Introductory Guide to Peer Review

for Community Research Partners and Early-Career Researchers

By Christian Ash and Ethan Czuy Levine

Preface: Why we wrote this guide

The process of peer review is slow and often complicated. Even among full-time researchers who understand and see the value of peer review, it's common for them to grumble about it or mock it.

- "Peer review is a pain in the neck". It adds extra steps and extra work.
- "Why does it always have to be Reviewer 2 who acts like a jerk?!" Sometimes reviewers, who are typically anonymous and referred to by their numbers, offer feedback in ways that overcomplicate things or seem obnoxious.
- "Peer review is built on free labour". Reviewers are not typically paid for their time.
- "Peer review is broken". Sometimes it takes so long to find people willing to put in the time to be peer reviewers that it delays getting findings into the literature far longer than it should.

Because of the above (and more) reasons, peer review is not always something researchers approach with enthusiasm.

Since peer review can be such a long, slow, and cumbersome process, even researchers who engage people with lived experience throughout projects may not always involve them in drafting peer reviewed publications. This is not typically out of a desire to exclude, but out of awareness of what a messy process peer review can be as well as understanding what a commitment of time and energy this process involves.

For example, a research team may have a research project funded to produce a report offering guidance on an aspect of meaningful engagement. They may only be able to get budget approval from the funder to involve 6 research consultants from impacted communities to assist with survey development, to conduct interviews of individuals in the field, to produce a report with their own findings, and to provide feedback and suggestions to the synthesised report that is the funding deliverable.[1] Typically, the grant-funded time is spent working on

that final report deliverable, and it's only after the grant period has come to a close that the researchers have time to think about additional research articles they might want to write for peer-reviewed publication. There are several reasons the researchers may move forward without the research consultants for the peer-reviewed publication.

- They may not have funding to pay the consultants, and know that it's a best practice to pay people (including those with lived experience) for work they do. Co-authorship on a peer-reviewed article typically requires significant contributions. While guidelines by journal or discipline may differ, it is expected that co-authors on research articles have made significant contributions on 1) the development or design of some part of the study that led to the paper, AND 2) analysis or interpretation of at least some part of the data, AND 3) writing the paper and reviewing and revising it for publication.[2] That's a lot to ask someone to do unpaid, even for researchers who value the unique insights researchers from impacted communities bring to papers.
- Researchers typically are expected to do this work as part of their 'day job,' at an academic institution, so it's done on their paid time, at least in theory.[3] If they need additional help with preparing a submission for peer review, they may bring on additional authors who are housed at an institution and can (theoretically) do it as part of their paid professional or research assistant time.
- Researchers working at an academic institution are often required or expected to publish regularly in peer-reviewed journals for their job performance and/or to seek additional grants. Thus, researchers (especially early-career researchers who are building their resume) are under pressure to publish quickly and frequently that others do not experience, and may assume that others would not find it to be a benefit to have peer-reviewed publications.
- Researchers learn to speak and write a new language, 'academic-speak', which takes years. They may be interested in translating language from reports, toolkits, or focus groups into 'academic-speak,' which is much more likely to be published. Those who don't speak or write 'academic-speak' can find this frustrating, particularly since it often makes those

articles entirely inaccessible to many of the communities they are about or that they propose solutions for. Those who speak academic-speak usually take extensive time and labour, often after a grant has ended, to translate manuscripts into 'academic-speak'.

- Some research partners from impacted communities may be unfamiliar with the peer review process and find it frustrating, insulting, or infuriating. For the record, many full-time researchers who are very familiar with the process also find it frustrating, insulting, and infuriating.

What this means is that some people who have lived experience may have participated in many research projects and have incredible research and analysis skills without ever working on a peer-reviewed publication. They might not realise how complicated it is or what standards and formats are common in the process, and thus be overconfident when submitting papers that may not be appropriate for the journal they're submitting to. Alternatively, they might think that it's so overly complicated that they could never do it, when they probably could with some support while they learned. It also means that many researchers may begin work with seasoned research consultants with erroneous assumptions about what they know or don't know, leading to frustration on both sides.

With this in mind and a call for papers out for an issue we were co-editing, we (Chris and Ethan) decided to write up this general overview of peer review to support our colleagues from impacted communities who have a decent amount of experience with (or even just a strong interest in) research, and who want to understand the peer review process a bit more. Realising the value of this overview to a broader audience, we then invited some of our friends, colleagues, and favourite researchers to take a peek and see what we may have missed. And since so many of them commented on how valuable this would be to their graduate students or other early-career researchers, we expanded the scope. Note that throughout this guide, we focus on impacted communities, but the information within is valuable to other researchers as well, both for supporting your own initial peer-reviewed submissions and for improving your lived experience engagement as you continue as a researcher.

While this guide is by no means comprehensive, it will (at a minimum) help you know the right questions to ask when considering working on a peer-reviewed paper. It is still fairly thorough, so feel free to use the section headings to find the specific parts you need. We hope you find this guide useful, and welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,
Chris Ash and Ethan Levine

With gratitude to the partners whose insights were essential in improving this guide:

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Cover image from #WOCinTechChat

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

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What is peer review?

Peer-reviewed publications are seen as the 'gold standard' in academic publishing. That is because all peer-reviewed journals are reviewed by people who the editors feel have extensive and appropriate knowledge about the subject, and generally only published after their feedback and associated revisions. The other side of this: Peer review is also seen as a complete pain in the neck, as it takes time, adds steps, and sometimes can challenge our confidence and hurt our feelings. Sometimes, peer reviewers may not have the exact expertise needed to understand our work, or they may not understand what we're trying to do. Peer reviewers may see their role as gatekeeping. However, when the peer reviewers who are selected really understand the issue and are thoughtful with their feedback, it can help us create papers that are so much better than what we started with (and sometimes learn that there's a different platform that is better suited for our vision).

How is researching and writing for a peer-reviewed journal different from working on an independent research project at an institution?

Many survivor-led organisations or consultants with lived experience may have been part of research projects in the past that were different. They might have been on a Community Advisory Board or served as a community liaison for a research project. They may have done research for a government, nonprofit, or institutional report (examples of this might be something like the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report or one of the research publications of the Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre [PEC]). They may have written community-developed peer-research papers (Research reports from groups like Hacking/Hustling or African Survivor Coalition are examples of this). And they may have been invited to submit a book chapter to a volume developed by an academic partner.

In almost all of these cases, you are selected to be part of the project or publication before the research is done. Community Advisory Board members or liaisons are chosen by the project team to co-develop the work. If members contribute to a peer-reviewed paper, the academic

partners are often the ones who take the lead on dealing with the peer review process and may be a buffer between community members and the editorial process.

