

Responsible research publication position statements

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Background

The following position statements were developed at the 2nd World Conference on Research Integrity, held in Singapore in July 2010. They are designed to complement the Singapore Statement and to provide more detailed guidance on responsible research publication with particular emphasis on research integrity and publication ethics. The first statement is aimed at researchers in their role as authors of publications. The second statement is aimed at editors of scholarly journals that publish research.

The two statements were originally drafted by the named authors (Elizabeth Wager and Sabine Kleinert, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)). These drafts were circulated before the meeting, discussed with the invited speakers, and revised to reflect these discussions. At the meeting in Singapore, the revised draft documents were presented and discussed in two sessions and further refined during a one-day, post-conference workshop. Both statements were then reworked to reflect the discussions in Singapore and circulated to those who had participated in the sessions and to members of the COPE Council and the International Council for Science (ICSU). However, while we hope such organizations may endorse the statements, they are primarily based on the views of participants at the Singapore meeting and therefore do not necessarily represent the official views of any of the participating organizations or the individuals' institutions.

While some differences in publishing conventions exist between fields, it was evident from the discussion that there is much common ground and also a desire to raise standards in the reporting of research. The two documents therefore aim to establish standards for authors and editors of scholarly research publications and to describe responsible research reporting and publishing practice. Given the special issues raised by research involving humans or animals, which may not apply to other types of research, both statements include a specific section on these. We hope the statements will be endorsed by research institutions, funders, professional societies, and publishers.

While it would be impossible to reflect the views of all researchers and editors, we were pleased to involve participants and reviewers from a wide range of academic fields including biology, forestry, earth sciences, the humanities, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, and political science. The Singapore meeting also brought together participants from Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America. We hope the versions presented here reflect the lively debate that took place before, during and after the meeting. However, we also hope that participants and reviewers will appreciate that it was not possible to incorporate all the suggestions we received, because some were contradictory. We therefore offer these documents as the first step in a process aimed at improving the reporting and publication of research and hope the statements will be reviewed and revised, as necessary, at future meetings.

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