

# REGULATIONS OF COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS (COPE)

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# REGULATIONS OF COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS (COPE)

These Regulations of the Committee on Publication Ethics (“COPE”) are approved by the Trustee Board on 25, May, 2021, pursuant to the power granted to it by Article 5.5 of the Articles of Association of COPE and may be repealed, varied or added to by the Trustee Board.

## 1. Membership

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The two classes of General Membership in COPE shall be the Full Members and the Associate Members. Criteria for membership in each class is as set forth below. Membership dues shall be set by the Trustee Board.

### 1.1 Eligibility for Full Membership

An applicant for Full Membership must be:

- 1.1.1 A peer-reviewed scholarly journal (hereafter, “Journal Member”); or
- 1.1.2 A company or body which is materially engaged in the business of publishing peer reviewed scholarly journals and which publishes at least one journal that is a Journal Member (hereafter, “Publisher Member”); or
- 1.1.3 An organisation or institution whose primary business and object is higher education and/or the conduct of scholarly research or investigations (hereafter, “Institutional Member”).

### 1.2 Eligibility for Associate Membership

An applicant for Associate Membership must be:

- 1.2.1 A person who is interested in COPE’s objects and is working in or associated with the publication of scientific but who is not an employee of a Full Member (hereafter, “Individual Member”); or
- 1.2.2 A company or body that does not qualify for Full Membership but is interested in the remit of COPE and is involved in or associated with peer-reviewed scholarly publishing, or has a significant interest in safeguarding the integrity of the scientific record (“Corporate Member”).

### 1.3 Admission

An applicant for membership shall complete and submit an application form on the COPE website. The Membership Administrator checks and verifies all information on the application with the final decision on the suitability for COPE membership made by the Membership subcommittee. An applicant who is rejected for membership can reapply not less than twelve months after the date of rejection, after incorporating any suggestions to improve standards.

## 1.4 Rights and Benefits of Membership

1.4.1 Only General Members in good standing shall be entitled to vote in **COPE** elections or to stand for election to **COPE** office.

1.4.2 Each Journal, Publisher, Institutional, Individual and Corporate Member shall be entitled to cast only one vote, regardless of the size of the organisation. The Member must name one representative to **COPE**, and this representative shall be the person who is entitled to vote or stand in a **COPE** election. For Journal Members, the default representative will be the editor-in-chief. Publisher Members may have one representative of the publisher and one representative for each journal they publish which is a Journal Member, but no one person may serve as the representative for both the publisher and a journal, or for any two journals.

1.4.3 Other benefits for General Members in good standing shall include:

- The right to present a case to Council or any of its committees and to seek advice from them;
- The right to use the **COPE** logo in the Member's journal or its business website; and
- Any other benefits decided by the Council.

## 1.5 COPE Core Practices

As a condition of acceptance to any class of Membership, each **COPE** Member agrees to comply with **COPE's** Core Practices.

## 2. Suspension of Membership

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The Trustee Board may suspend membership and the privileges of membership if the Trustee Board decides, after due enquiry and following the process as outlined in its sanctions policy, that the interests of **COPE** so require.

## 3. Council

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The Council shall consist of not more than forty (40) members, who shall be elected or co-opted by the procedures set out in these Regulations. The Council shall provide advice and support to the Trustee Board and shall assume such other duties as directed by the Trustee Board.

### 3.1 Qualifications of Council Members

3.1.1 A candidate for election as a Council Member must be: a) the nominated representative of a Journal, Publisher, Institutional, Individual or Corporate Member; or b) an Individual Member in their own right.

3.1.2 No Member may have more than one director, officer or employee serving on Council at any time.

- 3.1.3 If the service of any two or more sitting Council Member(s) becomes in conflict with 3.1.2 due to change of employment, merger, or other circumstance, the Trustee Board at its discretion may permit such Council Members serve out the duration of their terms, but they will not be permitted to stand for reelection or renewal until action is taken to remove this conflict.
- 3.1.4 Notwithstanding 3.1.3 the Trustee Board shall have the discretion to take such other actions as it deems appropriate in view of the specific circumstances of the potential conflict.

### 3.2 Election of Council Members

The procedure for election of Council Members shall be as set out below.