While the PEC uses different models for different projects, research consultants for some PEC projects may have been chosen before the project begins, and coached by and supported by the research leads to ensure the project meets expectations. While consultants may write partial, regional, or topical reports, the research leads may have done the bulk of the writing of the final, synthesised project report.

Community-developed peer research is essential and nonprofit research reports can provide key insights. However, different collectives or nonprofits may have a wide variety of standards, so the quality can be hit or miss. Some incredibly high-quality research may be published as independent reports due to the barriers academia can create – community-developed knowledge may not be respected or peer-reviewed publication may create barriers for underfunded groups or those with less access to formal education. On the flip side, some independent community or nonprofit research reports may include mistakes or misrepresentations that might have been caught in a peer review process.

At their best, peer reviews shape what is known, cited, and reproduced in public-facing materials, such as antiviolence awareness campaigns or political speeches, in helpful ways that can correct misinformation. In principle, peer review processes are designed to ensure the quality of and enhance confidence in the published work.

EXAMPLES OF THINGS THAT PEER REVIEW IS MORE LIKELY TO CATCH:

- *A survey may show that 9% of survivors always get paid for their storytelling events, but the authors may assert that "only 9% of survivors get paid for sharing their stories". This might mislead people into believing that 91% never get paid, which would be inaccurate.*
- *Someone's discussion of the literature might assert that they could only find 2 existing research articles on the needs of Lived Expertise Consultants (but it could turn out that they didn't include other phrases in their search, such as survivor, people with lived experience, etc). This would mislead people into thinking those are the only two articles in existence about this topic, when there might be many others that are just worded differently.*
- *Someone might be reinventing the wheel. The process of peer review usually expects a decent dive into what the existing research says, which means that papers are less likely to state that things are one way when there's already research showing they're not. We sometimes jokingly refer to this as the "why is nobody doing anything about this?!" phenomenon – when people declare that someone needs to DO SOMETHING without connecting first to everyone who has already been doing it for decades. In some cases, this is because authors may not be able to access peer-reviewed articles because they are paywalled (and thus do not have 'institutional access'), or the articles they can access may be written densely and inaccessibly. Other times, it is simply clear that they have not engaged with existing literature.*

So the main difference between peer review and these other kinds of research is that in one, you have more control over whether or not it gets published and what gets included. You are asked to be a consultant and, as long as you fulfil the expectations, your work will be included. You work with a research team to support their community engagement and the report is published. You work with your nonprofit or collective to develop the best report you can, and then you press the 'publish' button and it is out there. In peer review, you don't know before you write it if it will be published in any particular journal or not. You submit it, and then the editors and peer reviewers may require you to make changes and ultimately decide if it gets published. This can be stressful!

> ***Note:*** *This is the reason that a lot of times people will have a few different journals in mind for a research idea. So if you are researching and hoping to write on a specific topic, you may want to have a few journals that publish that kind of topic regularly so that if it turns out to not be a good fit for one, you can then submit it to another one.*

We'll talk more in a bit about some of the barriers and challenges created by peer review, but for now, let's walk through the process.

Deciding what to write

Most academic journals have guidelines for authors, to clarify what kinds of writing they will and won't publish. For example, Anti-Trafficking Review has a submissions page with a checklist to help authors prepare. The submissions page for any given journal will outline what kinds of submissions they accept, and their criteria for each. Therefore, our descriptions here are just broad outlines, and it's important to check a particular journal's submissions page before moving forward. A few common submission types include:

- **Full-Length Articles:** word limits vary for these, with some journals limiting submissions to around 7,000 words and others allowing 10,000 words or more – so often in the 25-35 double-spaced page range. Authors may analyse data, discuss important concepts in the field, or conduct a thorough analysis of existing research on a topic to help clarify the strengths and gaps of previous work. These papers often follow a standard structure, such as: introduction, literature review, methods, results, and discussion for social science journals.
- **Brief Report or Short Articles:** these are typically between 1,200 and 2,000 words. Authors may respond to pre-selected questions for consideration/debate, review preliminary data from a project, or they may offer shorter commentary on an issue relevant to the field. They may not have a standard structure. We have provided more information on short articles in Annex 1 at the end of this guide.
- **Book Reviews:** these are typically between 700 and 1,500 words. Book reviews are not summaries, but should provide enough of an overview so that readers who are unfamiliar with the book can understand what you're saying. Additionally, although you may wish to

praise or critique an author's work, it's important to do more than simply state that they did well or poorly with their subject matter. Think about what readers can learn from a specific book and how you see it contributing, or not contributing, to the field. Book reviews are reviewed by editors, rather than being sent out to additional peer reviewers.

Different journals will have different expectations around the kinds of content for articles submitted. In general, submissions may cover empirical work, which refers to research studies, methods, and findings, or they might include theoretical work, which introduces new frameworks or applies existing theories and frameworks to new contexts. Submissions might be focused on methods (how a project was done and what was learned from that process), and they might focus on or include first-person narratives or experiences of conducting research.

The peer review process

More detail on key stages of the peer review process follow in the next section. First, though, we offer a brief overview of the full process. In the ideal, peer review goes like this.

1. You research your topic to make sure you can write about your issue in the context of what other people have already learned (or misunderstood!) about the issue.
2. You write your paper and make sure you include what you learned in your research and cite it carefully. You may want to have a few people read over it to help check the writing and ask any questions about parts that aren't clear so you can submit your best work. The general convention in academic writing is that all empirical arguments (such as making claims about the state of the world) should be substantiated by reference to the supporting evidence, with the exception of extremely well-known and almost universally accepted information (like if you wrote that Paris is the capital of France). For example, if you say "Most identified survivors of sex trafficking are female" or "There is growing concern around the intersection of technology and human trafficking," those would need to cite the literature. Sometimes it can feel like overkill, but this is something that helps demonstrate rigour and tie your work to the previous work it builds upon. Ideas or concepts that draw on others' work are also expected to be referenced, and particular methods too. If you are getting feedback like "too many unsubstantiated assertions" then it's worth going through line by line to think where you could back up your points with

references. It's also worth remembering that just because something is published in a peer reviewed journal it doesn't mean it's right. Check original sources when possible. It's also important to know that, in academic writing, it is pretty standard to engage critically with others' ideas or claims. This might look like an article that says, "Author X claims... but actually we would argue this is based on a false premise because...."

