Welcome to COPE

COPE provides leadership in thinking on publication ethics and practical resources to educate and support members, and offers a professional voice in current debates.
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WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to COPE and thank you for joining us to help in our work to improve integrity in research publication. As a COPE member, we will support you to reach the highest ethical standards for your journal using both curated guidance, and advice from COPE Council and our member community.

If publication ethics is relatively new to you the Short guide to ethical editing is a good place to start, together with our eLearning modules. Or perhaps you already rigorously implement COPE’s Core practices for your journal, and are most interested in the emerging issues we face. In this case you will enjoy the lively discussions where we bring differing views on contentious topics together to help us all navigate the dynamic nature of research publishing.

Your opinion is valuable to the whole community as we serve all disciplines, globally, in research publication. COPE’s greatest value comes when we bring together experience and knowledge, as we strive to create a future where ethical practice in scholarly publication is the cultural norm.

We look forward to working with you.

Deborah Poff, Chair

YOUR MEMBERSHIP

As a COPE member you are now part of a community that is helping to create a future where ethical practice in scholarly publication is the cultural norm.

Membership of COPE signals to authors, reviewers and readers that your journal upholds the highest ethical standards in research publishing and that you intend to follow COPE’s Core practices and take appropriate action when issues arise. Make sure you are up to date with our Core practices using the COPE Journal audit as a checklist for your journal and editorial office.

Your membership gives you full access to COPE events and resources on our website, including guidance, advice, education and support on all aspects of publication ethics. When you need advice on a case, that cannot be resolved from using our website resources, you can submit it for discussion and advice to the COPE Forum.

You can demonstrate your membership of COPE with your personalised COPE logo on your website and in your print journal.

Your membership also provides you with a public profile page on our website and a chance to stand for election to COPE Council.

BEST PRACTICE & GUIDANCE

We maintain an extensive database of real publication ethics cases presented by our members, plus guidelines and flowcharts on handling different aspects of publication ethics issues.

ADvice

We provide a Forum for members to discuss and obtain advice on individual cases.

EDucATION

Our eLearning programme gives practical guidance on topics including: plagiarism, falsification, authorship, conflicts of interest and reviewer misconduct.

AUTHORITY

We provide leadership in thinking about publication ethics. Our purpose is to ensure ethical practices become part of publishing culture.
MEMBER BENEFITS

FORUM
Bring a case to the quarterly COPE Forum for discussion and advice by participants. A section of each Forum is dedicated to a discussion topic, giving members the opportunity for a more in-depth discussion on a current issue. For more information see page 6.

https://cope.onl/forum

WEBINARS
We invite speakers to share their knowledge of a publication ethics topic, from their perspective, and give attendees the opportunity to ask questions.

https://cope.onl/events

CONTACT COUNCIL
Members can obtain confidential advice on ethical issues, between our quarterly Forum meetings, from COPE Council Members.

https://cope.onl/forum

eLEARNING
Our eLearning course, in a series of ten modules, is designed for editors and publishers who want to improve their understanding of publication ethics and know how to access tools to address the many issues they face. For more information see page 7.

https://cope.onl/elearn

SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS
Attendance at annual COPE seminars and workshops is free. If you are holding a conference or Workshop, we can lend support with COPE materials.

https://cope.onl/events

AUDIT
The COPE Journal audit corresponds to COPE’s Core practices. It is designed to encourage members to identify areas of their journal’s policies and procedures that may need to be revised. Use the Audit as a checklist to ensure you have robust, publicly documented processes and procedures.

https://cope.onl/audit
PERSONALISED COPE LOGO

Use your personalised COPE logo, with your membership number, in your journal to signal to authors and reviewers that your journal upholds the highest ethical standards. Sign in to your account and download your logo. For more information see pages 10-11.

https://cope.onl/login

SAMPLE LETTERS

Writing to authors or reviewers about potential misconduct is one of the hardest tasks for an editor. We have a series of sample letters to help editors draft their own letters.

https://cope.onl/letter

COUNCIL

Be nominated as a COPE Council Member and contribute to the development of education and knowledge in publication ethics.

https://cope.onl/council
**COPE FORUM**

The Forum is where COPE began in 1997 and continues to be the main platform by which COPE members discuss and offer advice on current unresolved cases involving complex publication ethics issues. Only COPE members can participate in the Forum.

All the cases brought by our members are anonymised and then discussed by the participants of the Forum. Participants use their wide range of knowledge and experience to advise on the issue at hand. The member who brought the specific case to the Forum receives a summary of the discussion and advice, which they can consider when handling the case further. The final decision on handling the case lies with the member.

Each case is added to the website and reflects the discussion and advice from the Forum participants. We now have more than 600 cases that both members and non-members can browse by topic or search by keyword.

We dedicate time at each Forum to a discussion topic, giving members the opportunity for a more in-depth discussion on a current issue. Previous Forum discussion topics include predatory publishing, preprints, expressions of concern, editing peer reviews, and diversity and inclusivity.