- 3.2.1 The Council shall be representative of the **COPE** membership and shall encourage applications from areas of the membership not currently represented on Council, if such exist at the time a position becomes vacant. The Nominations subcommittee will be responsible for reviewing the composition of Council to determine if there are underrepresented areas in terms of region, specialty or other expertise. If so determined, this will be specified in the call for candidates for election and will form the main criterion for selection. Elections for vacant positions are usually called once a year. Vacancies shall be advertised via the **COPE** website.
- 3.2.2 In response to an advertised vacancy a candidate must nominate themselves by informing the Administrator of their intention to be a candidate for the advertised vacancy. The candidate, or the organisation they represent, must have been a member of **COPE** for at least one year.
- 3.2.3 A candidate for Council must submit letters of support from two Members of **COPE** with their application. If the candidate is the nominated representative of Journal, Publisher, Institutional, or Corporate Member, at least one of the persons providing a letter of support for Council membership must not be employed by the same organisation as the candidate.
- 3.2.4 The Nominations subcommittee shall review each candidate and prepare a shortlist of official nominees for approval by the Trustee Board. A written questionnaire or telephone interview with members of **COPE** Council may be required of candidates to support their application.
- 3.2.5 Where the number of official nominees is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, each nominee will be deemed as elected upon approval by the Trustee Board. Where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, the approved nominations will then be put forward for election by the General Membership. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson or (if the vote is taken at a meeting) the chairperson of the meeting will have a casting vote.
- 3.2.6 The appointment(s) shall be announced and ordinarily take effect immediately.

### 3.3 Co-option of Council Members

Council Members may be co-opted by the Trustee Board at its discretion; however, no more than 10 co-opted individuals may sit on the Council at any one time. The procedure for co-opting Council Members shall be as set out below.

- 3.3.1 The Nominations subcommittee will be responsible for reviewing the composition of Council to determine if there are any underrepresented areas in region or specialty. Potential candidates for co-opting will be expected to meet one of these specified areas.
- 3.3.2 A proposed candidate for appointment as a Council Member must be an Individual Member or the nominated representative of a Journal, Publisher, Institutional or Corporate Member. If a proposed candidate does not meet this criterion, but has expertise deemed of benefit to **COPE**, the proposed candidate will be required to become an Individual Member or nominated representative of Journal, Publisher, Institutional, or Corporate Member prior to assuming the role as Council Member.
- 3.3.3 Candidates proposed for co-opting must submit a CV to the Nominations subcommittee for review. The potential candidate may then be asked to complete a written questionnaire or participate in a telephone conversation with members of **COPE** Council. The Nominations committee will submit its recommendation to the Trustee Board for approval.
- 3.3.4 Once approved, the appointment(s) shall be announced and take effect immediately.
- 3.3.5 Council Members may be co-opted only for a single three-year term. A co-opted Council Member who wishes to serve for a second term must stand for election.

## 4. Trustee Board

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The Trustee Board shall be responsible for the overall direction of **COPE**. The Trustee Board shall consist of not less than 6 nor more than 12 members. Trustees may be elected or co-opted by the procedures set out in these Regulations.

### 4.1 Qualifications of Trustees

- 4.1.1 A candidate for appointment as a Trustee must be an Individual Member or the nominated representative of a Journal, Publisher, Institutional or Corporate Member. If a proposed candidate does not meet this criterion, but has expertise deemed of benefit to **COPE**, the proposed candidate will be required to become an Individual Member or nominated representative of Journal, Publisher, Institutional, or Corporate Member prior to assuming the role as Trustee.
- 4.1.2 No Member may have more than one director, officer or employee serving as a Trustee at any time.

- 4.1.3 If the service of any two or more sitting Trustees becomes in conflict with 4.1.2 due to change of employment, merger, or other circumstance, the Trustee Board at its discretion may permit such Trustees to serve out the duration of their terms, but they will not be permitted to stand for reelection or renewal until action is taken to remove this conflict.
- 4.1.4 Notwithstanding 4.1.3 the Trustee Board shall have the discretion to take such other actions as it deems appropriate in view of the specific circumstances of the potential conflict.

