



Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad

Conflict of Interest Policy

Public trust in academic research and the credibility of published articles depends in part on how transparently conflicts of interest are handled during the planning, implementation, writing, peer review, editing, and publication of scholarly work.

A conflict of interest exists when professional judgment concerning a primary interest (e.g. the validity of research) may be influenced by a secondary interest (e.g. financial gain). Perceptions of conflict of interest are as important as actual conflicts of interest. Financial relationships (such as employment, consultancies, stock ownership or options, honoraria) are the most easily identifiable conflicts of interest and the most likely to undermine the credibility of the journal, the authors, and of the research itself. However, conflicts can occur for other reasons, such as personal relationships or rivalries, academic competition, and intellectual beliefs.

For editors, editorial board and journal staff:

Editors who make final decisions about manuscripts should recuse themselves from editorial decisions if they have conflicts of interest or relationships that pose potential conflicts related to articles under consideration. Other editorial board or staff members who participate in editorial decisions must provide editors with a current description of their financial interests or other conflicts (as they might relate to editorial judgments) and recuse themselves from any decisions in which a conflict of interest exists. Editorial board members and staff must not use information gained through working with manuscripts for private gain.

For peer reviewers:

Reviewers should reveal at the time they are asked to critique a manuscript if they have conflicts of interest that could complicate their review. Reviewers must disclose to editors any conflicts of interest that could bias their opinions of the manuscript, and should recuse themselves from reviewing specific manuscripts if the potential for bias exists. Reviewers must not use knowledge of the work they are reviewing before its publication to further their own interests.