**HOW TO SUBMIT A CASE**

Search the cases on the website to see if a similar case has already been discussed:

[https://cope.onl/cases](https://cope.onl/cases)

You will need to sign in to the website to submit your case. Click on ‘Submit a case’. Complete all fields, ensuring you keep the case anonymous.

[https://cope.onl/forum](https://cope.onl/forum)

When you are given a date for the Forum, register for the Forum so you can present your case.

FOLLOW UP

A written summary of the discussion and advice given will be sent to you after the Forum and posted as a case on our website.

**SUMMARY**

Send us a summary of your follow-up actions so we can update the case details on the website.

[https://cope.onl/forum](https://cope.onl/forum)
eLEARNING

COPE is committed to improving editors’ abilities to deal with ethical issues arising before or after journal publication. Given the time pressures on editors and the fact that COPE has members around the world, we offer an eLearning programme for members. Aimed at new editors, it gives a deeper understanding of publication ethics and practical guidance on how to detect, prevent and handle possible misconduct.

The eLearning modules, which are a member-only benefit, provide a valuable resource for editors and publishers, especially those seeking an introduction to publication ethics, and complements the wide ranging advice and support already available from COPE.

MODULES:
- Authorship
- Conflicts of interest
- Corrections, retractions and expressions of concern
- Fabrication
- Falsification
- Introduction to publication ethics
- Plagiarism
- Redundant publication
- Reviewer misconduct
- Selective reporting
COPE RESOURCES

GUIDELINES
Designed to help editors with ethical issues that cross their desk.
https://cope.onl/guide

DISCUSSION DOCUMENTS
Encouraging discussion among members and other relevant parties on current and emerging issues.
https://cope.onl/discussion

FLOWCHARTS
A step by step process used when you need guidance dealing with an ethical issue.
https://cope.onl/flowcharts

INFOGRAPHICS
Helpful in the early stages to identify indicators of possible concern.
https://cope.onl/infographics

CASES
Over 600 cases, brought to the Forum for advice, are available to browse and search on our website.
https://cope.onl/cases

FORUM DISCUSSION TOPICS
Current issues discussed at the quarterly Forum.
https://cope.onl/forum-topics

AUDIT
Use this as a checklist to ensure your journal meets the highest standards in publication ethics.
https://cope.onl/audit
DIGEST NEWSLETTER

Keep up to date with recent developments in publication ethics issues, a roundup of news and events, and announcements of new COPE resources in our monthly newsletter.

COPE CORE PRACTICES

Core practices are the policies and practices journals and publishers need to reach the highest standards in publication ethics. We include cases with advice, guidance for day-to-day practice, education modules and events on topical issues, to support journals and publishers fulfil their policies. Find out more about our Core practices by following the links below.

- ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT  
  https://cope.onl/misconduct

- AUTHORSHIP AND CONTRIBUTORSHIP  
  https://cope.onl/authors

- COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS  
  https://cope.onl/appeal

- CONFLICTS OF INTEREST/COMPETING INTERESTS  
  https://cope.onl/coi

- DATA AND REPRODUCIBILITY  
  https://cope.onl/data

- ETHICAL OVERSIGHT  
  https://cope.onl/oversight

- INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
  https://cope.onl/ip

- JOURNAL MANAGEMENT  
  https://cope.onl/manage

- PEER REVIEW PROCESSES  
  https://cope.onl/peer-review

- POST-PUBLICATION DISCUSSIONS AND CORRECTIONS  
  https://cope.onl/corrections

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE DIGEST

https://cope.onl/digest
**MANAGING YOUR ACCOUNT**

1. **SIGN IN**

   The first step is to sign in to your account on the COPE website. As the member, you are the manager of your journal/publisher group.

   If you can’t remember your password, select ‘Request new password’.

2. **EDIT YOUR PUBLISHER/JOURNAL DETAILS**

   After clicking on your journal or publisher name, you, as the manager, can update the details of your journal/publisher page that can be viewed by the public.
3. MANAGE USER GROUP

Managers can invite colleagues to the journal/publisher group. Invited colleagues are ‘users’, have their own login details, can access member content, such as the eLearning modules, and are automatically added to the COPE mailing list. Managers can add up to 100 users.

4. USE YOUR PERSONALISED COPE LOGO

You can use your personalised COPE logo on your journal website and in your print journal. Your logo shows your membership number and the year you joined COPE. If you would like to add some words, we suggest the following:

“This journal is a COPE member and abides by COPE’s Core practices: https://publicationethics.org”
The Officers are elected by the Constitutional Members of COPE. The Trustees are elected by the general membership of COPE. Members of the Trustee Board are Trustees under charity legislation and Directors of the limited company under company law. It meets four times a year and is led by the Chair. For more information visit: https://cope.onl/trustees

Council Members are collectively responsible for the operational aspects of COPE eg, undertaking activities that meet the goals of COPE’s strategy. Council Members are also responsible for responding to member queries (by email), attending the Forum (by webinar), providing leadership on publication ethics, and acting as a representative of COPE externally.

In addition to the Trustees and Council Members, who are all volunteers, COPE has three full time staff positions.

