

POLICY

Scientific Integrity Policy for Submission of Abstracts

Board of Directors Approval Date: 09/18/2019 | **Version #: 03**

Policy: The AMP Scientific Integrity Policy for Submission of Abstracts is based on recommendations from the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals, the Council of Science Editors White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications, and the US Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Research Integrity, as summarized in *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics (JMD)* Scientific Integrity Policy available at: <http://jmd.amjpathol.org/content/integrity>. Accepted Annual Meeting abstracts are published in the Annual Meeting issue of *JMD*. In general, the *JMD* Scientific Integrity Policy will be followed, with appropriate modification for abstract submission and presentation at an AMP meeting.

In particular, please note:

ABSTRACT PEER REVIEW

Prior to publication in the *JMD*, all abstracts submitted to AMP for possible publication and presentation at an AMP meeting will undergo a peer review process by members of the AMP planning committee under the direction of the Chair. AMP has general authority to reject an abstract as part of the review process. Both Authors and Reviewers are expected to take their roles seriously, as detailed below.

AUTHOR CONDUCT

General Authorship Guidelines. Authorship is defined as 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the abstract or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3. **By submitting an abstract to an AMP meeting, all the authors have the responsibility to ensure that the content of the abstract is scientifically defended in the poster presentation and/or any invited oral presentation. Failure to present the poster and to defend it by being present to answer questions during assigned time periods is a violation of AMP policy and may result in forfeiture of the right to submit an abstract to a future meeting.**

Financial Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest. All authors must disclose all affiliations with any organization or entity having a direct financial or personal interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in the abstract. Authors should err on the side of full disclosure and should contact the AMP Office if they have questions or concerns. This information must be provided at the time of submission. Failure to do so will disqualify the abstract from review by the planning committee.

Scientific Misconduct. According to the US Office of Research Integrity (<http://ori.dhhs.gov/>), “fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them; falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record; plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.” AMP has a zero tolerance policy for such matters. For details regarding how AMP handles such matters, see the later section on Allegations of Misconduct.

Fabrication of Data. Any evidence of fraudulent methods, data, or data analysis may prompt AMP to request an explanation and access to original data, which the authors must supply.

Falsification of Data. The results presented in the abstract and, if accepted, subsequent poster or oral presentation, must accurately represent the data obtained in the course of the authors’ studies; omission of contradictory or negative data in an effort to support the main hypothesis is unacceptable. No specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. The grouping of images from different parts of the same gel or blot, or from different gels or blots, fields, or exposures must be made explicit by the arrangement of the figure (e.g., using dividing lines) and in the figure legend. Adjustments of brightness, contrast, or color balance are acceptable only if they are applied to the whole image, whether experimental or control image, and as long as they do not obscure or eliminate any information present in the original. Any evidence of inappropriate manipulation may prompt AMP to request an explanation and access to original data, which the authors must make available.

Plagiarism. Authors should carefully note that the use of another person’s data or ideas without permission constitutes plagiarism. Authors may not republish copyrighted material in whole or in part without the express permission of the copyright holder. Likewise, copyrighted material previously published in another form may not be published without express permission from the original copyright holder. These rules cover work previously published by the authors. Authors wishing to republish images, tables, or text should be prepared to provide proof of such permission and should include the appropriate attribution in the figure or table legend of the poster or oral presentation.

Redundant Publication. “Redundant (or duplicate) publication is publication of a paper that overlaps substantially with one already published in print or electronic media,” as defined by the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals (<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/>). Authors must certify upon submission that the abstract has not been accepted or published elsewhere and/or that it is not currently under review for another meeting. Please note that while most journals, including the *JMD*, allow future submissions of manuscripts based on data previously presented as meeting abstracts, authors should still contact the journal’s editorial office for guidance before submitting a manuscript based on an AMP abstract for future publication.

REVIEWER CONDUCT

Peer Review Process. Reviewers of abstracts are expected to take their obligation seriously and to consider carefully the merits of the abstract being assessed. It is considered a violation for peer reviewers to identify themselves or attempt to communicate directly with authors regarding the abstract without the express permission of the Chair of the planning committee.

