Peer Review Policy

All research papers and reviews to be published by *Materials Futures* will be rigorously peer reviewed.

Peer Review Model

*Materials Futures* uses the *single-blind* peer review process in which reviewers know the identity of the authors, but authors do not know the identity of the reviewers.

The Review Process

First Editorial Decision

When a submission is received, the editorial office previews an article to determine if it conforms to *Materials Futures* requirements such as correctly formatted and free of plagiarism. If an article passes the initial quality check, it is then forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief. The Editors-in-Chief will decide whether it should be sent to peer review based on the editorial criteria of the journal of novelty and significance.

Peer Review

We expect to send out papers for review within 3 working days of receiving the manuscript and selecting the reviewers. The Editor-in-Chief assign the article to an Associate Editor with expertise in the relevant field. The Associate Editor with the assistance from the editorial office will collect at least two review reports.

Decision after Review and Revision

The Associate Editor will make a recommendation based on feedback from the reviewers. Based on these comments from the reviewers, the Associate Editors will make editorial decisions, including:

- Provisional acceptance.
- Minor revision.
- Major revision.
- Reject, may resubmit.
- Reject, usually based on the grounds like lack of novelty, technically problems or gross errors.
Upon Associate Editor’s recommend for publication, the Editors-in-Chief make the final acceptance decision taking into account a range of additional information. In case of potential conflicts of interests, decisions should be made by other editorial board members.

Under normal circumstances, we will allow a maximum of one round of major revision. The revised manuscript should be accompanied with a cover letter providing point-by-point responses to referees’ comments, for any comments that cannot be corrected, a detailed explanation should be provided.

**Instructions to Reviewers**

**Quality Assessment**

You will usually be asked to give a score between 1 and 10 (1 = very poor, 10 = excellent). The aspects you may be asked to comment on include:

**Originality:**
- a measure of the novelty of the ideas and techniques reported in the manuscript compared to the existing literature. Articles presenting little or no new ideas or techniques should be given a low rating (1–3). Ideas or techniques that are not new but are approached in an original way should be given a medium rating (4–6). Completely original ideas, approaches to problems or experimental techniques should be given a high rating (7–10).

**Scientific Rigour:**
- a measure of how well the experiment has been carried out; whether all necessary details of the method and results are presented in a way that they can be reproduced; and whether the results have been appropriately analysed and discussed. (This includes the testability of any theoretical predictions or modelling.)

**Significance:**
- a measure of the likely impact of the results presented within the article’s field. If the article presents trivial or incremental results, it should be given a low rating (1–3). Articles that do not advance the field significantly but have archival value should be given a medium rating (4–6). Articles that provide significant new insight or make an important advance in the field should be given a high rating (7–10).

**Clarity:**
- a measure of the quality of writing within the article and how well the authors have conveyed the information. Articles written in very poor or broken English, that are very difficult to follow or completely unintelligible should be given a low rating (1–3). Articles that are understandable, but would still need significant language editing should be given a medium rating (4–6). Articles that are mostly clear and complete and would only require minimal editing should be given a high rating (7–10).
Confidentiality

Any paper sent to you for review should be treated as confidential until it is published in a journal:

- Reviewers should not discuss with anyone not directly involved in the review process.
- Reviewer should check the journal first if second opinion from colleagues on a paper are consulted.
- Reviewers should not disclose their identities to the authors or to other colleagues.
- The author should not by any attempts to determine the identities of reviewers or to confront them.
- The authors need to be confident that if they have major new findings to report, no-one will take unfair advantage from having seen the paper as a reviewer, or try to steal their ideas.

Conflicts of Interests

You may have a potential conflict of interest in reviewing a particular paper in the following cases:

- Have recent or ongoing collaborations with the authors in the past five years.
- Helped the author on drafts of the manuscript.
- Have direct competition in the same research area.
- Have a history of disputes with the authors.
- Have a financial interest in the outcome.

If any of the above apply to you, or if you feel uncomfortable reviewing a specific paper for any other reason, please inform the journal. It is fine for you to decline to review a paper if you have a potential conflict of interest, and it is important you declare any such conflict at this early stage to avoid any later accusations of bias.

Reviewer Guidelines: Dos and Don'ts

DO

- Provide unbiased, constructive, and evidence-based review.
- Declare any conflicts of interests.
- Keep the content confidential.
- Call on editor's attention if you found similarity between this manuscript and similar manuscripts under consideration elsewhere.
- Comment on the technical significance and the appropriateness of methods, analyses, results, and conclusions.
- Reject manuscripts that require substantial revision.
- Reject manuscripts with trivial or insignificant results and minor contributions to the subject area even if they are well written.
DON'T

- Agree but fail to do the review.
- Unreasonably delay in providing the review report.
- Breach the confidentiality of the review.
- Unfairly criticize a competitor's work.
- Propose changes that appear to merely support the reviewer's own work or hypotheses.
- Use ideas or text from a manuscript under review.

Use of an Adjudicator

In case reviewer reports are received with opposing views, we will send the manuscripts and reports to an editorial board member with relevant expertise to adjudicate. The board member would make a recommendation after considering the reviewer’s comments and then a publication decision would be made.

Appealing against a Rejection

You have the right to appeal against a rejection within four weeks of the original decision. Please contact Materials Futures Editorial Office to lodge an appeal. Please address the reviewers’ criticisms in detail in the appeal.

Appeals would be sent to the Publication Committee for consideration. If successful, the manuscript would re-enter the peer review processes with new review report collected or further revision required by the Publication Committee. If the appeal is rejected, the original rejection decision is final and the paper would not further be considered.