Editor Code of Conduct

The Editors-in-Chief and Subject Editors ensure the integrity of the publication process for their journals. The Subject Editors manage the review process for individual manuscripts, while the Editors-in-Chief provide oversight of the Subject Editors as well as managing the review process for certain types of manuscripts. Specific conduct includes the following:

Selection and evaluation of Editors

- **Editor-in-Chief.** The Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of a journal is selected by the ESA Governing Board based on a recommendation from that journal’s editorial board. The EIC’s term is five years with an option for renewal. The EIC’s annual evaluation is based on input from the journal’s editorial board, subject editors, and the ESA Director of Publications. The Governing Board can remove an EIC when there are job performance issues that cannot be resolved.

- **Subject Editors.** Subject Editors are recommended by the EIC and approved by the journal’s Editorial Board. They are selected based on their areas of expertise in the various subject areas that the journal covers. A Subject Editor’s term is four years with an option for renewal, although the editor may resign at any time if necessary. The EIC evaluates Subject Editors on an ongoing basis and may remove an editor if there are job performance issues that cannot be resolved.

General duties and responsibilities

Editors should be accountable for everything published in their journals. This means that the editors should:

- Strive to meet the needs of readers and authors.
- Strive to constantly improve their journal.
- Have processes in place to assure the quality of published material.
- Champion freedom of expression.
- Maintain the integrity of the academic record, and always be willing to publish corrections, clarifications, and retractions.
- Actively seek the views of authors, readers, reviewers, and editorial board members about improving their journal processes.
- Encourage responsible behavior and discourage misconduct by authors and reviewers.
- Encourage ethical research and ensure that journal policies in this area are met by authors.

Relations with readers

Readers should be informed about the funding of research, and whether the funders had any role in the research or its publication. Best practices include:

- Ensuring that articles have been reviewed by suitably qualified reviewers.
- Adopting practices that encourage accuracy, completeness, and clarity of research.
- Adopting authorship systems that promote good practice and discourage misconduct.
- Inform readers about steps taken to ensure minimizing conflict of interests.
Relations with authors

Editors’ decisions to accept or reject a submission should be based on the submission’s importance, originality, clarity, and the study’s validity and relevance to the journal’s scope. In addition:

- Editors should ensure that appropriate reviewers are selected for submissions (i.e., individuals who are able to judge the work and are free from disqualifying competing interests).
- Editors will consider an author’s request that an individual should not review their submission.
- Editors will ensure that all manuscript reviews sent to the author are constructive, maintain the journal’s integrity, and are written in a professional manner.

Relations with reviewers

If an editor decides to proceed with the review process, the editor is responsible for selecting two or more reviewers for each manuscript he or she sends forward for review. The editor may decide to use a reviewer suggested by the author, but is not obligated to do so. Editors should:

- Provide guidance to reviewers on everything that is expected of them including the need to handle submitted material in confidence.
- Require reviewers to disclose any potential conflict of interest before agreeing to review a submission.
- Ensure that peer reviewers’ identities are protected.
- Follow up with reviewers who have not responded to the review request or are tardy in submitting their reviews.
- Overall, editors should encourage reviewers to follow the ESA code of conduct for reviewers on the ESA website.

Relations with editorial board members

Editorial Board members are appointed from the various ESA Sections and represent their Section’s interest and perspective relative to each journal.

- Editors-in-Chief will provide annual reports to keep editorial board members updated on journal policies and developments.
- Editors will consult board members to gauge their opinions about the running of the journal, inform them of any changes to journal policies, and identify future challenges.

Relations with ESA as publisher

- Editors should make decisions on which articles to publish based on quality and suitability for the journal and without interference from the journal owner/publisher.
- ESA staff will provide as much assistance as possible to editors who request it.

Dealing with possible misconduct
Editors have a duty to act if they suspect misconduct or if an allegation of misconduct is brought to their attention. This duty extends to both published and unpublished papers.

- Editors should first seek a response from those suspected of misconduct and determine what, if any, should be the appropriate course of action.
- If they are not satisfied with the response, they should follow the procedures noted in the ESA Author Misconduct Policy.
- Errors, inaccurate or misleading statements must be corrected promptly and with due prominence.

Conflict of Interest

When assigned a manuscript, an editor should disclose any conflicts of interest to the EIC as soon as possible so that the EIC can decide whether to reassign the manuscript to another editor.

Complaints

If an editor receives a complaint, he or she should attempt to resolve it as soon as possible. This may mean forwarding the complaint to the EIC or ESA staff for resolution.

Intellectual Property

Editors should be alert to intellectual property issues and work with their publisher to handle potential breaches of intellectual property laws and conventions.

Commercial considerations

Editors should not let commercial considerations affect editorial decisions.