## 4.2 Election of Trustee Members

The procedure for election of Trustees is set out below:

- 4.2.1 The Trustees shall be representative of the **COPE** membership and shall encourage applications from areas of the membership not currently represented on the Trustee Board, if such exist at the time a position becomes vacant. The Trustees will be responsible for reviewing the composition of the Trustee Board to determine if there are underrepresented areas in terms of region, specialty, or other expertise. If so, this will be specified in the call for candidates for election and will form the main criterion for selection. Elections for vacant positions are usually called once a year. Vacancies shall be advertised via the **COPE** website.
- 4.2.2 In response to an advertised vacancy a candidate must nominate themselves by informing the Administrator of their intention to be a candidate for the advertised vacancy. The candidate, or the organisation they represent, must have been a member of **COPE** for at least one year.
- 4.2.3 A candidate for the Trustee Board must submit letters of support from two Members of **COPE** with their application. If the candidate is the nominated representative of a Journal, Publisher, Institutional, or Corporate Member, at least one of the letters of support must not be employed by the same organisation as the candidate.
- 4.2.4 The Nominations subcommittee shall review each candidate and prepare a shortlist of official nominees for approval by the Trustee Board. A written questionnaire or telephone interview with members of the Trustee Board may be required of nominees to support their application.
- 4.2.5 Where the number of nominations is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, each nominee will be deemed as elected upon approval by the Trustee Board. Where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, the approved nominees will be put forward for election by the General Membership. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson or (if the vote is taken at a meeting) the chairperson of the meeting will have a casting vote.
- 4.2.6 The successful candidate(s) shall be certified by special resolution circulated to all Constitutional members. The appointment will then take effect immediately.

### 4.3 Co-option of Trustees

Trustees may be co-opted by the Trustee Board at its discretion; however, no more than 4 co-opted individuals may serve as Trustees at any one time. The procedure for co-opting Trustees shall be as set out below:

- 4.3.1 When a vacancy arises, the Trustee Board shall be responsible for reviewing the composition of the Trustee Board to determine any gaps in skills or expertise. This will be used to seek a suitable person(s) with an appropriate level of experience as a Trustee and/or with the relevant expertise as identified.
- 4.3.2 A proposed candidate for appointment as a Trustee must be an Individual Member or the nominated representative of a Journal, Publisher, Institutional or Corporate Member. If a proposed candidate does not meet this criterion, but has expertise deemed of benefit to COPE, the proposed candidate will be required to become an Individual Member or nominated representative of Journal, Publisher, Institutional, or Corporate Member prior to assuming the role as Trustee.
- 4.3.3 Candidates proposed for co-opting must submit a CV to the Trustee Board for review. This review may seek additional information by asking the potential candidate to complete a written questionnaire or participate in a telephone conversation with members of the Trustee Board.
- 4.3.4 Trustees shall be co-opted by majority of the Trustee Board. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson or (if the vote is taken at a meeting) the chairperson of the meeting will have a casting vote.
- 4.3.5 The appointment(s) shall be announced and take effect immediately.
- 4.3.6 Trustees may be co-opted only for a single three-year term. A co-opted Trustee who wishes to serve for a second term must stand for election.

## 5. Officers

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The Officers will consist of the Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Chair-elect.

### 5.1 Duties

The duties of the Officers shall include:

- 5.1.1 Chair.** The Chair will be the chief officer of **COPE** and will preside over all Trustee, Council and General Member meetings at which the Chair is present. The Chair shall be the official representative of **COPE** and will have such other duties as are usual to such office. The Chair shall serve a term of three (3) years.
- 5.1.1.1** With the approval of the Trustee Board, the office of Chair may be held by two Co-Chairs. Co-Chairs must operate as a unit and to only one vote on the Trustee Board. Other duties may be split between the Co-Chairs as mutually agreed.
- 5.1.1.2** Following completion of a term as Chair, the Chair may elect, but is not required, to serve as Past Chair and be a voting member of the Trustee Board.
- 5.1.2 Chair-elect.** The Chair-elect shall support the Chair and preside over all meetings at which the Chair is not present, along with such other duties as assigned by the Trustee Board. The Chair-elect shall serve a term of one year, after which the Chair-elect shall assume the office of Chair.
- 5.1.3 Vice-Chair.** There shall be at least one but not more than three Vice-Chairs. One Vice-Chair will serve at large and shall preside over all Trustee, Council, and General Member meetings in the absence of the Chair and Chair-elect. Other Vice Chairs may be designated to represent a specified **COPE** membership group or strategic objective; eg, a Vice-Chair for Institutional Members. The Vice Chairs shall be responsible for such duties as assigned by the Trustee Board and shall serve a term of three years.
- 5.1.4 Secretary.** The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining **COPE's** corporate records and such other duties as assigned by the Trustee Board. The Secretary shall chair the Governance subcommittee. The Secretary shall serve a term of three years.
- 5.1.5 Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial management of **COPE** and such other duties as assigned by the Trustee Board. The Treasurer shall serve a term of three years.