• Executive Officer: Natalie Ridgeway manages the daily activities of the charity and is responsible for ensuring the objectives of the Trustee Board are implemented.

• Membership Administrator: David Summers is responsible for reviewing all new membership applications.

• Administrative Assistant: Sabah Moran is responsible for all administrative duties and supporting the Executive Team.

COPE also contracts specific tasks out to five freelancers.

• Administrator: Linda Gough is the first point of contact for external enquiries as well as events management and administrative duties.

• Marketing and Communications Officer: Sarah Gilmore is responsible for promoting COPE resources to COPE members and the wider community via our website and other media.

• Web Manager: Christina McGuire maintains and develops the website with the support of Cynthia Clerk.

• Facilitation and Integrity Officer: Iratxe Puebla handles the administration of concerns raised to COPE about its members.

• Design and Branding: Bonita Jacobs is responsible for the design and branding of all COPE materials.

There is more information on the website (https://cope.onl/about-us) explaining how COPE is managed, its constitution, structure and latest strategy. Council Members are listed, by country, on the opposite page.
GEOGRAPHICAL DIVERSITY OF TRUSTEE AND COUNCIL MEMBERS
COPE History Timeline

**1997**
- COPE founded by Mike Farthing (Gut), Richard Smith (BMJ) and Richard Horton (The Lancet) in April 1997
- Constitution written
- 90 Members

**1997–2003**
- Richard Smith: “[COPE] may not prove useful in the long term, and we will be delighted if it is made unnecessary because the international profession produces an adequate response to research misconduct”
- 350 Members

**2003–2006**
- Code of conduct for editors published
- Authorship guidelines published
- Member survey
- Fiona Godlee becomes Chair
- 1st USA seminar
- 1st Australasian and Middle East seminars
- eLearning course published
- Retraction guidelines published
- Code of conduct revised
- Publishers code of conduct published
- 1st discussion document published (on Plagiarism)
- 1st COPE staff member
- 1st newsletter, Ethical Editing, published
- 3000+ Members

**2006–2009**
- Code of conduct for editors published
- Flowcharts published
- Some publishers sign up all the journals
- 3000+ Members

**2009–2012**
- Harvey Markovitch becomes Chair
- COPE becomes a charity
- Flowcharts published
- 1st USA seminar
- 1st Australasian and Middle East seminars
- eLearning course published
- Retraction guidelines published
- Code of conduct revised
- Publishers code of conduct published
- 1st discussion document published (on Plagiarism)
- 1st COPE staff member
- 1st newsletter, Ethical Editing, published
- 3000+ Members

**2012–**
- Liz Wager becomes Chair
- 1st USA seminar
- 1st Australasian and Middle East seminars
- eLearning course published
- Retraction guidelines published
- Code of conduct revised
- Publishers code of conduct published
- 1st discussion document published (on Plagiarism)
- 1st COPE staff member
- 1st newsletter, Ethical Editing, published
- 3000+ Members

**Our Purpose:**
- educate and advance knowledge in methods of safeguarding the integrity of the scholarly record.
OUR MISSION:

SUPPORT
Provide practical resources to educate and support our members.

LEAD
Provide leadership in thinking on publication ethics.

VOICE
Offer a neutral, professional voice in current debates.

Ginny Barbour becomes Chair
Awarded the Council of Science Editors meritorious award
1st South American seminar
1st European seminar outside London
Website redesigned
Start of the university membership pilot scheme
Guidelines on cooperation between research institutions and journals published

2012–2017
- Review of Code of conduct and best practice guidelines for journal editors
- Ethical guidelines for peer reviewers
- 1st version of Principles of transparency for scholarly publishing
- Authorship discussion document
- Sharing of information among EICs discussion document
- COPE Digest launched
- 1st formal strategic plan
- Member survey
- Growth in COPE team members

Deborah Poff becomes Chair
New strategic plan
Universities to be accepted as members (by 2021)
More than 600 cases available on the COPE website
Arts, humanities, and social sciences research of publication ethics needs COPE has a prominent role at the World Conference on Research Integrity
Launch of refreshed and updated website
Predatory publishing discussion document published
DOIs assigned to all key COPE resources

2019 ONWARDS
- Code of conduct retired and replaced with Core practices
- COPE Journal audit reviewed and updated to tie in with COPE’s Core practices
- 3rd version of Principles of transparency and best practice in scholarly publishing
- Spanish and Chinese translations of key COPE guidance
- Infographics first published
- Growth in COPE Council and team members

2012–2017
- Chris Graf & Geri Pearson become Co-Chairs
- 1st China seminar
- Workshop with Russell Group members and COPE members
- COPE joins the programme committee of the World Conference on Research Integrity
- COPE materials redesigned and a clear brand style developed
- COPE’s 20th anniversary European seminar

2017–2019
- 1st South American seminar
- Workshop with Russell Group members and COPE members
- COPE joins the programme committee of the World Conference on Research Integrity
- COPE materials redesigned and a clear brand style developed
- COPE’s 20th anniversary European seminar

2020
- 12500+ Members from 103 countries
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