

publicationethics.org



## Strategic Plan 2016-2018

PROMOTING INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND ITS PUBLICATION

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Academic publishing and the technology that surrounds it is changing dramatically. With these changes comes an increased ability to detect long-established but previously poorly detected issues of publication ethics, but also some new challenges.

We also have an increasing understanding of the pressures that lead to poor (or worse) publication practices. Coupled with greater scrutiny via the internet of research and finally, and probably most importantly, a real determination on the part of many who work in this area to do something about the issues identified there is renewed vigour in addressing the intertwined problems of publication and research ethics.

**COPE's** core mission is to educate and support; thus our remit and approach is firmly in the direction of influencing through better education, resources and support of our members, alongside the fostering of a professional debate. It is our mission over the next five years to build on this with the aim to move the culture of publishing towards one where ethical practices become the norm, part of the culture itself, not something imposed from outside.



**Dr Virginia Barbour**  
Chair

## OUR PURPOSE

**COPE** is dedicated to ensuring high standards in publication ethics.

**OUR PURPOSE IS TO:** Educate and advance knowledge in methods of safeguarding the integrity of the scholarly record.

Conceived by just 3 editors in 1997, **COPE** is now a fully multi-disciplinary international organization with more than 12,000 members worldwide – primarily of editors, but also publishers and some related organizations and individuals. We provide resources and support to all our members on all aspects of publication ethics and, in particular, on how to handle cases of research and publication misconduct that arise at their journals. One of the main benefits of **COPE** is the Forum where members can bring individual cases for discussion and advice.

## OUR MISSION

**COPE's** mission is built around three core principals:

### SUPPORT



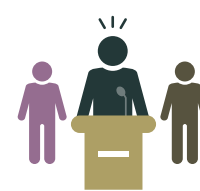
Providing practical resources to educate and support our members.

### LEADERSHIP



Providing leadership in thinking on publication ethics.

### VOICE



Offering a neutral, professional voice in current debates.

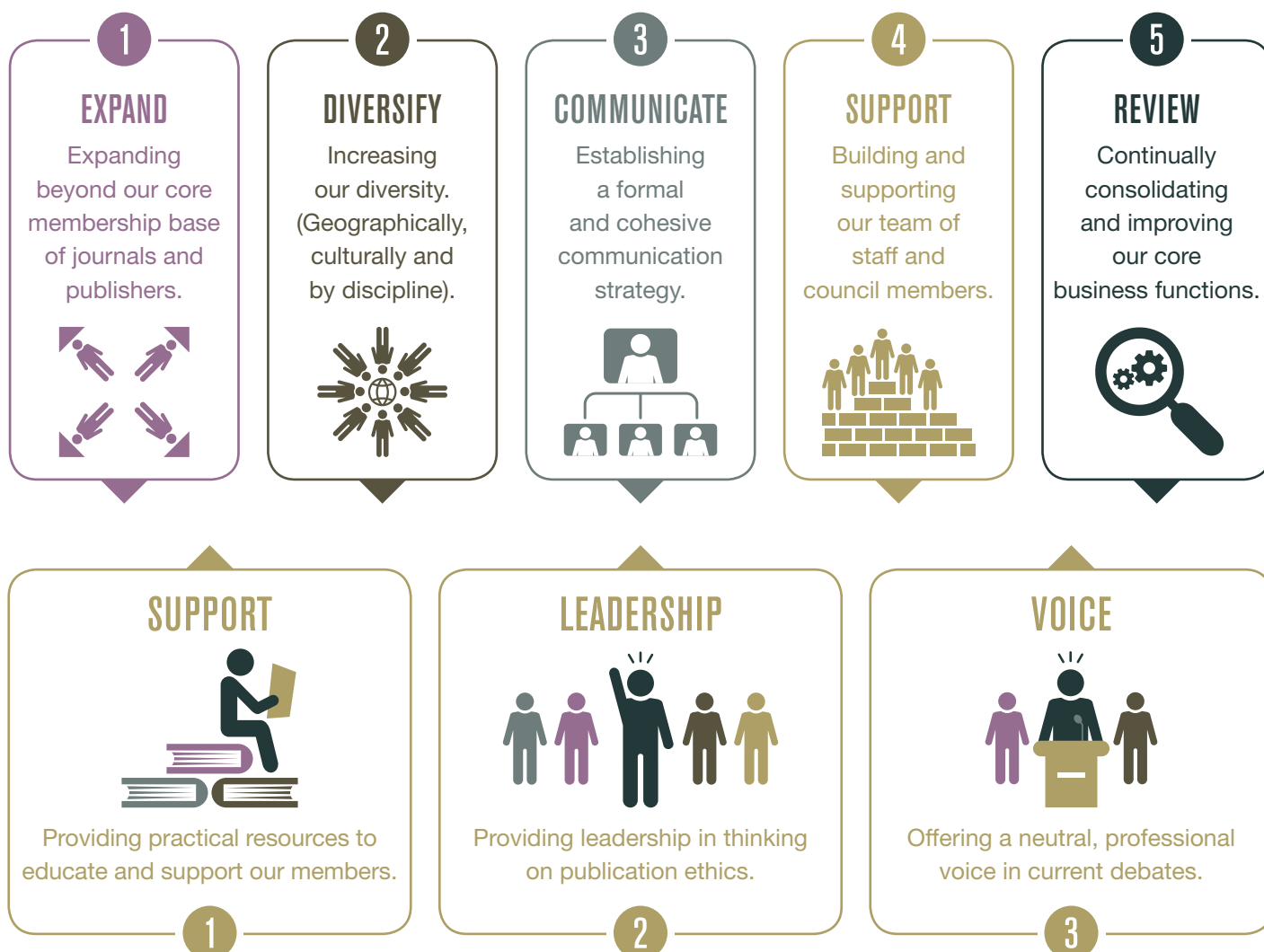
To most effectively and efficiently achieve this, we bring together key groups in the scholarly publishing process and help them to share their knowledge and ideas to ensure:

“ ethical practices become part of the culture itself. ”

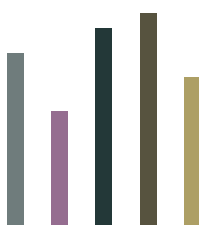
## STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 – 2018

Following a period of consultation with the Trustees, the Council, and feedback from our members via a wide-ranging membership survey, COPE is committed over the next two years to delivering on five strategic priorities. These priorities are designed to help us achieve our mission through the work of our Council, supported by a dedicated staff.

### OUR FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ARE TO:

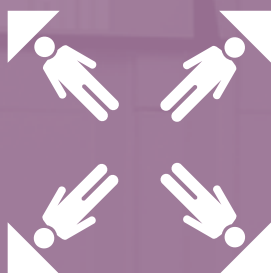


UNDERLYING OUR PRIORITIES ARE THE THREE PARTS OF OUR MISSION.



## OUR FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ARE TO:

### 1 EXPAND



#### Expanding Beyond Our Core Membership Base Of Journals & Publishers.

*Include other key groups with an interest in the debate on upholding ethical standards in scholarly publishing.*

**COPE's** membership does not currently include representation from key bodies such as academic institutions and it has become clear that our existing core membership of journal editors and publishers would like us to work more closely with these bodies to help educate and promote an understanding of publication ethics principles from the ground up.

This is a new direction for **COPE** strategically, but we feel the time is now right to work more closely with these other groups and over the next few months we will be exploring this idea further via a series of meetings and conversations with the aim that we will be able to offer a suite of educational resources for institutions to use when educating their researchers on publication ethics issues. We will also explore collaborations with other groups working in this area.

### 2 DIVERSIFY



#### Increasing Diversity: Culturally, Geographically & By Discipline.

Feedback from our 2015 member survey suggested that there was a desire for **COPE** to further enhance its resources and support for under-represented fields. This includes those regions which are still developing their publication ethics infrastructure; those regions where cultural issues play a part in publishing; and disciplines where the “traditional” forms of ethical concerns are not as apparent.

**COPE** intends to establish “champions” of publication ethics in these areas of need; conduct workshops aimed at specific regions/disciplines; and customize, or produce new, guidelines aimed at these specific areas.



### 3 COMMUNICATE



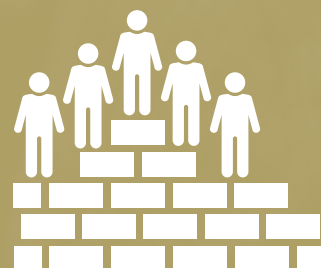
#### Establishing A Formal & Cohesive Communication Strategy.

**COPE** has, to date, never had a formal communications strategy. With the many groups and individuals that now work in this area, it is imperative that **COPE** is able to respond to issues as they arise, and provide the appropriate advice and resources that our members require as quickly and accurately as possible. This strategic aim is about ensuring that public debate on publication ethics is well informed and timely. We need to be sure that advice is easily obtainable and appropriate to the audience's needs: particularly in light of the expansion of our membership base outside of journal editors and publishers, as well as our need to be sensitive to cultural, or discipline, differences.

To this end we have appointed a marketing and communications officer who will be working with us to produce a formal strategy ensuring that **COPE's** advice is relevant, timely and "on voice".

We will also be undertaking a full review of our website to ensure that it is user friendly, easy to navigate and that we make the most of the rich resources we have.

### 4 SUPPORT



#### Building & Supporting Our Team Of Staff & Council Members.

For **COPE** to be able to support our membership effectively we must have an adequate infrastructure in place. We have already laid the foundations of this by updating our constitution, separating governance and operational responsibilities between the Trustee Board and Council; and committing to doubling the size of Council.

Over the coming 12-24 months we will also undertake a full HR review to ensure that we have the most up to date processes in place to support our staff; review the needs and requirements of Council to enable them to undertake their activities efficiently and effectively; and ensure that our logistical infrastructure meets the needs of our members.

## 5 REVIEW



### Continually Consolidating & Improving Our Core Business Functions.

This strategic goal is to review all of our current resources, functions and activities and ensure they are fit for purpose. COPE has a wealth of resources, not only on its website, but also among the knowledge and expertise of its Council. We want to ensure that our members can access this knowledge and expertise as expediently and practically as possible.

To this end we will be thoroughly reviewing our website and have appointed a new web content manager to ensure our resources are presented in the most user friendly way on our website. We will be reviewing how we respond to our members and intend to offer a number of ways in which our members can contact us with their queries. We will be re-evaluating the ways our resources are presented and will look at other, creative ways in which our advice and support can be delivered.

All these elements, and more, will ensure we deliver maximum value to our members, whether editor, publisher or individual as well as the wider publishing community.

## CONTACT US



Please contact us using the form on the 'Contact Us' page of our website:

**publicationethics.org**

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Executive Officer

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Administrator

**Cathy Whiteley** (*Membership Queries*)  
Membership Administrator

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