3. After ensuring that your paper is formatted according to the guidelines of the specific journal, you submit your paper to the journal. This process can take different forms. Some smaller journals simply require you to email a pdf or Word document to the editor. However, many journals use automated submission systems that may require a fair amount of information beyond the paper. For example, you may be asked to provide your institution and title (if applicable), areas of specialisation, and contact information - if you collaborate with other authors, you may need to provide their information as well.[4] You may be asked to recommend reviewers. You may be expected to write a cover letter to the editor, describing the paper and how it fits with the journal's focus. You may be asked to disclose any potential conflicts of interest. Finally, you may be required to break up your paper into different documents before submitting. For example, you may be asked to prepare a cover page with all authors' names and institutions, a redacted manuscript (main text) in which any references to authors are removed, and separate files for any graphs, images, or other non-text components.

4. The editor(s) review your paper to see if it's a good fit. If it's not a good fit, they will usually let you know. Common reasons that an otherwise perfect paper might not be a good fit may include that it is not connected to the call or the journal's focus strongly enough, that it is not a good fit for an academic journal, that it was not formatted correctly, or that it needs too much work to get it ready for publication. This is commonly known as a 'desk reject', and it never feels good to receive one, but it can also sometimes end up being a positive, since it enables you to submit your paper to another journal that could be a better fit, rather than waiting a couple of months for your reviewers to say the same kinds of things. Many desk rejects are concerned with considerations of 'fit' before anything else. More on desk rejects in a bit. You may or may not receive feedback as to why the manuscript was desk rejected.

5. The editors and/or journal staff review your paper. If it seems like a good fit for the issue/journal, they will then find 2-3 qualified peer reviewers to review your paper. This typically involves sending email requests that include the title and abstract. (Not all people who are invited accept the invitation, so this part can take a while.) The peer reviewers ideally are people who are known to have expertise on the topic you are writing on (or intersecting areas, or the methodology), and often research expertise on it. Often reviewers are selected based on what they've published on previously, but the rarer the combination of expertise needed, the less likely you'll find it all in a single reviewer. For example, if your submission is about interventions that have been developed and implemented by migrant survivors of domestic servitude whose exploitation happened in Qatar, the editors would likely try to choose reviewers who understand the relevant topics, geographies, theories and/or methods used, have deep academic knowledge about the dynamics of domestic servitude in Qatar, and know about many of the existing interventions that have been implemented. If your submission is about online recruiting for criminal exploitation in China, the editors would choose experts who are knowledgeable about how technology is used in trafficking recruitment, dynamics of criminal exploitation in China, and what different countries have tried to do to reduce use of technology for recruitment. Depending on your topic and the journal, you may find that reviewers lack some of the necessary expertise to understand what you're trying to do or say. For example, you may submit a paper about training health care providers to identify and support trafficking survivors, and receive feedback from reviewers with backgrounds in medicine or public health but not in anti-trafficking work. Note that most journals have an anonymous or 'double-masked' review process, which means that your reviewers don't know the identity of the authors and that the authors won't know who the reviewers are.[5]

6. People don't accept invitations to review for many reasons that have nothing to do with your paper. They may have already committed to other reviews, or the reviewer doesn't think their expertise is as good of a fit as the editor thinks it is. Sometimes, though, people don't accept because the abstract is unclear, which makes them worried about the quality of the paper. So the abstract is important! The peer reviewers will then have a period of time to review your paper. They will review your paper to check things like the accuracy of your statements, whether or not you support any claims you make with evidence, the quality of your methodological approach, any ethical concerns (for example, if you surveyed people, were they able to give informed consent to participate?), how well-written your paper is, and how well you structure your arguments (meaning: Does it make logical sense?). After the reviewers are finished, they will send their comments, questions, and recommendations back to the editor. They will usually recommend one of four things:

   - **Publish the paper as is.** This almost never happens, but it is an option.
   - **Minor revision.** If the editor believes that your paper is nearly ready for publication, but needs a few changes first, they may recommend to accept it, pending minor revisions. When you get this decision, editors will typically read your new draft and make a decision on their own, rather than sending it back to reviewers. This makes for a faster, smoother process.
   - **Revise and resubmit or major revision.** This means the reviewer thinks that if you revised it based on some of the feedback and to correct some of the issues they identified, it might be good to publish. Occasionally, this is referred to as 'reject with encouragement,' which can be confusing! When you receive this decision, it's likely that the editor will send your revised manuscript back to the reviewers, who may recommend an additional round (or rounds) of changes.
   - **Do not publish or reject.** This means that the reviewers have concerns, whether they are about the quality, ethics, methods, fit, or accuracy of the paper, that are bigger than what can typically be addressed in the revisions process.

7. The role of a peer-reviewer is to provide advice to the editor based on their expertise, but the official final decision of the manuscript is ultimately up to the journal editor(s). The editor will consider the reviewers' feedback. Usually, if the feedback aligns (such as if all reviewers say 'revise and resubmit' or if all say 'do not publish') they will likely follow the guidance. Otherwise, the editor will make their own assessment based on everyone's feedback. There are times when reviews point in different directions. In this case, the editor will (1) send the paper out for another reviewer to serve as the tiebreaker, (2) provide guidance as to where the revisions need to be oriented, since it might be impossible to satisfy everyone, or (3) simply send the reviews back to the author(s) to navigate conflicting feedback how they see fit. Many prominent journals also host a weekly manuscript decision call, where multiple members of the editorial board and the journal editors go over articles with complete reviews for that week, discuss both the article and peer-reviewer feedback, and make the final manuscript decision. This process adds more perspectives to the decision, but it also means that a passionate person on the call may have the ability to make or break an article.

8. For revise and resubmit, the editor will then send you collated feedback on your paper and give you a period of time to accomplish the revisions. Responding to all reviewers' concerns shows that you considered them and took them seriously, and the response to reviewer feedback will have a substantial impact on the editor's next decision. Even if the reviewers recommend a change you decide not to make, you would want to include a note on why the change would not work or why you chose an alternative change instead. See the section 'Revise and Resubmit' below for more information.

9. After revision, you send your updated draft back to the editor along with a cover letter and 'response to reviewers' document showing how you responded to each of the reviewers' concerns. It can be helpful to include a document with a table or list showing point by point how you responded to each of the reviewer's comments (including where you might have chosen to push back and why you think changes are not needed), as this signals that you have engaged thoroughly and provides a simple overview for editors.

10. Depending on journal protocols, and the scope of recommended revisions, the editor may have reviewers follow up and review your revised draft and responses. Sometimes the original reviewers are no longer available, which creates the less than ideal situation

where someone else gets asked to review the revised paper for the first time. Again, they will provide commentary and advise the editor on whether to publish, revise and resubmit, or do not publish. Alternatively, the editor or guest editors may make final decisions and/or offer feedback at this point.

