific issue, e.g. a specialist technical point, on which we feel the need to obtain further advice.

Selecting peer-reviewers

Reviewer selection is critical to the publication process, and we base our choice on many factors, including expertise, reputation, specific recommendations and our own previous experience of a reviewer's characteristics. For instance, we avoid using people who are slow, careless, or do not

provide reasoning for their views, whether harsh or lenient.

We check with potential reviewers before sending them manuscripts to review. Reviewers should bear in mind that these messages contain confidential information, which should be treated as such.

ACSBE works on the basis that our editors should:

- establish and maintain a database of suitably qualified peer-reviewers for their journal;
- monitor the performance of peer-reviewers/editorial board members, recording the quality and timeliness of their reviews;
- ignore rude, defamatory peer-reviews. Peer-reviewers who repeatedly produce poor-quality, tardy, abusive or unconstructive reviews should not be used again;
- encourage peer-reviewers to identify any conflict of interest with the material they are being asked to review. In this situation peer-reviewers should decline invitations requesting peer-review where any circumstances might prevent them from producing a fair peer-review.
- take note of the peer-reviewers suggested by authors, but without considering such suggestions as binding.
- request that peer-reviewers who delegate peer-review to members of their staff inform the editor when this occurs, as peer-review is a confidential process.

Writing the review

The primary purpose of the review is to provide the editors with the information needed to reach a decision. The review should also instruct the authors on how they can strengthen their manuscript to the point where it may be acceptable. As far as possible a negative review should explain to the authors the weaknesses of their manuscript, so that rejected authors can understand the basis for the decision and see in broad terms what needs to be done to improve the manuscript for publication elsewhere. This is secondary to the other functions, however, and referees should not feel obliged to provide detailed, constructive advice to authors of manuscripts that do not meet the criteria for the journal (as outlined in the letter from the editor when asking for the review). If the reviewer believes that a manuscript would not be suitable for publication, their report to the author should be as brief as is consistent with enabling the author to understand the reason for the decision.

Confidential comments to the editor are welcome, but it is helpful if the main points are stated in the comments for transmission to the authors. The ideal review should answer the following questions:

- Who will be interested in reading the work, and why?
- What are the main claims/conclusions of the work and how significant are they?
- How does the work stand out from others in its field?
- Are the claims novel, or in support of emerging knowledge in the field?
- Are the claims/conclusions convincing? If not, what further evidence is needed?
- Are there other experiments or work that would strengthen the manuscript further?

- How much would further work improve it, and how difficult would this be? Would it take a long time?
- Are the claims appropriately discussed in the context of previous literature?
- If the manuscript is unacceptable, is the study sufficiently promising to encourage the authors to resubmit?
- If the manuscript is unacceptable but promising, what specific work is needed to make it acceptable?
- Are there any special ethical concerns arising from the use of human or animal subjects?

We appreciate that reviewers are busy, and are very grateful if they can answer the questions in the section above. If time is available it is extremely helpful to the editors if reviewers can also advise on some of the following points:

- Is the manuscript clearly written?
- If not, how could it be made more clear or accessible to non-specialists?
- Would readers outside the discipline benefit from a schematic of the main result to accompany publication?
- Should the authors be asked to provide supplementary methods or data to accompany the manuscript online? (Such data might include source code for modelling studies, detailed experimental protocols or mathematical derivations.)
- Have the authors done themselves justice without overselling their claims?
- Have they been fair in their treatment of previous literature?
- Have they provided sufficient methodological detail that the experiments could be reproduced?
- Is the statistical analysis of the data sound, and does it conform to the journal's guidelines?
- Are the reagents (if applicable) generally available?

Timing of reviews

ACSBE is committed to rapid editorial decisions and publication, and we believe that an efficient editorial process is a valuable service both to our authors and to the scientific community as a whole. We therefore ask reviewers to respond promptly within the number of days agreed. If reviewers anticipate a longer delay than previously expected, we ask them to let us know so that we can keep the authors informed and, where necessary, find alternatives.

Editors should aim to ensure timely peer-review and publication for manuscripts they receive, especially where – to the extent that this can be predicted – findings may have important implications. Authors should be aware that priority publication is most likely for manuscripts that, as judged by the journal's editorial staff, may have important implications. The timing of publication may also be influenced by themed issues or if editors group submissions on a similar topic; this inevitably prevents articles from being published in the order in which they were accepted.

