



**SOCIETY FOR ROBOTICS  
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

## ***Ethical Guidelines for peer Reviewers***

*The process peer review in all its forms plays an important role in ensuring the integrity of the scholarly record. Peer reviewers play a central and critical part in the peer-review process, but too often come to the role without any guidance and may be unaware of their ethical obligations.*

### ***Basic principles to which peer reviewers should adhere***

#### ***Peer reviewers should:***

- ❖ *respect the confidentiality of peer review and not reveal any details of a manuscript or its review, during or after the peer-review process,*
- ❖ *declare all potential conflicting interests, seeking advice from if they are unsure whether something constitutes a relevant interest,*
- ❖ *not use information obtained during the peer-review process for their own or any other person's or organization's advantage, or to disadvantage or discredit others,*
- ❖ *not allow their reviews to be influenced by the origins of a manuscript, by the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender or other characteristics of the authors, or by commercial considerations,*
- ❖ *acknowledge that peer review is largely a reciprocal endeavour and undertake to carry out their fair share of reviewing and in a timely manner,*
- ❖ *be objective and constructive in their reviews, refraining from being hostile or inflammatory and from making libellous or derogatory personal comments,*
- ❖ *declare if they do not have the subject expertise required to carry out the review or if they are able to assess only part of the manuscript, outlining clearly the areas for which they have the relevant expertise,*
- ❖ *declare any potentially conflicting or competing interests (which may, for example, be personal, financial, intellectual, professional, political or religious), seeking advice from the journal if they are unsure whether something constitutes a relevant interest,*
- ❖ *respond in a reasonable time-frame, especially if they cannot do the review, and without intentional delay,*

- ❖ *only agree to review a manuscript if they are fairly confident they can return a review within the proposed or mutually agreed time-frame, informing the journal promptly if they require an extension,*
- ❖ *not agree to review a manuscript just to gain sight of it with no intention of submitting a review,*
- ❖ *decline to review if they feel unable to provide a fair and unbiased review,*
- ❖ *decline to review if they have been involved with any of the work in the manuscript or its reporting,*
- ❖ *decline to review if asked to review a manuscript that is very similar to one they have in preparation or under consideration at another journal,*
- ❖ *ensure suggestions for alternative reviewers are based on suitability and not influenced by personal considerations or made with the intention of the manuscript receiving a specific outcome (either positive or negative),*
- ❖ *not involve anyone else in the review of a manuscript, including junior researchers they are mentoring, without first obtaining permission from the journal; the names of any individuals who have helped them with the review should be included with the returned review so that they are associated with the manuscript in the journal's records and can also receive due credit for their efforts,*
- ❖ *keep all manuscript and review details confidential,*
- ❖ *in the case of double-blind review, if they suspect the identity of the author(s) notify the journal if this knowledge raises any potential conflict of interest,*
- ❖ *notify the journal immediately if they come across any irregularities, have concerns about ethical aspects of the work, are aware of substantial similarity between the manuscript and a concurrent submission to another journal or a published article, or suspect that misconduct may have occurred during either the research or the writing and submission of the manuscript; reviewers should, however, keep their concerns confidential and not personally investigate further unless the journal asks for further information or advice,*
- ❖ *not intentionally prolong the review process, either by delaying the submission of their review or by requesting unnecessary additional information from author,*
- ❖ *bear in mind that the editor is looking to them for subject knowledge, good judgement, and an honest and fair assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the work and the manuscript,*
- ❖ *make clear at the start of their review if they have been asked to address only specific parts or aspects of a manuscript and indicate which these are,*
- ❖ *follow journals' instructions on the specific feedback that is required of them and, unless*

*there are good reasons not to, the way this should be organized,*

- ❖ *be objective and constructive in their reviews and provide feedback that will help the authors to improve their manuscript,*
- ❖ *not make derogatory personal comments or unfounded accusations,*
- ❖ *be specific in their criticisms, and provide evidence with appropriate references to substantiate general statements such as, 'this work has been done before', to help editors in their evaluation and decision and in fairness to the authors,*
- ❖ *remember it is the authors' paper and not attempt to rewrite it to their own preferred style if it is basically sound and clear; suggestions for changes that improve clarity are, however, important,*
- ❖ *be aware of the sensitivities surrounding language issues that are due to the authors writing in a language that is not their own, and phrase the feedback appropriately and with due respect,*
- ❖ *make clear which suggested additional investigations are essential to support claims made in the manuscript under consideration and which will just strengthen or extend the work,*
- ❖ *not prepare their report in such a way or include comments that suggest the review has been done by another person,*
- ❖ *not prepare their report in a way that reflects badly or unfairly on another person.*

***Bihać, 27.08.2019.***

***Organizing committee  
Scientific committee***