Confidentiality. The abstract is considered a privileged communication. When reviewing an abstract, the peer reviewer takes responsibility for maintaining its confidentiality. Reviewers should not retain copies of submitted abstracts for personal use after completing their review. Reviewers are not allowed to make any use of the work described in the abstract or take advantage of the knowledge gained by reviewing it until and unless it is published.

Financial Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest. Reviewers must disclose to AMP any affiliations with any organization or entity having a direct financial or personal interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in the abstract that could bias their opinions. Reviewers should also consider potential conflicts of interest arising from personal relationships or academic competition. Personal relationships include family members, colleagues (such as collaborators, mentors, students, or trainees), or associates at a Reviewer's institution. Such disclosures do not automatically disqualify a Reviewer and shall be reviewed by the planning committee Chair for resolution and management. Reviewers should err on the side of caution and should consult with the Chair of the planning committee when in doubt about a potential conflict of interest. By agreeing to review an abstract, Reviewers implicitly affirm that any potential conflicts of interest have been disclosed to the planning committee and that they are able to provide an impartial review of the abstract.

POSSIBLE MISCONDUCT

Reporting Suspected Misconduct. AMP welcomes reporting of possible misconduct or other concerns related to abstracts published or under review. Suspected misconduct relating to Authors, Reviewers, or AMP staff should be reported in writing to the AMP planning committee Chair, c/o Mary Steele Williams, AMP Executive Director, at 6120 Executive Blvd. Suite 700, Rockville, MD 20852 or mwilliams@amp.org. Willful misconduct does not include incidents of honest misjudgment or inadvertent error. The anonymity of the whistleblower(s) will be maintained throughout any procedural review. With respect to all other communications arising from examination of misconduct, the ability to effectively investigate and administer an allegation of scientific misconduct shall be carefully balanced with the need to maintain confidentiality in order to protect the rights and reputations of all concerned.

Procedures for Suspected Misconduct. Upon written notification of possible misconduct, AMP shall first perform a preliminary evaluation to determine if there is merit to the claims. If the claims appear to have merit, the next step is to contact the Author/Reviewer for an explanation. The AMP Executive Director, on behalf of the AMP planning committee Chair shall contact the Corresponding Author or Reviewer to request a formal response to the concerns, possibly including source data, within 30 days. Authors/Reviewers are expected to cooperate fully and in good faith. Upon review of said explanation and data, the AMP planning committee with the assistance of the AMP Executive Director shall determine whether an innocent error was committed (requiring publication of a Correction or Retraction) or whether further reporting or

investigation is warranted. If appropriate or needed, the Author/Reviewer's institutions and/or funding agencies shall be contacted. In such case, the appropriate authorities shall be notified of the original complaint and may be asked to conduct an independent investigation. The investigation is expected to proceed in a timely manner, and upon completion the institution should quickly notify AMP of its findings. If an institution or funding agency declines to conduct an investigation on a timely basis, or if an Author/Reviewer does not have such an affiliation, AMP may conduct its own investigation. Upon receiving final determination of misconduct (including final appeal), AMP may publish a Correction, Note of Concern, or Retraction in the JMD (if the abstract was published in the journal) and/or in the next AMP meeting Program Book or meeting website, depending on the findings of the investigation. If misconduct is determined by the Authors' institutions, then AMP may request that the Authors retract their abstract. If the Authors refuse, AMP shall notify all Authors of the intent to publish a Retraction, to which the Authors have 30 days to respond. The final Retraction (published in the JMD and/or the next AMP meeting Program Book or meeting website) shall describe the reason for retraction as well as a list of Authors agreeing (and if necessary those disagreeing) with the retraction. These procedures do not supersede or diminish the general authority of AMP to reject an abstract as part of the review process.

References:

The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics, Scientific Integrity Policy:
<http://jmd.amjpathol.org/content/integrity>

Revision History:

Version	Approval Date	Author	Summary of Changes
01	08/04/2016	M. Limson	New: Existing policy formatted to standard AMP Policy format; generic committee ("planning") to accommodate other events, e.g., the Global Congress.
02	09/18/2017	L. Barker	Minor update from comments and edits by JMD Scientific Editor C. Chauhan
03	09/18/2019	L. Barker	Address change