

Editorial Procedures and Peer-Review : Publication policies and Ethics

The journal **Strategy and Development Review S&D-R** operates a rigorous peer-review process. In most cases this is a single-blind assessment with at least two independent reviewers, followed by a final acceptance/rejection decision by the Editor-in-Chief, or another academic editor approved by the Editor-in-Chief. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the academic quality of the publication process, including acceptance decisions, approval of Guest Editors and special issue topics, and new Editorial Board members.

- **Initial Checks :**

All submitted manuscripts received by the Editorial Office will be checked by a professional in-house *Managing Editor* to determine whether they are properly prepared and whether they follow the ethical policies of the journal. Manuscripts that do not fit the journal's ethics policy or do not meet the standards of the journal will be rejected before peer-review. Manuscripts that are not properly prepared will be returned to the authors for revision and resubmission. After these checks, the *Managing Editor* will consult the journals' *Editor-in-Chief* or *Associate Editors* to determine whether the manuscript fits the scope of the journal and whether it is scientifically sound. No judgment on the potential impact of the work will be made at this stage. Reject decisions at this stage will be verified by the *Editor-in-Chief*.

- **Peer-Review :**

Once a manuscript passes the initial checks, it will be assigned to **at least two independent experts for peer-review**. A single-blind review is applied, where authors' identities are known to reviewers. Peer review comments are confidential and will only be disclosed with the express agreement of the reviewer.

In the case of regular submissions, in-house assistant editors will invite experts, including recommendations by an academic editor. These experts may also include **Editorial Board members** and **Guest Editors of the journal**. Potential reviewers suggested by the authors may also be considered. **Reviewers** should not have published with any of the co-authors during the past five years and should not currently work or collaborate with any of the institutions of the co-authors of the submitted manuscript.

A summary of the editorial process is given in the flowchart below. The following provides notes on each step.

I. Responsibilities of Reviewers

The peer review process remains as the heart of journal publishing. Below are certain roles and responsibilities the reviewer must follow in order to maintain the high publication standards of the journal.

Confidentiality: Reviewers must maintain strict confidentiality related to the information shared with them in the manuscripts, which may contain data, text, images and videos, Revisers should not share any information from an assigned manuscript with outsiders without the prior permission of the Editor. Reviewer should not retain the data from an assigned manuscript.

Competence: Reviewer with fair expertise should complete the review. Assigned Reviewer with inadequate expertise should feel responsible and may decline if the reviewer presumes that He/she lacks the expertise in the respective field.

Constructive assessment: Reviewer's comments should appreciate positive aspects of the work, identify the weak areas constructively, and indicate the same to improve the quality of the manuscript. Reviewer should explain and support his or her judgment clearly so that editors and authors can understand the basis of the comments.

The reviewer should ensure that the authors are strictly adhering to the citation of the source of the information. The reviewer should alert the editor if he/she finds the study is already in existence to avoid any duplicate publication.

A reviewer should not use any kind of abusive language while commenting on an article. Judgment of each article should be done without any bias and personal interest by the assigned reviewer.

Impartiality and Integrity: Reviewer's decision should be made based on the scientific merit and relevance of the study and should be able to examine whether or not it fits into the scope of the journal rather than the financial, racial, ethnic origin etc., of the authors.

Disclosure of conflict of interest: To the extent feasible, the reviewer should minimize the conflict of interest. In such situation, reviewer should notify the editor describing the conflict of interest. Conduct the review objectively and avoid any personal criticism of the author. Express views clearly with supporting arguments. Inform the Editor of any substantial similarity between the manuscript and any other paper of which they have personal knowledge, whether published or concurrently under review elsewhere. Inform the editor of suspected research misconduct (e.g. data fabrication).

Timeliness and responsiveness: Reviewers should morally abide by the time mentioned to provide the review comments by honouring the deadlines and should respond quickly to the queries raised by the editor if any.

2. Responsibilities of Editor and Editorial Board

Editor must comply with the policy guidelines provided by the publisher and fulfil the responsibilities bestowed upon them. They have the responsibility to maintain the integrity of the published literature by publishing the errata or corrections, if any when any significant retractions or expressions of concern are identified.