11. Steps 5-10 may repeat a few times.

12. If your paper is accepted for publication, the editor will inform you of next steps. It is standard to wait until after you have received notification of acceptance to cite your paper in other work you are writing, as 'in press'. Increasingly, however, researchers are choosing or encouraged to upload what are known as 'pre-publication' versions to archives (for example, CrimRXiv in the criminology field, which is an open-access repository). There are pros and cons to doing this – it can help get the work out sooner and increases transparency around the original submission, but also means your work might not be as polished, or it might not be entirely true to the final version of the manuscript (for example, you might decide to reinterpret your findings or remove a section of the paper).

13. At some point you will review a 'proof' of the paper, meaning they'll send you a pdf or online version of what it will look like when published so that you have a chance to correct any typos, errors, or formatting concerns. The handling editors will usually have a series of questions that you need to respond to at this stage. These questions may be things like confirming key details are correct or checking inconsistencies in a publication year of a work cited. Unlike the rest of the publication process, this stage tends to expect very fast turnarounds, with requests to deal with the queries within a few days (however please don't worry if you are, for example, unwell or on holiday when this comes in - realistically they can handle a slight delay if needed).

14. Some academic journals are 'open access,' meaning that anyone can view it. If the journal is not open access, only people who have a subscription to the journal (independently or through their library) or who purchase the article can view it. The publisher will give you a link that includes some free downloads or send you a pdf of it that you can share with others who request it from you. Many open access journals charge the author (or their institution) for publishing their article, sometimes ridiculous amounts. See this hilarious (yet infuriating) video mocking this practice.[6] It is very common for people to get around

copyright protections and post copies of their work outside paywalls but several journals have language in the acceptance procedures that dissuades this practice and outline consequences. If you have academic co-authors based at a university, it's worth speaking to them about where a publicly accessible version could go as they may be required by their university to post an open access version on the university 'repository' but (for copyright reasons) there are various rules governing what version can be used for this, like perhaps posting an unformatted copy of the final text submitted, rather than the final typeset version.

JOEL WRITES:

The outline of the peer review process given above sets out how the process is supposed to work. I am reluctant to bring up too many of the worst examples, since I obviously don't want people to never try to publish anything. That said, I think it is worth noting that it has become increasingly difficult to get anyone to do reviews. I do maybe four or five articles a year, plus a book or two, but I am sent at least three or four times that many requests, and sometimes it is for stuff I am not an expert on. This is because editors are really struggling to get anyone prepared to do reviews. For a special issue I recently edited we had a paper that had 27 reviewer requests that were turned down. At that point, traditional considerations about matching people to the topic can fall away. The difficulties with reviewers can also result in long wait times and/or the quality of review can be quite inconsistent. Good editors handle these variations, but many are just too busy, which makes the process especially burdensome and delayed for authors. A smart and well considered review is a truly wonderful thing, but there are sometimes occasions where things go badly off course in terms of timelines and quality. Many academics also increasingly feel like suckers for working for free for giant corporations who make billions (the most notorious of which is Elsevier) while keeping knowledge behind paywalls. Some colleagues have also decided to boycott specific presses (one example: there is an ongoing boycott of Columbia University due to their response to Gaza).

Pros, cons, and mitigation

Things that make peer review wonderful are that the quality of what is published is more likely to be better and more consistent. Different journals have different levels of rigour and/or prestige, but when you know a journal is respected for the quality of its work, you can trust that articles in it are going to be thoughtful, grounded in evidence (and not just reinventing the wheel), and making arguments that it can support with evidence. When we (those of us who developed this guide) write our own papers, we include both peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed publications as part of our literature reviews, but we may read and cite them differently. We may view their findings differently. For example, if I'm citing the hypothetical paper in the earlier example box that says only 9% of survivors ever get paid for storytelling, I'm probably not going to cite one of the parts of their statistical analysis, since I will be less likely to trust their numbers. But I might still cite some of their framings or concepts. If I'm citing a peer reviewed paper where the statistical analysis is thorough and transparent, and where they clearly name the limits to their research, I can feel more confident citing that paper, including its statistical analysis.

That level of trust means that it's also exciting to be published in a peer-reviewed journal. It's harder to be published in a respected peer-reviewed journal, and you have to carefully check, revise, and improve your work before it is published.

But there are drawbacks and challenges with peer review too. Following are a few of them, along with steps some editors and reviewers take to try to mitigate them.

- Academia broadly relies on Western models of knowledge production, and often disregards communal knowledge, non-linear ways of thinking and knowing, and the value of indigenous knowledge models.
- Editors can invite peer reviewers who have knowledge of both academic and community approaches to knowledge sharing, and can partner with reviewers from different disciplines and parts of the world.

- Peer review can serve as gatekeeping, creating an insular process that ends up excluding communities and otherwise brilliant researchers who have not had access to the same forms of education. Sometimes peer reviewers have very fixed ideas about the 'right' kind of methods or theories, and can therefore be unnecessarily critical of submissions that don't align with their narrow ideas of how papers 'should' be written.
- Editors can provide transparent information to those interested in submitting (like this guide) outlining the process.
- Editors can recommend co-authors with academic backgrounds where it seems like a good fit.
- Editors can coach the peer reviewers to highlight ways the paper could be improved to be a better fit for publication rather than just indicating what doesn't work about the paper.
- Sometimes peer reviewers are not as qualified as they seem to assess a paper, and may give feedback that is inaccurate or unhelpful. When this occurs, responding to peer review may require correcting a lot of misunderstandings rather than having a chance to meaningfully improve your work.
- Editors should be thoughtful about reviewer selection and ensure that the feedback received by the authors is relevant and appropriate.
- Editors can provide clear guidance to authors about what feedback they see as most important to address, what could be ignored and how to address conflicting recommendations.
- Editors can choose not to include entire reviews or sections of reviews when sending them to authors because they are not constructive or are outright rude or unprofessional.

WENDY AND ELLA WRITE:

When we talk about researchers learning how to write in 'academic speak', it's important to remember that technical vocabularies and ways of communicating are often specific to a researcher's discipline. Jargon and writing expectations in humanities research (such as history, literature, philosophy etc.) will be different from say natural sciences research (such as chemistry, physics, zoology etc.), for example. So a full-time researcher in literature may have just as much difficulty with physics writing as someone who doesn't have academic training would.

Similarly, this means that a researcher in one field who wants to publish in another may have to learn the language and norms of that field, which may be totally different from their own. This is true when they have to learn writing styles and jargon that are unfamiliar, but also when the publication process varies somewhat from one field to the next.

