

## Ethical statement

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*Studi di Sociologia* is published by Vita e Pensiero, the publisher of Catholic University of Milan.

Vita e Pensiero is committed to upholding ethical standards through all the stages of publication, as specified by [COPE](#) and the [Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors](#).

Papers published by *Studi di Sociologia* are selected after a double blind peer review. Editorials, brief introductions to monographic volumes, book reviews are excluded from the review process; other contributions which in exceptional circumstances might be excluded from the double blind peer review will be clearly indicated. All documents relating to peer review are archived and stored. The act of publishing involves many parties, each playing an important role in achieving aims such as high standards of reliability, rigor and scientific quality. Editor-in-chief, editorial board, scientific Committee and editors' are responsible for ensuring that expected ethical standards are met at all stages of production, from submission to publication of an article.

Below is a summary of our key expectations of all actors involved in the publishing process.

### 1. Ethical expectations

#### *Editor-in-chief, editorial board, editorial staff and editors' responsibilities*

The editor-in-chief, with the cooperation of the editorial board and editors of each issue, is responsible for deciding which of the manuscripts submitted to the journal should be published. The validation of the work in question and its importance to researchers and readers must always drive such decisions. The editors may be guided by the policies of the journal and constrained by such legal requirements as shall then be in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The editor-in chief and the editors may confer with other editors, members of the scientific committee or reviewers in making this decision. An editor should act in a balanced, objective and fair way while carrying out their expected duties, without discrimination on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, ethnic or geographical origin of the authors. The editor-in-chief and the editors of each volume should handle submissions for sponsored supplements or special issues in the same way as other submissions, so that manuscripts are considered and accepted based solely on their academic merit and excluding commercial influence.

The editor-in-chief and the editors should inform readers about who has funded research or other scholarly work and whether the funders had any role in the research and its publication. The editor-in-chief, the editorial board and the editorial staff should adopt and follow reasonable

procedures in the event of complaints of an ethical or conflictual nature. The editor-in-chief should give authors a reasonable opportunity to respond to any complaints. All complaints should be investigated independent of acceptance of the original manuscript. Documentation associated with any such complaints should be retained.

The editor-in-chief, the editorial board and editors have the responsibility to select suitably qualified and competent reviewers that show no conflict of interest with regard to the article assigned to them for blind review.

### *Reviewers' responsibilities*

Peer review assists the editor-in-chief and the editors in the decision-making process, by improving the quality of the published manuscript and reviewing the manuscript objectively, in a timely manner. Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. The reviewer should maintain the confidentiality of any information supplied by the editor. Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Referees should express their views clearly with supporting arguments. Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. A reviewer should also alert the editor-in-chief to any published or submitted content that is substantially similar to that under review. Reviewers should be aware of any potential conflicts of interest (financial, institutional, collaborative or other relationships between the reviewer and author) and to alert the editor-in-chief to these, if necessary rejecting the invitation to review.

### *Authors' responsibilities*

A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable. Book reviews and articles should be accurate and objective, editorial contributions should be clearly identified. Authors should keep accurate records of data associated with their submitted manuscript, and supply or provide access to these data, on reasonable request. An author should confirm/assert that the manuscript as submitted is not under consideration or accepted for publication elsewhere. Where portions of the content overlap with published or submitted content, he/she has to acknowledge and cite those sources. Authors should confirm that all the work in the submitted manuscript is original and to acknowledge and cite content reproduced from other sources. They should obtain permission to reproduce any content from other sources. Authors should declare any potential conflicts of interest (e.g. where the author has a competing interest (real or apparent) that could be considered or viewed as exerting an undue influence on his or her duties at any stage during the publication process). Authors should notify promptly the journal editor-in-chief or publisher if a significant error in their publication is identified. They have to cooperate with the editors and publisher to publish an erratum, addendum, corrigendum notice, or to retract the paper, where this is deemed necessary.

## *Scientific Committee's responsibilities*

Scientific Committee members will serve a variety of functions. These may include:

- *supporting and promoting the journal*
- *seeking out the best authors and best work and actively encouraging submissions*
- *reviewing submissions to the journal*
- *attending and contributing to editorial board meetings*
- *periodically rethink peer review practices to consider possible improvements;*
- *propose monographic volumes, helping to identify the curators.*

The Scientific Committee should meet regularly (at least once a year, off or online) to exchange opinions about the running of the journal, define any changes to journal policies, and identify future challenges. The Scientific Committee in cooperation with the editor-in-chief, the Editorial Board and the editorial staff is responsible for monitoring the performance of peer reviewers and taking steps to ensure the review process is of high quality. It works to develop and maintain a database of suitable reviewers, and to update this on the basis of reviewers' performance; by using a wide range of sources (not just personal contacts), it will also identify potential new reviewers (e.g. author suggestions, bibliographic databases). It will encourage reviewers to ensure the originality of submissions and be alert to redundant publication and plagiarism, as well as urging academic institutions to recognise peer-review activities as part of the scholarly process.

## **2. Procedures for dealing with unethical behaviour**

Misconduct and unethical behavior may be identified and brought to the attention of the editor-in-chief and publisher at any time, by anyone. Whoever informs the editor-in-chief or publisher of such conduct should provide sufficient information and evidence in order for an investigation to be initiated. All allegations should be taken seriously and treated in the same way, until a successful decision or conclusion is reached. An initial decision should be taken by the editor-in-chief, who should consult with or seek advice from the editorial board, the scientific committee and the publisher, if appropriate. Evidence should be gathered, while not divulging any allegation beyond the parties directly involved. In any event, the author should be given the opportunity to respond to allegations. Where an improper behavior by a reviewer or an editor is ascertained, he/she will no longer be considered by the journal as a possible reviewer or editor. Where an improper behavior is discovered by an author, he / she will no longer be able to make a submission to the journal for a period commensurate with the seriousness of the violation committed. If necessary, a note with the description of irregular behaviors will be published in the number following the verification in order to inform the readers.