

Editorial Policies

OVERVIEW OF THE EDITORIAL PROCESS

For detailed submission guidelines please refer to the Instruction for Authors or contact the Editors of *Special Matrices*.

■ Submission

Each manuscript should be accompanied by a cover letter which should explicitly state that the authors have the authority to publish the work and that the manuscript (or one with substantially the same content, by any of the authors) has not been previously published in any language anywhere and that it is not under simultaneous consideration by another journal. All authors of the manuscript are responsible for its content; they must have agreed to its publication and have given the corresponding author the authority to act on their behalf in all matters pertaining to publication. The corresponding author is responsible for informing the co-authors of the manuscript status throughout the submission, review, and production process.

■ Authorship

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Those who do not meet that criteria should be acknowledged (see Instructions for Authors for details). It is the sole responsibility of contributors to determine the authors of the manuscript submitted to the journal.

Authors must ensure that anyone named in the acknowledgments agrees to being so named. Editors of *Special Matrices* may require that the corresponding author obtain written permission to be acknowledged from all acknowledged individuals.

■ Addition or Removal of Authors

The authors' request for addition or removal of an author should be properly justified. Please note that a change in authorship (order of listing, addition or deletion of a name, or corresponding author designation) after submission of the manuscript will be implemented only after receipt of signed statements of agreement from all parties involved (all listed authors and the author to be removed or added).

■ Peer Review process

Each manuscript after uploading to Editorial Manager receives an individual identification code that is used in all correspondence regarding the publication process. However, a submission may be declined by the Editors without review, if the studies reported are not sufficiently novel or important to merit publication in the journal. Manuscripts deemed unsuitable (insufficient originality or of limited interest to the target audience) are returned to the author(s) without review.

■ Choice of reviewers

The Editor seeks advice from experts in the appropriate field. Research articles and communications are refereed by a minimum of two reviewers, review papers by at least three.

■ Suggestions from authors

Authors are requested to suggest persons competent to review their manuscript. However, please note that this will be treated only as a suggestion, and the final selection of reviewers is exclusively the Editor's decision. The authors' names are revealed to the referees, but not vice versa.

The reviewers make an objective, impartial evaluation of scientific merits of the manuscript. Reviewers operate under guidelines set forth in the Guidelines for reviewers and are asked to comment on the following aspects of submitted manuscripts:

- novelty and originality of the work;
- broad interest to the community of researchers;
- significance to the field, potential impact of the work, conceptual or methodological advances described;
- study design and clarity;
- substantial evidence supporting claims and conclusions;

■ Rigorous methodology

If a manuscript is believed to not meet the standards of the journal or is otherwise lacking in scientific rigor or contains major deficiencies, the reviewers will attempt to provide constructive criticism to assist the authors in ultimately improving their work.

If a manuscript is believed to be potentially acceptable for publication but needs to be improved, it is invited for reconsideration with the expectation that the authors will fully address the reviewer's suggestions.

Once all reviews have been received and considered by the Editor, a decision letter to the author is drafted. There are several types of decisions possible:

- Accept without revision
- Minor revision
- Major revision
- Reject

■ Revised manuscript submission

When revision of a manuscript is requested, authors should return the revised version of their manuscript as soon as possible. Prompt action may ensure fast publication, if a paper is finally accepted for publication. The authors need to return their revised manuscript within the time specified by the Editor in the decision letter (usually 28 days for the first revision and 14 days for subsequent revision). If these deadlines are not met, and no specific arrangements for completion have been made with the Editor, the manuscript will be treated as a new one and will receive a new identification code along with a new registration date.

The final decision is made by the main Editor of the journal.

■ Final proofreading

Authors will receive a pdf file with the edited version of their manuscript for final proofreading. This is the last opportunity to view an article before its publication on the Journal web site. No changes or modifications can be introduced once it is published. Thus, authors are requested to check their proof pages carefully against the manuscript within 3 working days and prepare a separate document containing all changes that should be introduced. Authors are sometimes asked to provide additional comments and explanations in response to remarks and queries from the language or technical editors.

■ Immediate publication

Manuscripts ready for publication are promptly posted online. The manuscripts are considered to be ready for publication when the final proofreading has been performed by authors, and all concerns have been resolved. Authors should notice that no changes can be made to the articles after online publication.

■ Erratum

If any errors are detected in the published material, they should be reported to the Editor of the journal. The corresponding authors should send the appropriate corrected material to the Editor via email. This material will be considered for publication as soon as feasible.

■ Reprints

Because the journal is published in an Open Access model, and has no printed version, the authors receive no reprints.

■ Copyright

All authors retain copyright, unless – due to their local circumstances – their work is not copyrighted. The copyrights are governed by the [Creative-Commons Attribution Only license](#) (CC-BY) which is compliant with Plan-S. Scanned copy of license should be sent to the journal, as soon as possible.

SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT AND OTHER FRAUD

Scientific misconduct is defined by the [Office of Research Integrity](#) as "fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting, or reporting

research". In cases where there is a suspicion or allegation of scientific misconduct or fraudulent research in manuscripts submitted or published, the Editors reserve the right to impose sanctions on the authors, such as:

- an immediate rejection of the manuscript;
- banning author(s) from submitting manuscripts to the journal for a certain period of time;
- retracting the manuscript;
- alerting editors of other journals and publishers;
- bringing the concerns to the authors' sponsoring or funding institution or other appropriate authority for investigation

This journal publishes only original manuscripts that are not also published or going to be published elsewhere. Multiple submissions/publications, or redundant publications (re-packaging in different words of data already published by the same authors) will be rejected. If they are detected only after publication, the journal reserves the right to publish a Retraction Note. In each particular case Editors will follow [COPE's Code of Conduct](#) and implement its advice.

■ Plagiarism

As a member of Cross Ref, De Gruyter provides plagiarism detection software [CrossCheck](#) to all its journals. When plagiarism in the submitted manuscript is identified, Editors will follow [COPE guidelines on plagiarism](#).

■ Retraction Policy

Serious errors in a published manuscript and infringements of professional ethical codes will result in an article being retracted. This will occur where the article is clearly defamatory, or infringes others' legal rights, or where the article is, or there is good reason to expect it will be, the subject of a court order, or where the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk. In any of these cases all coauthors will be informed about a retraction. A Retraction Note detailing the reason for retraction will be linked to the original article.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In order to encourage transparency without impeding publication, all authors, referees and editors must declare any association that poses a conflict of interest in connection with the manuscript. There should be no contractual relations or proprietary considerations that would affect the publication of information contained in a submitted manuscript. A competing interest for a scholarly journal is anything that interferes with, or could reasonably be perceived as interfering with, the full and objective presentation, review, or publication of research findings, or of articles that comment on or review research findings. Potential conflicts of interest exist when an author, editor or reviewer has financial, personal or professional interests in a publication that might influence their scientific judgment.

Examples of such conflicts include, but are not limited to:

- **Financial conflicts:** stock ownership; patents; paid employment or consultancy; board membership; research grants; travel grants and honoraria for speaking or participation at meetings; gifts
- **Personal conflicts:** relationship with editors, editorial board members, or with possible reviewers who have had recent or ongoing collaborations with the authors, have commented on drafts of the manuscript, are in direct competition, have a history of dispute with the authors
- **Professional conflicts:** public associations with institutions or corporations whose products or services are related to the subject matter of the article; membership of a government advisory council/committee; relationship with organizations and funding bodies

Authors should declare whether they have any conflicts of interests that could have influenced the reporting of the experimental data or conclusions in their paper. Such a statement should list all potential interests or, if appropriate, should clearly state that there are none. The editors may decide not to publish papers when we believe the competing interests are such that they may have compromised the work or the analyses or interpretations presented. Upon submission of a manuscript, authors may suggest to exclude any specific editors or reviewers from the peer review of their article. It is the responsibility of authors to disclose in the Acknowledgments section any funding sources for the project or other relationships that are relevant. Authors are suggested to fill in the [Conflicts of Interest Form](#) and send the electronic version to the Editor.

Editors should consider whether any of the above competing interests are relevant to them and the manuscript under consideration. Editor who believes that the conflict will preclude an impaired judgment should disclose to the main Editor of the journal the nature of the conflict and decline to handle the paper.

Reviewers should consider whether any of the above applies to them and declare any such competing interests. If they feel they cannot review a paper because of any competing interest, they should tell us. They should also declare any association with the authors of a paper.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS AND DATA

The publication of an article in the journal is subject to the understanding that authors will make all data and associated protocols available to readers on request. The Methods section should include details of how materials and information may be obtained. In cases of dispute, authors may be required to make any primary data available to the main Editor.

In the case of new software, source code should ideally be made available, for example as supporting information with the rest of the paper, or by deposition at a publicly accessible resource such as sourceforge.net. For a new algorithm, a detailed description should be published in the paper. In cases where the software/algorithm is not central to the paper, we nevertheless encourage authors to make all relevant materials freely available. Software can be provided under license where necessary, but any restrictions on the availability or on the use of materials might be judged to diminish the significance of a paper, and therefore influence the decision about whether a paper should be published subject to those conditions.

POLICY ON COMMENTING ARTICLES

Readers are free to submit comments, questions or criticism about all articles published in the journal.

De Gruyter reserves the right not to post comments deemed to be discourteous, inaccurate or libelous and the right to remove comments already posted.

Comments may also be declined if they:

- are irrelevant to the article
- are lacking cogency
- are incomprehensible
- appear to be advertising

Authors of all comments are requested to reveal all competing interests they might have with respect to the article. For more details see [Conflict of Interest](#).

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

■ Appeals

Authors who want may appeal on the rejection of their manuscript should contact the Editors of the journal. Appeals should refer to scientific content of the manuscript and its suitability for publication. The decision made by the Editor is final.

■ Complaints

Authors who want to make complaints should, in first instance, contact the main Editor of the journal. In case, the Editor is not able to resolve the complaint, the Authors should contact us directly

(Managing Editor/Mathematics; Ewa.Sarzynska@degruyter.com)