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Open Access and Public-Good Curatorship

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Introduction

We are sometimes approached by authors who query the necessity of the publication process, which involves several steps to explore originality, integrity, and reliability of research presented for publication. Because the work we do as a publisher operates in the background with editors examining manuscripts, reviewers applying their subject expertise to assess quality of a submission, etc., the author may believe that we could and should expedite their work from initial submission to final publication. However, fast publication does not exist where quality, rigour, and impact are goals.

Why do we bother with the various steps leading (hopefully!) to publication? Stepping out from behind the curtain to elucidate our processes offers an opportunity to consider how the work we do has importance as a public-good contribution and how our journal acts as a public-good curator.

Our Publication Process

The publication process is not particularly mysterious. As happens in all scholarly journals, submissions are received and considered for publication. Double blind peer review plays a central role in determining potential for publication at *Information Research*. Submissions are initially desk-reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief for points, such as scope, overall quality, and adherence to journal guidelines. Papers that do not meet these criteria are returned to authors. For manuscripts that pass this initial bar for potential publication, our Regional Editors perform a second desk review, examining papers for issues with plagiarism, AI generation, publication elsewhere, etc.

Papers that continue in the process beyond these initial inspections are referred to reviewers for peer review. Our Regional Editors locate scholarly reviewers to offer their expertise in a particular area. Papers may be accepted, returned to author(s) for minor or major revisions, or declined. This part of the process is the most time consuming for various reasons, for example, location of reviewers who currently have time to review, potentially significant time for authors to complete revisions, and the potential need for reviewers to revisit revised manuscripts.

Finally, papers that are accepted for publication post peer review must then be copy edited and prepared for publication online. The overall time required for a manuscript to move from initial submission to final publication takes several weeks at minimum, depending on the length of time needed to complete all of these various steps.

Open Access Publication and Public-Good Curatorship

Opposing the growth of misinformation and disinformation, Sense About Science champions public-good curators as those who are “committed to transparency about where they source and how they evaluate information. They help society navigate our world’s complex information landscape by protecting pathways to trustworthy answers and inviting good questioning” (Sense About Science, 2025).

Recently, Sense About Science published *The People's Case for Curatorship*, which offers principles that guide multiple public-good actors, e.g., librarians, journalists, research professionals, publishers, editors, and research integrity officers, to ensure the availability of reliable information in the public realm. Specifically, “public-good curators understand the importance of evaluating the reliability of information and being transparent about the criteria they use. For example, journal editors evaluate research manuscripts and, after weighing comments from expert reviewers, validate material by making final editorial decisions that contribute to the scholarly record” (Sense About Science, 2025).

Following a multi-faceted review process enables us to play a role in public-good curatorship at *Information Research*. Our various quality checks are similar to those advocated as core media literacy tasks - namely checking for legitimate and unique research papers. The work we do contributes to the publication of information that is trustworthy, as well as research that can then be used to help build upon research. A repository of articles published in *Information Research* at the National Library of Sweden ensures that research is curated for the public to access. Our open access approach means that this research sits in the public domain where the public can access and use the research freely. Articles are re-findable and constantly available through DOI (Digital Object Identifier), a unique and permanent identifier for each published article.

Ongoing Activities at *Information Research*

We have welcomed a number of new Regional Editors to our team over the past several months. Our Regional Editors provide a key function in our journal work, supporting authors through the peer review process. You will find a full list of our Regional Editors at <https://publicera.kb.se/ir/about/editorialTeam>.

We thank Hannah Speight for her help with copy editing submissions for several years. Hannah is moving on to new adventures and we wish her well for the future.

Finally, we have a new, 1 minute video which introduces authors to applying our journal template prior to submission. The video can be found [here](#). The latest [PDF version](#) of our template documentation, also available on our website, provides further information, including examples for working with more complex content.

Professor Crystal Fulton
Editor in Chief

References

Sense about Science. (2025). *The People's Case for Curatorship*. Sage Publications.
<https://senseaboutscience.org/championing-good-information-curation/#PublicGoodCuration>. (Note: Sense about Science requests that all public-good curators add the tag, #PublicGoodCuration, to their work to help disseminate public-good curation ideas and stories to the public.)

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