Anonymity

ACSBE does not release reviewers' identities to authors or to other reviewers, except when reviewers specifically ask to be identified. However, unless they feel strongly, we prefer that reviewers should remain anonymous throughout the review process and beyond. Before revealing their identities, reviewers should consider the possibility that they may be asked to comment on the criticisms of other reviewers and on further revisions of the manuscript. Identified reviewers may find it more difficult to be objective in such circumstances.

We ask reviewers not to identify themselves to authors without the editor's knowledge. If they wish to reveal their identities while the manuscript is under consideration, this should be done via the editor or, if this is not practical, we ask authors to inform the editor as soon as possible after the reviewer has revealed their identity to the author.

We deplore any attempt by authors to confront reviewers or determine their identities. Our own policy is to neither confirm nor deny any speculation about reviewers' identities, and we encourage reviewers to adopt a similar policy.

Editing reviewers' reports

As a matter of policy we do not suppress reviewers' reports; any comments that were intended for the authors are transmitted, regardless of what we may think of the content. On occasion we may edit a report to remove offensive language or comments that reveal confidential information about other matters, or to make the report more understandable. We ask reviewers to avoid statements that may cause needless offence; conversely, we strongly encourage reviewers to state plainly their opinion of a manuscript. Authors should recognise that criticisms are not necessarily unfair simply because they are expressed in robust language.

Ethics and security

ACSBE's editors may seek advice about submitted manuscripts not only from technical reviewers but also on any aspect of a manuscript that raises concerns. These may include, for example, ethical issues or issues of data or materials access.

Very occasionally concerns may also relate to the implications to society of publishing a manuscript, including threats to security. In such circumstances advice will usually be sought simultaneously with the technical peer-review process. As in all publishing decisions, the ultimate decision whether to publish is the responsibility of the editor of the journal concerned.

If discussions between an author, editor and peer-reviewer have taken place in confidence, they should remain in confidence unless explicit consent has been given by all parties or there are exceptional circumstances.

Editors or board members will never be involved in editorial decisions about their own work.

Editors, members of editorial boards and other editorial staff (including peer-reviewers) should withdraw from discussions about submissions where any circumstances might prevent them from offering unbiased editorial decisions.

Editorial independence

Editorial independence should be respected. Owners (both learned societies and universities) should not interfere with editorial decisions. Decisions by editors about whether to publish individual items submitted to ACSBE should not be influenced by pressure from the editor's employer, the journal owner or the publisher.

Intellectual property

Authors are entitled to expect that peer-reviewers or other individuals privy to the work of an author who submits to ACSBE will not steal their research ideas or plagiarise their work.

ACSBE's guidelines to peer-reviewers are clear about their roles and responsibilities. In particular, the need to treat submitted material in confidence until it has been published. Furthermore, ACSBE expects peer-reviewers to destroy submitted manuscripts after they have reviewed them.

Editors should expect allegations of theft or plagiarism to be substantiated, but should treat allegations of theft or plagiarism seriously.

ETHICS

ACSBE trusts its editors, who in turn trust peer-reviewers to provide fair assessments, and authors trust editors to select appropriate peer-reviewers, and readers put their trust in the peer-review process. Academic publishing also occurs in an environment of powerful intellectual, financial, and sometimes political interests that may collide or compete.

Ideas and expression

Our editors and readers have a right to expect that submitted work is the author's own, that it has not been plagiarised, i.e. taken from other authors without permission where required, and that copyright has not been breached, e.g. if figures or tables are reproduced.

Ethical obligations

ACSBE expects authors to maintain the highest ethical standards when conducting research and in the publication process. The following principles, which are not an exhaustive list, should apply:

Soundness and reliability

The research being reported should:

- be conducted in an ethical and responsible manner and follow all relevant legislation;
- be sound and carefully executed; and
- use appropriate methods of data analysis and display.

The author(s) should:

- check their manuscripts carefully at all stages to ensure that methods and findings are reported accurately; and
- carefully check calculations, data presentations, typescripts/submissions and proofs.

