

Publication Ethics Statement

Sibbaldia the Journal of Botanic Garden Horticulture is committed to maintaining high standards of publication ethics and procedures and the responsibilities of contributors to the publication process outlined below has been compiled with reference to guidelines provided by the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#) (COPE) and is in line with the ethics of [Edinburgh Diamond](#) the online platform on which *Sibbaldia* is hosted.

Principles of Transparency

The Editors of *Sibbaldia* adhere to COPE's Principles of Transparency (COPE/DOAJ/WAME, 2018). These can be found [here](#).

Editor Responsibilities

- **Publication Decisions:** The Editor/s are responsible for the material published in the journal and have set criteria by which to assess submissions. Processes are in place for addendums, erratums, and retractions. The journal's acceptance criteria and guidelines are fair. Manuscripts are evaluated on the paper's clarity, originality and relevance to the scope of the journal. No discrimination is made on the basis of the Protected Characteristics of UK Equality Act 2010.
- **Confidentiality:** Information about submitted manuscripts is kept between the editorial team, corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers and the publisher, as appropriate. Information must not be shared with anyone else. Editors also ensure peer reviewer identities are kept anonymous unless there is additional and exceptional agreement between reviewer and editor regarding anonymity.
- **Transparency:** Editors ensure that everyone associated with reviewing, processing and publishing papers for, are aware of their duties in accordance with publication ethics. The Advisory Board is updated on new policies at annual meetings.
- **Peer review:** The editor is responsible for creating reviewer guidelines for their journal. These are available to reviewers once they have agreed to review a paper. It clearly states that two blind peer-reviews are required by *Sibbaldia*.
- **Competing interests:** Editors will inform their team if they have competing, or conflicting, interests with a submission. Competing interests include rivalry and financial gain. Editors will not handle submissions where they have a competing interest, unless appropriate statements have been made that show all parties are aware of the conflict.
- Papers submitted by the journal editor should go through the journal's usual evaluation and peer review processes, with peer review being handled independently of the author and their research groups. A clear statement explaining this must be included on any paper authored by the journal editor that is published.
- **Changes to the Scholarly Record** Editors should be transparent about any changes to the scholarly record, including links to previous versions where applicable.
- **Suspected misconduct:** Editors will refer to COPE flowcharts in cases of plagiarism, disputed authorship or general misconduct.
- **Ethical oversight:** *Sibbaldia* adheres to the COPE definition of Ethical Oversight: "Ethical oversight should include, but is not limited to, policies on consent to publication, publication on vulnerable populations, ethical conduct of research using animals, ethical conduct of research using human subjects, handling confidential data and of business/marketing practices". The editors will consider appeals regarding non-compliance of ethical principles by authors.
 - **Plagiarism:** COPE defines plagiarism as follows: 'When somebody presents the work of others (data, words or theories) as if they were his/her own and without proper acknowledgment' Reviewers must inform the journal editor of any suspected plagiarism in the content they are reviewing.
 - **Corrections and Retractions** The editor is responsible for decisions on corrections and retractions. Editors will not alter or remove published content, in line with the International

Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers' (STM) guidelines. However, editors reserve the right to issue expressions of concern, corrections or retractions if there is proof of author or research misconduct or inaccurate content. When investigating allegations of misconduct, the editor will follow the COPE flowcharts as the basis for decisions.

Expression of Concern

The Editor will consider issuing an expression of concern if:

- There is an ongoing investigation or lawsuit into alleged misconduct or publication of falsified/fabricated data
- There is inconclusive evidence of misconduct from the authors
- The authors' institution will not investigate misconduct
- There is not the possibility of an impartial, fair or conclusive investigation into the alleged misconduct.

The expression of concern will be published on the article landing page, linking directly to the related version of the article.

Correction

The Editor will consider issuing a correction if:

- A small amount of an otherwise reliable article is misleading
- The scientific accuracy is compromised
- An author needs to be added or removed from the authorship list
- An author conflict of interest has been disclosed post-publication (which isn't significant enough to potentially change the conclusions of the article, in the judgement of the editor).

The correction will be published on the article landing page, linking directly to the related version of the article.

Retraction

The Editor will consider issuing a retraction notice if:

- There is clear evidence that findings are unreliable due to misconduct (such as data fabrication and plagiarism) or honest error (such as a miscalculation)
- The article is a duplicate publication (the findings have been published elsewhere without cross-referencing or permission)
- The article contains plagiarised content
- The article reports unethical research
- The peer review process has been compromised to the point where the integrity of the article cannot be guaranteed
- An author conflict of interest has been disclosed post-publication (which is significant enough to potentially change the conclusions of the article, in the judgement of the editor).

The retraction notice will be published on the article landing page, linking directly to the related version of the article. The version of record PDF will not change, other than for a watermark with the word "retracted" on each page. The HTML version will be removed. The retraction statement should include the reason for retraction (to distinguish misconduct from honest error) and avoid defamatory or libellous statements.