A note on academic co-authors

A note from Chris: I don't have a Ph.D. I did go to graduate school in my forties and had to learn certain kinds of academic practices then, but definitely not enough to feel entirely confident writing for academic outlets. In anything I write, I typically prefer co-authoring articles, toolkits, or essays with someone who brings different insights than I do. This isn't because I lack confidence in my writing in general, but is because I know that I am one person, with my own misunderstandings, biases, and limits of what I know. Having a co-author has always helped me catch things I wouldn't have caught otherwise, understand things in new and different ways, and clarify elements that might have otherwise been confusing for my readers.

When I write for an academic journal or book, I always have at least one co-author who has a stronger academic background than me. This isn't because my expertise is insufficient. It's because I'm still learning what the norms are in academic writing. My co-authors may know better than I do what editors and peer reviewers will be looking for. They may know if there is something I'm wanting to do that needs an ethics review or for me to pause to consider alternatives. They will know how to cite in APA while I am still learning, and they will not make fun of me when I have to turn a chapter in before they've had the chance to review the

last sections I added and the reviewers' feedback notes my 'weird habit' of doing a citation wrong in several of the paragraphs. Basically, we co-author, and they serve as my consultant or coach on the academic parts. That doesn't invalidate my contributions or make me any less of an expert or author, but it helps me feel more confident in academic spaces. If I'm going to check out a neighbourhood I don't spend a lot of time in, I like a local to go with me even if I'm mostly leading, because then I can feel more confident that I won't get lost. When I'm writing for academic platforms, I feel more confident when I have an academic co-author who has more knowledge about academic processes than I do. And just like I might eventually learn the new neighbourhood and feel more at home there, I'm finding that I'm needing less and less support from my academic co-authors the more I write.

To make this work, though, I need a co-author I trust. Someone who understands the work I'm doing. Someone who understands how academia can shut out good ideas because they aren't presented The Right Way, and who wants to disrupt that a bit. Someone who is patient with me when I ask a lot of questions or don't know something most academic writers would know. I do my best to identify folks who can collaborate in this way. However, as with all collaborations, it's important to think about boundaries and what kind of process will work for us. If an academic co-author (or any co-author) doesn't respect my boundaries or expertise, it may be necessary to revisit our process or even end the collaboration.

If you have trusted colleagues who have co-authored with academics, you might want to ask them for recommendations for potential partners.

A note on authorship

Academic writing can have weird and hierarchical authorship norms, but in general credited authors include individuals who make direct and substantial contributions across multiple categories: the design of the research, securing funding, gathering data and analysis/interpretation of the data, drafting the manuscript, reviewing and revising drafts prior to submission, responding to reviewer/editor feedback, and final approval of the manuscript. Often, the order of the authors is considered to be in order of the significance of the contribution.

Let's use an imaginary research team of Ben, Sarah, and Aya. If Ben wrote an article with Sarah and Aya, and Sarah wrote most of the article and did some of the research, Aya wrote a smaller section of the article, did a lot of the research, and reviewed the final paper, and Ben mostly just reviewed the paper but wrote a paragraph to clarify an issue, the author order might be Sarah, Aya, and Ben.

This could be influenced by other factors.

If the team had been meeting for months and Ben's contributions to the discussions really laid the foundation for the way the paper was framed, he might be listed as second author even though he didn't do as much of the research or writing.

If Aya is the lead researcher who holds the grant that funded the paper and Sarah is a graduate student she supervises, she may feel like she should be the first author even though Sarah wrote most of the paper. It is not uncommon for graduate students to joke/complain about professors who have a list of first-author publications that were written by their graduate students, and many are directly advocating against exploitative practices like this.

Alternatively, if Sarah was the lead researcher and Aya is a graduate student she supervises, and Aya's research contributions really informed even the sections that Sarah wrote, Sarah might want Aya to be first author. "I already have enough publications where I'm first author," Sarah might say. "Your contributions were so important to the paper and I think it's fair for you to get to shine."

And to make it more confusing, author order can mean something entirely different to different researchers and journals. In some fields, such as public health, the last author position is typically considered 'senior' and most prestigious; in others, the last author is presumed to have made the least substantive contributions.

Ultimately, it's up to you and your co-authors to determine the order.[7] It can be helpful to have discussions upfront (and on an ongoing basis, if contributions evolve) to understand each other's views, needs and expectations around authorship order and avoid tensions further down the line. Some research groups have a practice of developing formal author agreements at the beginning of a project, to ensure that everyone understands how authorship and author

order will be determined across publications and other materials.[8] Finally, some journals require a clear statement of contributions that each author made, which can be helpful in making transparent the different tasks involved.

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES WE HAVE SEEN OF ETHICAL, MUTUALLY RESPECTFUL APPROACHES:

- *Late-career, award-winning academics saying, "I'm old and retiring in a few years and it doesn't really matter. Put me at the end, and let these young folks shine!"*
- *A professor explaining to a student that he plans to be first author and then working out a detailed plan to ensure that he also does the bulk of the work so that author order matches the level of contribution.*
- *A group of authors for a single article deciding to list their authorship under a collective name rather than list each individual author because they want to emphasise collective knowledge-building and don't need or want individual acknowledgement.*
- *A group of authors choosing to exclude the names of two authors from a report at the request of those two authors, who have safety concerns about increased visibility. Alternatively, pseudonyms can and have been used for publications where needed.*
- *Two authors indicating that they will list themselves as joint authors on a curriculum vitae or resume and note this in the article (and are therefore listed alphabetically).*
- *Lead researchers who have authorship discussions and plans prior to the bulk of the writing. While these can change as people's intended contributions may not actually happen, proactive discussions are helpful.*

WE HAVE ALSO SEEN EFFORTS TO NAME ALL CONTRIBUTORS GO AWRY:

- *A lead author ensuring that everyone who contributed (even a sentence) being named as co-authors, and one of the ones who contributed at a minor level later misrepresenting themselves as "developing the framework" and minimising the historical work of the primary authors.*

AND EXPLOITATIVE PRACTICES ARE SADLY COMMON:

- *Survivors working closely with an academic above and beyond the 'community advisory board' responsibilities throughout the project, and largely providing the concepts that become the published piece, not being credited as a co-author but remaining in the acknowledgements.*
- *Lead authors sanitizing or whitewashing the contributions of marginalised authors, so they're credited as authors but the work that gets submitted may be saying things they would not have said.*
- *Students who did a lot of the work on a research project and the resulting papers, but then having their names removed as co-authors before submission without any notification or conversation beforehand.*
- *An organisation publishing an article under the organisation's name without crediting the authors, invisibilizing their work and denying them the credit they are due.*
- *Project leads offering authorship to colleagues who did not meaningfully contribute for strategic reasons, such as the hopes of obtaining a favourable grant review in the future, and minimizing the contributions of coauthors with less power or status in the field.*

The takeaway: *Some people want to be honoured by name and/or order for their contributions. Some do not. Some receive less credit for their contributions by choice, and some are pushed down or excluded by hierarchy. Make sure you talk to your co-authors and choose an approach that meets your needs, honours your work, and respects your dignity. You may want to have a conversation about authorship credit or develop a formal agreement at the beginning of a collaboration, to determine whether your team can find a common approach.*

After you submit

While waiting

You invest so much of your heart, soul, and time into preparing a submission you are proud of, you submit it to the editor, and then… ? You know how after you've had company and they leave, things feel a little quieter than they did before they came? That's how it sometimes feels after submitting a paper. Be patient. If the journal gives an estimated amount of time between submitting your paper and receiving a decision, we suggest waiting that long before reaching out. More emails won't get you through the process faster.