Honesty

Researchers should:

- present their results honestly and without fabrication, falsification or inappropriate data manipulation;
- present research images, e.g. micrographs, X-rays, pictures of electrophoresis gels, without them being modified in a misleading way;
- follow applicable reporting guidelines;
- provide sufficient detail and describe their methods clearly and unambiguously and with reference to public sources of information, in order to permit others to repeat the work and confirm the findings. Data should always be reported accurately and never be manipulated, with any problematic data also treated accordingly;
- present reports of complete research. They should not omit inconvenient, inconsistent or inexplicable findings or results that do not support the authors' or sponsors' hypothesis or interpretation;
- alert the editor promptly if they discover an error in any submitted, accepted or published work. Authors should cooperate with editors in issuing corrections or retractions when required;
- represent the work of others accurately in citations and quotations;
- not copy references from other publications if they have not read the cited work; and
- identify any hazards inherent in conducting the research.

Special notes:

- Researchers should not enter agreements that permit the research sponsor to veto or control the publication of the findings (unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as research classified by governments because of security implications).
- If investigations have involved animals or human subjects, authors should provide all the statements required by the journal in order to prove that the experimental protocols were approved appropriately and that they meet all the guidelines of the agency involved, including obtaining informed consent where required.
- Information obtained privately should not be used without the explicit permission of the individuals from whom it was obtained, and appropriate letters confirming permission to include this information must be acquired.

Balance

Researchers should:

- present new findings in the context of previous research. The work of others should be fairly represented. Scholarly reviews and syntheses of existing research should be complete, balanced, and should include findings regardless of whether they support the

hypothesis or interpretation being proposed. Editorials or opinion pieces presenting a single viewpoint or argument should be clearly distinguished from scholarly reviews;

- address study limitations in their manuscript; and
- avoid criticisms of a personal nature, although well-supported criticism of a piece of work is always welcomed.

Originality

Researchers should:

- adhere to the accepted publication requirements that submitted work should be original and has not been published elsewhere in any language without express citation and acknowledgement of the previously published work;
- adhere to and follow all applicable copyright laws and conventions. Copyright material, e.g. tables, figures or extensive quotations, should be reproduced only with appropriate permission and acknowledgement;
- properly acknowledge and reference relevant previous work and publications, both by other researchers and the authors' own. The primary literature should be cited where possible;
- properly acknowledge data, text, figures or ideas originated by other researchers, and these should not be presented as if they were the authors' own work. Original wording taken directly from publications by other researchers should appear in quotation marks with the appropriate citations;
- inform editors if findings have been published previously or if multiple reports or multiple analyses of a single data set are under consideration for publication elsewhere. Authors should provide copies of related publications or work submitted to other books/journals; and
- not claim originality if others have already reported similar work in part or as a whole, and credit should always be given to the work and findings of others that have led to their findings or influenced them in some way.

Special notes:

- Multiple publications arising from a single research project should be clearly identified as such and the primary publication should be referenced. Translations and adaptations for different audiences should be clearly identified as such, should acknowledge the original source, and should respect relevant copyright conventions and permission requirements. If in doubt, authors should seek permission from the original publisher before republishing any work.
- Avoid fragmenting research to maximise the number of articles submitted (also known as 'salami publishing') to a journal, and the submission of the same research to multiple books/journals or other publication media (also known as parallel publishing). Both these practices seriously undermine the innovative nature of research findings.

Human/animal rights

ACSBE promotes ethical and responsible research practices:

- Authors should provide evidence that research has adhered to national standards for research practices (in human and animal studies).
- Authors should provide evidence that studies have been approved by relevant bodies, the relevant research ethics committee or institutional review board, e.g. institutional review board, research ethics committee, data and safety monitoring board, and regulatory authorities including those overseeing animal experiments.
- If human participants were involved manuscripts must be accompanied by a statement that the experiments were undertaken with the understanding and appropriate informed consent of each.
- If experimental animals were used the materials and methods (experimental procedures) section must clearly indicate that appropriate measures were taken to minimise pain or discomfort, and details of animal care should be provided.
- Editors should encourage peer-reviewers to consider ethical issues raised by the research they are reviewing.
- Editors should request additional information from authors if they feel this is required.
- Editors reserve the right to reject manuscripts if there is doubt whether appropriate procedures have been followed.
- If a manuscript has been submitted from a country where there is no ethics committee, institutional review board, or similar review and approval, editors should use their own experience to judge whether the manuscripts should be published. If the decision is made to publish a manuscript under these circumstances, a short statement should be included to explain the situation.
- Where individual human subjects or case studies are discussed, e.g. as in medicine, psychology, criminology, books/journals should protect confidentiality and should not permit publication of items that might upset or harm participants/subjects, or breach confidentiality of, for example, the doctor-patient relationship.
- ACSBE will not publish individual information and identifiable images from patients/human subjects. We will also require explicit consent from any patients described in case studies or shown in photographs.

