Responsible Authorship and Publication

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Author

au·thor·ship

noun \ˈō-thər-ˌship\ : the identity of the person who has written something
: the job or profession of writing

au·thor

noun \ˈō-thər\ : a person who has written something; especially : a person who has written a book or who writes many books
: a person who starts or creates something (such as a plan or idea)

Taken from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Publication

dictionary entry:

**Publication**

*noun* \ˈpə-bli-ˈkā-shən\: the act or process of producing a book, magazine, etc., and making it available to the public

: a book, magazine, etc., that has been printed and made available to the public

: the act of printing something (such as an article or photograph) in a magazine, newspaper, etc.

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Why Publish?

1. Reporting new findings is important for scientific progress
2. Documentation for the newer generation
3. Establish name of original discoverer or inventor
4. Peer evaluation of research results and authentication of relevance
5. Sets a frame for evaluating researchers
6. Responsibility of researcher to funders, to society to provide evidence of proper use of funds
7. Opportunity to develop products for society
8. Other?

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Publication Ethics

1. Credit should only be claimed for work that a researcher actually performed or contributed in terms of planning, analysing and Interpreting data.

2. Credit may be claimed for a critical reagent or a methodology or analysis process which is fairly new.

3. Data should be reported accurately with no intention to mislead – falsification, fabrication are unethical.

4. Use of another’s spoken ideas, written thoughts or published results is plagiarism and is unethical.

5. Using one’s published work as new is plagiarism.
Research Misconduct

1. **Fabrication** is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

2. **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.

3. **Plagiarism** is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

Research misconduct does not include differences of opinion, honest error, misinterpretation of results.

Above also applies to publication ethics.
Contributions -- significantly towards work in

Communicate accurate data
Ensure correct interpretation
Ensure all contributors are included as authors or appropriately acknowledged

Responsibilities

Intellectual aspects
Practical aspects

Author
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Who gets authorship on a manuscript?</td>
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<td>2. What level of contribution is needed to be included as author?</td>
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<td>3. Does order in author list matter?</td>
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<td>4. What determines first author vs senior author?</td>
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<td>5. Who decides content? journal to submit to?</td>
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<td>6. Who definitely does not merit authorship?</td>
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<td>7. What determines authorship vs acknowledgement</td>
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<td>8. Other?</td>
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Consideration for Authorship

Considerations to qualify as an author:

• Concept
• Design
• Supervision
• Resources
• Materials
• Data collection or processing
• Analysis or interpretation
• Literature search
• Writing
• Critical review

The above does not specify order of names
Non-contributors to Authorship

1. Obtaining and providing funding
2. Collecting data under a contract/agreement
3. Supervising or coordinating the research
4. Senior people such as department chairs or communicating
5. Technical assistance (lab, animal handling, typing, proofreading etc)

Acknowledgements
Rules of Authorship

1. An author cannot be included without their knowledge
2. An author must review the manuscripts and agree with the submission
3. An author has rights and responsibilities – sink or swim together
4. All authors defer to the senior or contributing author in communications with journal
5. All authors must comply with journal requirements
ICMJE Guidelines

International Committee on Medical Journal Editors

http://www.icmje.org/ethical_1author.html

“Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article 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.”
Rights and Responsibilities of an Author

1. Receiving credit for creativity and originality as well as the hard work needed to show independence required by most academic research positions is a justified right of an author.

2. Accepting credit requires accepting responsibility for the publication.

3. Not acceptable to publish identical or equivalent materials in different journals – self plagiarism?

4. Not a good practice to piecemeal findings into “least publishable units” to maximize publication credit if it hinders telling a “story”.

5. Plagiarism—claiming credit for the words or ideas of another. This is a form of scientific misconduct and discussed further in that unit.

6. Even if contributions of co-authors are explicitly identified, all authors are responsible for the publication as they should have read, understood and approved the contents before publication.
Honest errors can be rectified

1. Erratum - Unintentional, minor errors should be sent to the journal as by the corresponding author

2. Correction - If the errors compromise part of the conclusions, the authors should issue a Inadvertent errors that invalidate the study should be sent in as a “retraction”

3. Intentional falsification, fabrication or plagiarism will be considered research misconduct and will be subject to due course of investigation
Take Home Points

1. Usually research projects involve a team; relative contributions must be discussed before starting
2. Optimally author order should be discussed before writing of the first draft
3. First and last author should be decided early on
4. Have authorship conversations often and as new members are added to the team
5. Assign authorship role and order based on significance of contribution
6. Maintain high standards when assigning authorship
Take Home Points

7. Anticipate potential authorship conflicts before they occur
8. Authorship disputes damage professionalism and professional relationships.
9. Discuss any concerns at any time during the manuscript preparation
10. Take responsibility for the manuscript as a whole not just your contribution

Finally remember that certain decisions are made based on considerations outside your control and knowledge – therefore assess relative importance of concern before making it an “issue”


http://www.icmje.org/
Contact Tulane University Research Compliance Office when in need of further assistance or clarification of any issues relating to responsible authorship and publication

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