Review process: Editors are responsible for monitoring and ensuring the fairness, timeliness, thoroughness, and civility of the review process. They are responsible for the management of the entire editorial team that comprises panel of experts as reviewers and associate editors. Editors provide timely suggestion to the respective journals for covering the relevant and significant topic essential for the growth of the journal.

Towards Readers and Research Community

- To ensure that the content or the author information present in the manuscript is legible.
- To evaluate all manuscripts such that they fall within the scope of the journal.
- Maintain the journals internal integrity by suggesting the corrections, dealing with retraction, supplemental data etc.
- Working closely with authors to attract the best manuscripts and research that will be of interest to readers.
- Ensure that all involved in the publication process understand the importance of citations, and the consequences of manipulating the citations.

Towards Journal

- **Decision-Making:** He/she is entitled to carry out decision-making in consultation with reviewers or members of the Editorial Board.
- **Impartiality:** An Editor should evaluate manuscripts for their intellectual content without any bias towards race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.
- **Confidentiality:** The Editor or any Editorial staff must not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher, as appropriate depending on the need and stage of processing.

Publisher Role

Strategy & Development Review aims following timely rigorous peer review process to bring the recent and novel academic information at its best possible mode. As a publisher the following policies are being considered:

- Supporting fair and timely Peer review process with the valuable inputs from the respective Editors and Reviewers.
- The publisher adheres to the guidelines and procedure designed to ensure the fair and best practice followed by the industry.
- Making constructive recommendations for improving the overall process along with better production support and global dissemination of the information published in the journal.
- With the vision to make scientific valuable researched information “Open Access”, Strategy & Development Review is striving towards designing and launching innovative ways to showcase its commitment and integrity towards publishing the best research in the field of leadership, business, economics and management.

Pre-check :

Immediately after submission, this check is initially carried out by the managing editor to assess:

- Suitability of the manuscript to the journal/section/special issue;
- Qualification and background of authors;
- Reject obviously poor manuscripts.

The Academic Editor, i.e., the *Editor-in-Chief* in the case of regular submissions, or the *Guest Editor* in the case of Special Issue submissions, or an *Editorial Board Member* in case of a conflict of interest, will be notified of the submission and invited to check and recommend reviewers.

Peer-review (Reviewer application):

The process is double-blind peer review, meaning that the author does not know the identity of the reviewers.

At least two review reports are collected for each submitted article. Suggestions of reviewers can be made by the academic editor during pre-check. Alternatively, editorial staff will use qualified *Editorial Board Members*, qualified reviewers from our database, or new reviewers identified by web searches for related articles.

The following checks are applied to all reviewers:

- That they hold no conflicts of interest with the authors, including if they have published together in the last five years;
- That they hold a PhD
- They must have recent publications in the field of the submitted paper;

To assist academic editors, staff handle all communication with reviewers, authors, and the external editor; however, Academic Editors can check the status of manuscripts and the identity of reviewers at any time. Reviewers are given 7-10 days to write their review. For the review of a revised manuscript, reviewers are asked to provide their report within three days. In both cases, extensions can be granted on request.

A paper can only be accepted for publication by an academic editor.

The journal operate an open peer review option, meaning that the authors have the option to publish the review reports and author responses with the published paper (often referred to as open reports). In addition, reviewers may choose to sign their reports if the review is published, in which case the reviewer name appears on the review report (referred to as open identity). The default option is for reviewers to remain anonymous and for reports not to be published, reviewers and authors respectively must opt into this option. If an article is rejected no details will be published. Open peer review has the benefit of increasing transparency about the review process and providing further information about the paper for interested readers and we encourage authors to choose open review.

Authors can recommend potential reviewers. Journal editors will check to make sure there are no conflict of interests before contacting those reviewers, and will not consider those with competing interests. Reviewers are asked to declare any conflicts of interest. Authors can also enter the names of potential peer reviewers they wish to exclude from consideration in the peer review of their manuscript, during the initial submission progress. The editorial team will respect these requests so long as this does not interfere with the objective and thorough assessment of the submission.