Respecting confidentiality

In most cases editors should only consider publishing information and images from individual participants/subjects or patients where the authors have obtained the individuals' explicit consent. Exceptional cases may arise where gaining the individuals' explicit consent is not possible but where publishing such information or image can be demonstrated to have a genuine public health interest. In cases like this, before taking any action, editors should seek and follow counsel from the journal owner, ACSBE and/or legal professionals.

In the case of technical images (for example, radiographs, micrographs), editors should ensure that all information that could identify the subject has been removed from the image.

Plagiarism and fabrication

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is when an author attempts to pass off someone else's work as his or her own. Duplicate publication, sometimes called self-plagiarism, occurs when an author reuses substantial parts of his or her own published work without providing the appropriate references. This can range from having an identical manuscript published in multiple books/journals, to 'salami-slicing', where authors add small amounts of new data to a previous manuscript.

The editorial board is very strict regarding plagiarism. The journal believes that taking the ideas and work of others without giving them credit is unfair and dishonest. Copying even one sentence from someone else's manuscript, or even one of your own that has previously been published, without proper citation is considered plagiarism-use your own words instead. The editorial board retains the absolute authority to reject the review process of a submitted manuscript if it subject to minor or major plagiarism and even may cancel the publication upon the complaint of victim(s) of plagiarism.

Plagiarism can be said to have clearly occurred when large chunks of text have been cut and pasted. Such manuscripts would not be considered for publication in AFJED. However, minor plagiarism without dishonest intent is relatively frequent, for example when an author reuses parts of an introduction from an earlier manuscript. AFJED editors judge any case of which they become aware (either by their own knowledge of and reading about the literature, or when alerted by referees) on its own merits.

If a case of plagiarism comes to light after a manuscript is published in AFJED, the journal will conduct a preliminary investigation. If plagiarism is found, the journal will contact the author's institute and funding agencies. A determination of misconduct will lead the AFJED to publish a corrigendum linked to the original publication, with an explanation. Depending on the extent of the plagiarism, the manuscript may also be formally retracted.

Supplements/funded publications

In the case of journals that choose to publish supplements, special issues, sections, or similar materials that are funded by a third-party organisation, e.g. a company, society or charity – the supporter or sometimes sponsor, the content of funded items must align with the purpose of the journal. They must also include:

- explicit declaration of conflicts of interest or absence thereof for all contributions, including those of authors, editors and co-editors;
- explicit acknowledgement of any contributions (for example, editorial assistance) made by anyone other than named authors, including their affiliations;
- description of the processes used to select, review and edit the content, especially the differences in this process (if any) from the journal's normal content selection and peer-review processes; and
- details of the journal's affiliations and Editorial Board.

Journals that choose to publish supplements should appoint co-editors (including the individual who proposed the initial idea for the funded material and a second individual appointed by the journal) as standard procedure for all funded materials. This enables editorial decisions to be easily deputised, as should be the case when one editor is an author or is acknowledged as a contributor of a particular article, or when one editor is presented with manuscripts where their own interests may impair their ability to make an unbiased editorial decision.

A short statement explaining the process used to make editorial decisions must be included in the editorial of such an issue.

Journals should not permit funding organisations to make decisions beyond those about which publications they choose to fund and the extent of the funding. Decisions about the selection of authors and about the selection and editing of contents to be presented in funded publications should be made by the editor (or co-editors) of the funded publication.

ACSBE reserves the right not to publish any funded publication that does not comply with the requirements defined for the journal to which the manuscript or supplement has been submitted.

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