Removal

In very rare cases an article may need to be removed. The Editor will only consider a removal:

- If the article is the subject of a court order or injunction
- Defamation
- A serious medical error (such as an incorrect dosage that could lead to significant harm)
- A serious breach of privacy or confidentiality.

The removal notice will be published on the article landing page, with a clear reason explaining the removal.

Further information on [COPE's Retraction Guidelines](#)

Reviewer Responsibilities

- **Ethical:** Peer reviewers must conduct reviews in an ethical and accountable manner. Reviewers should be objective and considerate.
- **Bias:** Reviewers must remain unbiased by characteristics of the authors or editors. There should be no discrimination on characteristics protected by law.
- **Competing interests:** Reviewers must declare all potential competing, or conflicting, interests. Competing interests include rivalry and financial gain. Reviewers should talk to the editor if they are unsure.
- **Timeliness:** Reviewers should aim to respond to an invite to review within a reasonable timeframe, even if they cannot accept the invitation. They should only accept to review if able to do so within the proposed or a mutually agreed timeframe. If circumstances change, the reviewers should let the editors know as promptly as possible.
- **Plagiarism:** Reviewers must inform the journal editor of any suspected plagiarism in the content they are reviewing.
- **Confidentiality:** Information about submitted manuscripts must be kept between the editorial team, corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers and the publisher, as appropriate. Information acquired in the process of the review should not be distributed or shared with anyone else.

Ethical guidelines for peer reviewers are on the COPE website: [COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers](#)

Author Responsibilities

- **Authorship:** Authors (those that completed the work reported in the article and those that wrote the piece) are responsible for deciding authorship appropriately, referring to authorship best practice within their discipline. The listing of authorship should reflect those that carried out the research as well as those that wrote the article. The order should be agreed upon by all co-authors and lead authors. All authors should be aware of the completed article and subsequent submission.
- **Originality:** Authors should ensure all the work reported in their article is original, citing information and content from other sources, and avoiding plagiarism.
- **Competing interests:** Authors must declare all potential competing, or conflicting, interests. Competing interests include financial, commercial, or legal, relationships with the journal, or any member(s) of the journal team, that could in any way influence the research. They also involve personal rivalry. Authors must include a disclosure statement in their submission if they have a competing interest and should talk to the editor if they are unsure.
- **Copyright infringement:** Authors are responsible for ensuring their work does not contain libellous matter or infringe any copyright, intellectual property rights, or third party rights. It is the author's responsibility to ensure permissions are obtained for third-party content, including texts and images.

- **Simultaneous submissions:** Authors should not submit their article elsewhere while under consideration by the journal. Any overlap in previously published content should be cited appropriately.
- **Funding:** Any funding sources, or other sources of support, should be listed.
- **Errors:** Authors should immediately inform the journal editor if there are any major errors in the published work. The author will be responsible for working with the editor to publish the necessary addendum, erratum, or retraction.
- **Ethical oversight:** Authors should adhere to the COPE definition of Ethical Oversight: “Ethical oversight should include, but is not limited to, policies on consent to publication, publication on vulnerable populations, ethical conduct of research using animals, ethical conduct of research using human subjects, handling confidential data and of business/marketing practices”.
 - o Human/animal experiments: Data involving human or animal experiments should be descriptive about practices within the article. Work with humans (living or dead) or nonhuman animals should be accompanied by proof of ethical approval from an institution. This could be reference to the process in the manuscript, or additional documentation.
 - o Human subjects: Authors should detail how consent was obtained from any participants in their study. All participants have a right to confidentiality of their personal data, which should not be broken without their consent. No identifying information should be included, unless essential to the work and written informed consent has been obtained, after which it can be included in the manuscript. No data on participants should be falsified or amended.
 - **Nagoya Protocol:** The author is responsible for making sure that the principles and spirit of the UN Nagoya Protocol is followed when gathering material, data and/or traditional knowledge for publication to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits resulting from accessing genetic material².
- **Appeals:** Authors have the right to appeal editorial decisions.

Author Appeals

Authors have the right to appeal editorial decisions. Editors should consider appeals fairly. Decisions made by the Editor after the appeal is final. The process for an author to appeal is:

1. Write and send a response letter to the editor which includes counterpoints to the decision and rebuttals to comments provided by the editor and peer reviewers.
2. The editor should consider the appeal, looping in the editorial board as necessary. The editor’s decision is final.
3. If the author’s appeal is granted, their article should be sent to another independent reviewer.
4. Based on the reviewer’s comment, the editor should make a decision on the author’s article. The editor’s decision is final.

References

COPE/DOAJ/ OASPA/WAME. (2018). Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing v3. Available online: https://publicationethics.org/files/Principles_of_Transparency_and_Best_Practice_in_Scholarly_Publishingv3_0.pdf (accessed January 2022)

Equality Act 2010. Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>