Editor Decision :

Acceptance decisions on manuscripts, after peer review, are made by an academic editor, either the Editor-in-Chief, a Guest Editor, or another suitable Editorial Board member. When making an editorial decision, we expect that the academic editor checks the following:

- The suitability of selected reviewers;
- Adequacy of reviewer comments and author response;
- Overall scientific quality of the paper.

The editor can select from: accept, reject, ask author for revision, ask for an additional reviewer.

Accept after Minor Revisions: The paper is in principle accepted after revision based on the reviewer's comments. Authors are given five days for minor revisions.

Reconsider after Major Revisions: The acceptance of the manuscript would depend on the revisions. The author needs to provide a point by point response or provide a rebuttal if some of the reviewer's comments cannot be revised. Usually, only one round of major revisions is allowed. Authors will be asked to resubmit the revised paper within a suitable time frame, and the revised version will be returned to the reviewer for further comments.

Reject and Encourage Resubmission: If additional experiments are needed to support the conclusions, the manuscript will be rejected and the authors will be encouraged to re-submit the paper once further experiments have been conducted.

Reject: The article has serious flaws, and/or makes no original significant contribution. No offer of resubmission to the journal is provided.

If there is any suspicion that a paper may contain plagiarism, the editorial office will check using the industry standard iThenticate software.

Reviewers make recommendations, and Editors-in-Chief are free to disagree with their views. If they do so, they should justify their decision, for the benefit of the authors.

Editorial independence is extremely important and MDPI does not interfere with editorial decisions. In particular, no paper is published without the agreement of an academic editor and journal staff do not advise academic editors about accepting or rejecting articles.

The Journal strategy & development staff or editorial board members (including Editors-in-Chief) are not involved in the processing their own academic work. Their submissions are assigned to at least two independent outside reviewers. Decisions are made by other editorial board members who do not have a conflict of interest with the author.

Revision :

In cases where only minor revisions are recommended, the author is usually requested to revise the paper before referring to the external editor. Articles may or may not be sent to reviewers after author revision, dependent on whether the reviewer requested to see the revised version and the wishes of the Academic editor. Apart from in exceptional circumstances, we allow a maximum of two rounds of major revision per manuscript.