LARA WRITES:

The first author will usually submit the paper using the journal's online portal. When they log in, they can see the status of the submission. It's a good way to know where in the process your paper is, as the paper may be with the editor for months before it even goes out for review!

Some common statuses you might see include:

Awaiting processing or with editor: This means that the editor has not yet reviewed your paper to decide next steps.

Awaiting reviewer selection, or reviewers invited: This means that the editor has reviewed it and is deciding on reviewers or waiting for reviewers to confirm if they can review it.

Awaiting reviewer feedback: This means that the paper is currently with the reviewers, and that it will be until the editor receives their feedback.

Decision in process: The editor is reviewing feedback to make a decision.

There are many other statuses you might see, and how the status is worded might be different from one journal to the next. You can search online if there is ever a status you don't understand.

Revise and resubmit

For most papers that will eventually be published, the first response you get will be a revise and resubmit request. First off – don't panic! This means that the editors like your work enough to make suggestions for improving it. It is not a guarantee that it will be published if the edits are made, so it's important to know that even after making edits they could decide that it's not a good fit. But it's a first step towards possible publication.

Second, try not to take feedback personally! Academics can absolutely adore each other, and pick apart each others' ideas with enthusiasm. Chris once heard an academic start a talk about another academic by sharing a story about watching bears ride bicycles at the circus as a child, and sharing how he was entertained by it but that even as a child he knew there was something wrong about forcing a bear to ride a bike. He then joked, "And that's how I felt when I read my colleague's attempt to force this theory to work for his argument". The academic he was talking about was in the audience and laughed heartily – they were good friends. This is to say that in academia it is common (and indeed part of the process) to critique ideas without it at all being a critique of the person or their intelligence.

That said, sometimes reviewers may try to make it personal, or you may feel personally attacked even if that wasn't the reviewer's intention. Someone reviewing a strong critique of a method may be one of the pioneers of that method. Someone may bring their own biases into their reviews. Someone may offer feedback that is not constructive or helpful. In some cases, if reviewers leave feedback that is inappropriate or cruel, editors may choose to remove or edit those comments before passing them along. However, not all editors do this. If you get feedback that feels intentionally personal or rude, take a pause before responding, and then decide the best path forward.

TIPS:

- *Consider giving it a few days before deciding to make edits or revisions based on feedback that doesn't feel good. Sometimes you'll be in the shower two days after reading feedback that initially made you angry, and begrudgingly realise that there's a way the feedback could force you to clarify your thinking and strengthen your argument.*
- *If feedback feels off or like it's misunderstanding your point, sometimes that can be because your point isn't entirely clear. It may be that you don't need to make the specific edits they suggested (because they would redirect your point), but that you need to do a better job of explaining what your point is elsewhere in your article.*
- *If after reflection you feel like the feedback was off target or inappropriate, there are sometimes still ways you can respond and revise according to the reviewers' feedback but with your own reframing that doesn't accept theirs. Following is an extreme and absurd hypothetical example to illustrate the point: If a reviewer suggests you add a sentence suggesting that survivors often do not have the skills needed to do research, you might choose instead to add a sentence that says "because of prior marginalisation and lack of long-term services that include support for higher education, survivors often lack access to formal education that teaches research skills". You've addressed the reviewer's point, but you've noted the systemic reasons for lack of access (including a critique of services that don't support educational goals), and you've said they lack access to 'formal education' about research, which does not exclude the possibility of learning outside of formal education. See how this works?*

PREETI WRITES:

Remember that peer-reviewers are not trained on how to peer-review. They provide reviews based on their own personal experience of getting reviews from others, how their mentors or lab directors might write reviews, and sometimes from class work. This is a huge frustration of both researchers and journal editors. There are a few programmes now that provide mentorship and training on how to peer review. I started one with Pediatrics (a child health focused journal where I serve on the Editorial Board), and developed materials and checklists for how to provide a good, professional, relevant review, as well as insight into how the editorial process works and what journal editors look for.[9]

Third, when you resubmit, it will likely be sent to the same reviewers as before. So you'll want to show how you addressed their comments. You will want to send a draft showing the changes made (possibly in 'track changes' mode so they can see where you edited and what was there before or using highlighted or bolded text to show your revisions, depending on which works best for your needs). And for any general feedback that was written, you'll want to respond to each and send that back to the editor with your resubmitted article.

EXAMPLE:

Your reviewer feedback may look something like this, but probably longer:

Reviewer 1

An overall strong paper. It seems like your conclusions would be stronger if you introduced the labour framework earlier in the paper and wove it throughout your work. Also, there are some places where quotation marks start a quote but there is not a close quotation mark, so I am not sure where the quote ends.

P. 3, lines 3-8, you reference Kiconco's work but the connection to your argument is unclear. Recommend either making that connection clearer or removing this section.

P. 8, lines 23-24, What do you mean by 'paradigm of pain'? This is unclear.

Reviewer 2

A good start, but needs some clarity to build the argument you're making. Needs a strong copy edit to catch a few odd patterns.

P. 4, lines 18-24, You cite Adams' 2001 study but it is both old and was done on a very small sample. Recommend removing this.

.....

If this was your reviewer feedback, your response might look like this:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to revise our manuscript. We appreciate this feedback, and have addressed the reviewer's concerns as outlined below. All substantial edits are highlighted in yellow.

Reviewer 1

We have copyedited to ensure that quotations are accurately indicated.

P. 3, lines 3-8, you reference Kiconco's work but the connection to your argument is unclear. Recommend either making that connection clearer or removing this section.

We added two sentences clarifying the connection of Kiconco's work to our own.