## 5.2 Election of Officers

All Officers shall be directly elected by the Constitutional Members excluding the Chair, who shall assume office upon completion of a term as Chair-elect. The procedure for election of the Officers shall be as follows:

- 5.2.1** A proposed candidate for appointment as a Trustee must be an Individual Member or the nominated representative of a Journal, Publisher, Institutional or Corporate Member. If a proposed candidate does not meet this criteria, but has expertise deemed of benefit to COPE, the proposed candidate will be required to become an Individual Member or nominated representative of Journal, Publisher, Institutional, or Corporate Member prior to assuming the role as Officer.
- 5.2.2** Proposed candidates for the office of Chair-elect must have not less than three years of prior service as a Council Member and/or Trustee. Proposed candidates for any other office ordinarily must have at least one year of prior service as a Council Member and/or Trustee; however, if a vacancy remains unfilled after the closing date for nominations, the Trustees may nominate an individual who has been a Council Member for less than one year to fill the vacant office.
- 5.2.3** All Officers are considered Trustees and will be voting members of the Trustee Board.
- 5.2.4** The Administrator will publish on the COPE website and provide notice to all Constitutional Members a list of vacancies among the Officers to be filled at the forthcoming election and inviting nominations for such vacancies. The notice shall include a list of required qualifications for the vacant office and will specify the closing date and time by which nominations must be received by the Administrator.
- 5.2.5** In order for the nomination to be valid, each nominee must be proposed by one Constitutional Member and must consent to his/her nomination. The nominee must submit electronically their completed nomination together with a curriculum vitae and reasons for wanting to serve in office. The proposer must submit electronically their support for the nomination. The proposer must confirm they have reviewed the nominee's application in full (cover letter and CV) and fully support their application based on their review of the application against COPE's requirements as outlined in the call for nominations.
- 5.2.6** Constitutional Members may nominate more than one person for any vacancy.
- 5.2.7** The Trustee Board shall review the nominations and supporting information, and a shortlist of nominees for each vacant office shall be selected by the Trustee Board. The final shortlist of approved nominees and copies of their curriculum vitae and reasons for wanting to serve shall be sent electronically to all Constitutional Members.

- 5.2.8 Each Constitutional Member shall be entitled to vote for one candidate for each Officer vacancy. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be deemed elected to the office. In the event of a tied vote the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.
- 5.2.9 The results of such election shall be certified by special resolution circulated to all Constitutional Members electronically and then declared immediately.

## 6. Subcommittees

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COPE may establish standing or ad hoc subcommittees to facilitate its mission or objectives.

### 6.1 Standing Subcommittees

The standing subcommittees are: Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences, Education, Facilitation & Integrity, Finance, Governance, Member Services, Membership, Nominations, Strategy, and University & Research Institutions. Duties and membership of the standing subcommittees are as set out below.