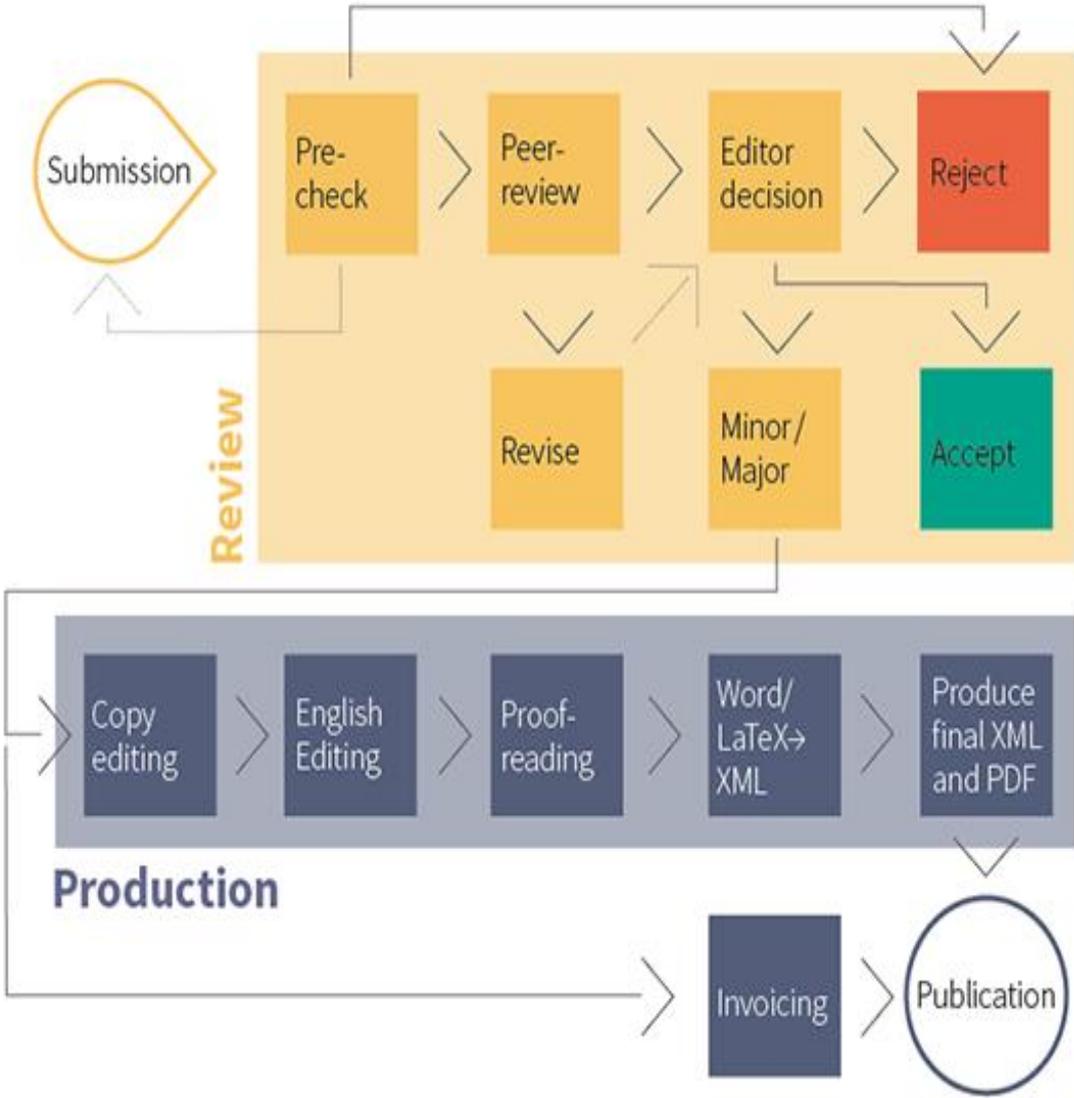


Fig.1. Strategy & Development Review : Editorial process

3. Production

Strategy & Development Review carries out production on all manuscripts, including language editing, copy editing and conversion to PDF. Language editing is carried out by professional English editing staff. In the small number of cases where extensive editing or formatting is required, we charge authors an additional fee (with authors' prior approval). The authors are also free to use other English editing service, or consult a native English-speaking colleague - the latter being our preferred option.

4. Publication Ethics

Strategy & Development Review is a member of the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#) (COPE), including following its [Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#). Strategy & Development Review follows COPE's procedures for dealing with potentially unethical behaviour by authors, reviewers or editors. Strategy & Development Review editorial staff are trained in how to detect and respond to ethical problems.

Ethical issues raised by readers of the journal will be investigated by the editorial office following procedures recommended by COPE. Disputes on the validity of research reported in published papers can be settled by the editorial board. For disputes around authorship, data ownership, author misconduct, etc., where necessary we will refer to external organizations such as a university ethics committee. Authors are asked to respond to any substantiated allegations made against them.

Misconduct

If author (s) are found guilty of breaching this code of ethics or guilty of research misconduct, the journal reserves the right to reject/retract or withdraw the paper and declines further submissions from the offending authors for a period of up to five years by informing all the interested parties, including journal editors and authors, the author's department head and/or institutional office of Publication misconduct.

Guidelines for Retracting Articles

Strategy & Development Review takes the responsibility to maintain the integrity and completeness of the scholarly record of the content for the end users spanning the length and the breadth of the globe. The journal place great importance on the authority of articles after they have been published and our policy is based on the best practice followed in the academic publishing community.

Editor of journal is solely and solely responsible for accepting or rejecting any manuscript for publication. The journal's Editorial board and the legal experts extend their support to the editor regarding copyright infringement and plagiarism. The final outcome will be archived for the readers and the entire scholarly world in digital form. This would remain permanent, as a historical record for the development of future scholarship in any given field. Articles that have been published shall remain unaltered as far as possible. However, occasionally, if any unavoidable circumstances arise after the publication, the article will be retracted or even removed from a particular journal. Such actions must not be undertaken lightly and can only occur under exceptional circumstances, such as: severe breach of research and publication ethics like violation of copyrights and repetition or republication of the manuscript by manipulating the facts and figures.