P. 8, lines 23-24, What do you mean by 'paradigm of pain'? This is unclear.

> *We have added a phrase defining the 'paradigm of pain' and referencing Harakat's earlier work on this concept.*
>
> **Reviewer 2**
> *The revised article has been carefully copyedited to address errors.*
>
> *P. 4, lines 18-24, You cite Adams' 2001 study but it is both old and was done on a very small sample. Recommend removing this.*
>
> *Although we understand these concerns, we believe that Adams' work is important for our argument. We have added language acknowledging the limits of Adams' 2001 study, including noting the small sample size and the age of the study. We have also added language highlighting key elements of Adams' study that have been excluded in more recent studies to clarify the unique contribution of her methodology to our article.*
>
> .....
>
> *See how this clearly shows your responsiveness while preserving your vision?*

Sometimes it may not be useful - and it may not feel good - to repeat the reviewers' words directly. It's perfectly appropriate to paraphrase their comments, as long as you identify the concerns they've raised. For example, one of us (Ethan) once received a strikingly mixed review for a paper - one reviewer suggested that he was changing the field of research on interpersonal violence for the better, and one wrote a pages-long critique that felt like a personal attack. The second reviewer began multiple points with phrases such as, "the author shows no understanding of [specific concept]". When preparing his response to feedback, Ethan took that language out. The peer review process went smoothly and the paper was published. If, in the example above, Reviewer 2 had said something to the effect of, "the author shows no understanding of the need to engage recent scholarship, as evidenced by their inclusion of Adams' 2001 study," you might respond by stating that, "the reviewer raised concerns about our engagement with some older literature, including Adams' 2001 study" and then providing your response.

Not a good fit

This can be such painful feedback to receive. It is especially hard if you wrote your article specifically for this issue, and weren't just trying to find a good outlet for work you were already doing anyway. Have your feelings and let yourself be disappointed – that is normal. And remember, your article's fit for any one journal is not a sign of the worth of your work or your article. Remember that every author who has ever published a paper has also had rejections. Ethan has even shared about a time he had several things out for review at once, three of which were rejected within the same week. The stress of rejections was so high that now he has a rule of only having 2 things out for peer review at any given time, so he knows he won't get more than two rejections at once. Rejections can hit us hard, and they are also part of the publishing process.

Following are some alternatives if your paper isn't a good fit for the issue you submit it to:

Submit in a different format

Sometimes, reviewers might recommend that you resubmit your article to the same journal as a brief report instead of as a full research paper. This means they believe your contribution contains valuable learnings, but that it might not work in the structure it was initially submitted.

Another academic journal

If the feedback isn't about the rigour of the research or writing but is more about alignment with the theme, consider submitting to a different journal. Reviewers and editors will sometimes make this suggestion, and may even offer suggestions about other outlets. It's also worth remembering that your reviewers are only people too and their idea of what constitutes sufficient rigour is not the final word. Academics have plenty of stories about papers they were told weren't 'good enough' that ended up being published elsewhere (either in different form or very similar form) and were well received by many others in the field. To some extent, who you get as reviewers is a bit of a lottery, so try to remember that 'Reviewer 2' is not necessarily representative of how your target audience at large will respond to your work.

Edited books

Academic journal articles have a fairly standard structure and methodology, although the specific structure varies by field (for example, arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences journals each have their own writing norms). Edited academic volumes often have more flexibility in how concepts are presented, and may have looser structures for how the chapters are constructed. Sometimes the authors of edited books are invited by the editor, who already knows them. Other times they are found through an open call that is circulated. When there is an open call, you will not typically submit your full chapter, but will only send the abstract for consideration. The call will outline what is expected.

Blog posts

Sometimes organisations will post guest articles on their blogs. When looking for an organisation to publish your article, it's important to be familiar with the organisation and its audience. An organisation that provides training and policy advocacy for anti-trafficking professionals has an audience of anti-trafficking professionals, so it might not be the right outlet for an article that focuses on general public awareness, for example. An organisation that provides education and awareness campaigns for the general public will not be the right outlet for a technical article about specific practices in service delivery. When Chris managed the National Survivor Network, they regularly got pitches for guest blogs that indicated that the person did not familiarise themselves with the organisation before reaching out. It was obvious that they just searched 'human trafficking survivor group' (or sometimes even just 'human trafficking') and submitted it to every organisation they found. It takes time to familiarise yourself, but it also helps you make sure you aren't wasting your time or theirs with your submission, and helps you to craft your pitch to their needs. You can also ask around for recommendations for or introductions to organisations that might be a great fit.

News media

If your article is about a timely or newsworthy issue, consider submitting your piece as an opinion editorial (or 'op-ed') to a news outlet. If you are less worried about being published as an author but are more concerned with getting timely and misunderstood information to the public, consider writing to a journalist about your topic as a tip.

Creative writing publishing and fellowships

If your aim is to write captivating, poetic, or creative personal reflections, consider seeking deeper engagement with creative writing opportunities. Many works of creative nonfiction take the form of essays. Search out creative nonfiction journals, read what kinds of things they publish, and consider if your work could be adapted for submission. If you feel like your work has potential, but that you need more support learning the craft of writing creatively, find classes. If you feel like you're a strong creative nonfiction writer but want more opportunities to deepen your craft, seek out creative writing fellowships.

Concluding thoughts: a call to reflect on colonial norms of knowledge production

The purpose of this guide was to offer an overview of the academic process for peer review in publications to an audience that may not be fully familiar with it. We have attempted to demystify a process that often seems confusing and mysterious. Our goal was to help those who want to submit to a peer reviewed publication to understand the process, not to offer a critique of the peer review process or academic knowledge-production in general.

That said, we are both clear that peer review does not determine what is or isn't knowledge – it determines what meets the standards for publication in any given journal. The peer review system was designed by and for academics in the Western tradition. Even well-meaning efforts to include lived experience (particularly those from marginalised communities, Indigenous scholars, or those in resource-rich but historically exploited countries) expect them to fit into models that may not reflect their cultural understandings of what is or isn't knowledge, and how it is or isn't (co-)created.

Western academic norms, which are not themselves objective or without cultural bias, have historically and often been used in ways that harm oppressed and colonised populations.

Examples of this include:

- Starting from oppressive or culturally specific assumptions about who people are, how things work, how knowledge is produced, and what things are 'good' or 'bad' rather than starting by interrogating those assumptions.
- Using 'research' processes that superficially or supposedly check the requirements for academic rigour to justify violence, racism, and colonisation.
- Manipulating research data to argue for violence.
- Dismissing knowledge that is not developed through 'academic' processes (meaning: Western academic processes), and invalidating or diminishing the value of lived experience. This is sometimes weaponised in racial ways, such as dismissing knowledge

from Indigenous communities as folk wisdom or (nonscientific) cultural practice, and then crediting White scientists for 'discovering' the same information

- Prioritising individual knowledge over collective knowledge.
- Treating 'othered' individuals as subjects of study rather than as people with agency and knowledge.
- Presuming that individuals who do not have conventional academic credentials, such as Master's or doctoral degrees, have nothing to contribute except for their lived experience.