- 6.1.1 **Strategy.** The Strategy Subcommittee shall lead the development and review by the Trustee Board of COPE's strategic plans. The Strategy subcommittee shall consist of the officers plus one additional Trustee and one Council Member. The Chair shall serve as chair.
- 6.1.2 **Governance.** The Governance Subcommittee shall advise the Trustee Board on matters related to governance of COPE. The subcommittee shall consist of not less than five members, including the Secretary, two other Trustees, and up to two members of Council. The Secretary shall serve as chair.
- 6.1.3 **Finance.** The Finance Subcommittee shall advise the Trustee Board on financial matters and review the annual financial reports. The Finance Subcommittee shall consist of the Treasurer, plus two other Trustees and two Council Members. The Treasurer shall serve as chair.
- 6.1.4 **Education.** The Education Subcommittee shall develop educational offerings and support the education of COPE members on matters of publication ethics.
- 6.1.5 **Membership.** The Membership Subcommittee evaluations applications for membership in COPE.
- 6.1.6 **Member Services.** The Member Services Subcommittee works to expand COPE members' knowledge of and engagement with COPE.
- 6.1.7 **Facilitation & Integrity.** The F&I Subcommittee shall review and facilitate resolution of concerns submitted to COPE over the ethical practices of member journals or publishers.
- 6.1.8 **Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences.** The AHSS Subcommittee shall create strategies and aid in development of resources to support the needs of COPE members representing journals in the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

**6.1.9 Nominations.** The Nominations subcommittee reviews nominations for **COPE** members who wish to stand for Council.

**6.1.10 University & Research Institutes.** This Subcommittee shall create strategies for University and Research Institutes membership.

## **6.2 Membership in Standing Subcommittees**

Unless otherwise set forth in section 6.1, membership in a subcommittee shall be open to all current Trustees and Council Members.

### **6.3 Chairs of Standing Subcommittees**

Except as otherwise set forth in section 6.1, chairs of standing subcommittees shall be appointed in accordance with the procedures set out below:

**6.3.1** Only current Council Members or Trustees shall be eligible to serve as a subcommittee chair.

**6.3.2** Vacant positions are called as they arise. The position shall be advertised via **COPE's** internal system.

**6.3.3** In response to an advertised vacancy a candidate must nominate themselves by informing the Administrator of their intention to be a candidate for the advertised vacancy.

**6.3.4** Where the number of nominations is less than or equal to the number of vacancies each nominee will be appointed if approved by a majority of the Trustee Board. Where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies the Nominations subcommittee shall review the nominations and produce a shortlist of approved nominees for approval by the Trustee Board.

**6.3.5** The Administrator shall give to all Constitutional Members with voting rights notice of and publish the vacancies among the subcommittee chairs to be filled at the forthcoming election, at the same time **COPE** shall explain that elections shall be conducted by electronic voting for those Constitutional Members.

**6.3.6** The notice shall specify the closing date each Constitutional Member shall be entitled to vote for one candidate for each subcommittee chair vacancy. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be deemed elected to the office.

**6.3.7** Appointments shall take effect as directed by the Trustee Board.

### **6.4 Other Subcommittees**

The Trustee Board may establish ad hoc subcommittees, working groups or other subcommittees as it deems necessary. The Trustee Board shall designate the members and chair of any such subcommittee.

## 7. Expectations of Council and Trustee Board Members

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- 7.1 Full attendance at Trustee Board and Council meetings is expected. Apologies must be sent in advance to the Chair if not able to attend a Trustee or Council meeting. Missing two meetings without sending apologies in advance and/or not participating actively between meetings in the work of **COPE** may result in being asked to step down from being a Trustee or Council member.
- 7.2 Attendance at **COPE**'s one annual face to face meeting is expected from all Trustees/Council members. This usually takes place over two or three days. All other meetings shall usually be conducted electronically.
- 7.3 It is expected that all Trustees/Council Members participate in at least two of the four Forums held each year. These are usually held electronically although some may be face to face meetings.
- 7.4 Much of the work of **COPE** is conducted electronically, it is therefore expected that all Trustees/Council Members have adequate internet access to be able to fully participate in online meetings, as well as be prepared to use the electronic systems that are in place to facilitate the work of **COPE**.
- 7.5 All Trustees/Council members must provide an annual Conflict of Interest statement for publishing on the **COPE** website. This must also be updated during the year if a conflict arises, and, additionally, any conflicts of interest must be stated before each meeting

## 8. Amendments

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These Regulations may be amended at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Trustee Board. Proposed amendments shall be sent to the Governance subcommittee for review prior to consideration by the Trustee Board.

*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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PROMOTING INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARLY  
RESEARCH AND ITS PUBLICATION