Article withdrawal: This is applicable for manuscripts in the stage of "Article in Press" which represents the early versions of the accepted articles. If any article at this stage infringes the professional ethical codes, such as multiple submissions, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, fraudulent use of data, and the article may be withdrawn depending on the Editor's discretion. In this regard, editors assess and analyze the entire situations, on a case by case basis.

Article retraction: Infringements of professional ethical codes, such as multiple submissions, sham claims of authorship, plagiarism, fraudulent use of data and similar claims will lead to the retraction of an article. Occasionally, a retraction may be considered to correct errors in submission or publication.

Article removal and replacement: Subjected to legal limitations of the publisher may withdraw any article faces issues related to copyright holder or author(s). Identification of false or inaccurate data representation, as it may pose a serious risk and involves academic data tampering or other fraudulent and unfair practice; hence it should be handled firmly.

The core objective of these measures is necessary to maintain the integrity of the academic record.

5. Authors Guidelines : Publication Information

Theoretical and Empirical Manuscripts

The Allied Academies affiliates which handle theoretical and empirical manuscripts can be found on our Journal Matrix. These editorial guidelines reflect the Academies' policy with regard to reviewing theoretical and empirical manuscripts for publication and presentation in each of these affiliates. The primary criterion upon which manuscripts are judged is whether

the research advances the discipline. The specific guidelines which are followed by referees is displayed on the following page. It shows the areas of evaluation to which each manuscript is subjected. Key points include currency, interest, and relevancy. Theoretical manuscripts are particularly vulnerable to problems in literature review. In order for theoretical research to advance a discipline, it must address the literature which exists in the discipline to support conclusions or models which extend knowledge and understanding. Consequently, referees for theoretical manuscripts pay particular attention to completeness of literature review and appropriateness of conclusions drawn from that review.

Empirical manuscripts are particularly vulnerable to methodological problems. In order to advance the literature, empirical manuscripts must employ appropriate and effective sampling and statistical analysis techniques. However, empirical papers must also incorporate thorough literature reviews in order to advance the literature. Referees will pay close attention to the conclusions which are drawn from statistical analyses and their consistency with the literature. As the last question on the referee guidelines suggests, we ask referees to be as specific as possible in indicating what must be done to make a manuscript acceptable for journal publication. This embodies a primary objective of the Academy: to assist authors in the research process. Our Editorial Policy is one which is supportive, rather than critical. We encourage all authors who are not successful in a first attempt to rewrite the manuscript in accordance with the suggestions of the referees. We will be pleased to referee future versions and rewrites of manuscripts and work with authors in achieving their research goals.

6. Responsibilities of Authors

An author is accountable for the data and information presented in their respective article. Hence, authors are expected to present genuine and the original outcome of their research, by providing appropriate and relevant citation while representing the data and documenting the discussion. Authors must provide information which is comprehensible and reproducible. Supporting information such as figures and tables provided by the authors should be legible and must be reproducible technically.

An author should not repeat any previous research data of their own or from others while submitting the original manuscript for the primary publication in any of the journals. Before submitting any article, authors should check the scope of the journal and in case of any query they should contact the Editorial office.

Authors should strictly adhere to the authorship criteria. All listed authors must have made a significant contribution to the research presented in the manuscript and approved all its claims. In order to be considered as an author of an original research, the author (s) must have contributed in any of the following ways: designed the study, executed the study or conducted the experiments, have taken part in analysing the data, supported in documenting the article and drawing the conclusion, spearheaded the project as a principal investigator. It is mandatory to include everyone that contributes towards the completion of the research work.

Authors must ensure that they have written and produced entirely original work and have not breached the research norms by duplicating the work accomplished by the others. They should make accurate and appropriate attributions while quoting the other researchers referred in the study. Avoid self-plagiarism. Avoid fragmenting research to maximize the number of articles for publication.