While it is outside the scope of this guide to provide detailed histories of academic harm or practical tools for decolonising research practices, we have added resources to Annex 2 that provide strong guidance and practical models for collaborative models of knowledge production that challenge colonial logics. We hope that you will explore these resources and incorporate their concepts into your work.

Remember, peer reviewed research shapes not just what is known about the topics of research, but also what is seen as knowledge, and what is valued and centred in policy and advocacy work. Together, we can shift narratives around knowledge, value, truth, 'objectivity', and expertise. We look forward to serving as partners in this work, and to learning from and alongside you as you grow as a researcher.

Annex 1: Examples of short articles

Some journals allow for the submission of short articles that are more like a blog post. This can be a wonderful opportunity for individuals with less formal academic writing experience, or those who want to write up a short concept but aren't writing up the results of a study or longer research project. It can also be confusing, because even though it's a short 'blog-style' article, it still needs to be the right level of 'academic'. What does that mean?

Here are three examples of open access, short articles from Anti-Trafficking Review that are good reads. As you read through them, notice not just the content and topics, but also how they present the information. They still use references to statistics and research and cite them properly. They still have to support their claims with evidence (whether it is researched evidence or findings from their own work). There is still a general format to how they are structured.

This article is by a development professional at a large anti-trafficking nonprofit: https://antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/786/574

Hers has an abstract, and then goes into a blog-style write-up that builds the case for change, describes the changes she'd recommend, and then explains the impact she believes they could have.

This article is written by two employees of a major anti-trafficking service provider: https://antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/838/603

This one has an abstract, an introduction, a story to anchor the topic, some discussion/reflections, and recommendations/conclusions.

This article is a write-up of an approach to survivor inclusion utilised by two doctors and a survivor consultant on a project they did together: https://antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/582/442

This one has an abstract, an introduction, a short description of what they did, a few sections on their process, some reflections, and a conclusion.

Annex 2: Additional resources

Rather than create a comprehensive list to use as a curriculum, we have listed a few accessible resources that can be the first thread you pull. We encourage you to see what other threads they offer, using these as a starting point rather than a goal.

Resources on lived experience engagement

- The Meaningful Engagement Handbook by Collective Threads Initiative (See also CTI's Tools Library for documents to assist with implementation).

Resources on lived experience engagement in research

- A Funders Toolkit for Lived Experience Inclusion in Modern Slavery Research: Guidelines for supporting peer engagement of people with lived experience in modern slavery research. A tool guiding funders on how to determine and frame meaningful engagement of human trafficking survivors in research.
- Ethical Lived Experience Engagement in Research. Audience-specific guidance notes designed to support researchers, research institutions, NGOs, funders and research participants in incorporating into their own work the findings of a recent project "Ethics in modern slavery research," led by the University of Liverpool and University of Nottingham.
- You Are an Expert: Research Collaborations for Survivors. A toolkit developed by the survivor-centred research team that is part of the team called Human-Centered Action Research to Disrupt Trafficking, a transdisciplinary and community-engaged research team. The toolkit is by survivors of trafficking for survivors of trafficking to explore whether and how they might want to engage as research consultants.
- We Name It So We Can Repair It: Rethinking Harm and Repair in the Anti-Trafficking Sector. While this document is not specific to researchers, several of the recommendations address research, measurement, evaluation, and impact.

Authorship resources

- Guidance on Authorship in Scholarly or Scientific Publications (Yale Office of the Provost)
- Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)
- International Standards for Authors (Committee on Publication Ethics)
- Credit Taxonomy National Information Standards Organization (Also see: this fillable form which can help implement the taxonomy)
- Dr. Preeti Panda's Authorship Agreement: Authorship Agreement Template

Resources on providing peer review

- Guidance for Reviewing Manuscripts for Peer-Reviewed Publications (Pediatrics Editorial Board)

General research and publishing resources

- Free tutorials on YouTube (Sage Publishing)
- Free resources on research (Sage Publishing)

Introductory decolonial research resources

- Pause and Effect - provides public-facing blogs and information and offers a course called 'Reimagining Research'
- Praxis - advancing alternative, anti-colonial approaches to participatory research and evaluation
- Sindhanai - aims to mainstream tools, methods and perspectives that evolve within Collectives, especially in the Global South
- Anti-Colonial Research Library - holds a collection of open-access articles and books, websites, and YouTube videos on Indigenous and anti-colonial research methodologies

Notes

1. 'Deliverable' refers to the final product that is expected in exchange for grant funding. It can be a report, a training, a workshop, or something entirely different. ↩
2. See: Guidance on Authorship in Scholarly or Scientific Publications, Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors, or International Standards for Authors, or the Credit Taxonomy (see: this fillable form). ↩
3. Many students and early career researchers do significant unpaid research work as part of their academic courses, knowing that it can go on their resumes and help with future career goals. Many researchers hold full-time positions at universities where they are also involved in teaching students and participating in departmental and administrative tasks. When their other work responsibilities increase, many find that their time to do research-related tasks erodes, and they may find themselves working unpaid hours to meet research and publication expectations. Finally, grant funding often goes to support the grant deliverables rather than researcher salaries. Remember, researchers may not fully realise how important it is to pay consultants for all their time working on a research project because of how much unpaid work they are used to doing. ↩
4. If you plan to participate in peer reviewed research publications regularly, you may want to consider setting up an ORCID account. ORCID allows authors and researchers to register and receive a unique number (identifier). Many journals will automatically update ORCID when new articles are published, and if you have submitted your ORCID identifier with your journal submission, your unique profile listing all of your publications will be updated as well. See: https://info.orcid.org/what-is-orcid/ ↩
5. You may sometimes hear this referred to as a 'double-blind' review, but this language is falling out of favour as professionals work to remove ableist or 'disability-as-metaphor' language from their frameworks. ↩
6. Most journals that offer paid subscriptions will also allow authors to pay to publish individual articles as open access, but this can cost thousands of dollars. ↩
7. Note that some journals automatically list the authors in alphabetical order. ↩
8. See this example provided by Dr. Preeti Panda: Authorship Agreement Template ↩
9. You can view these resources on how to provide a peer review here: Guidance for Reviewing Manuscripts for Peer-Reviewed Publication. ↩