

# Journal of Migration Affairs

## Editorial Policy

### I. Peer Review Process

1. Migration Affairs is a double-blind peer-reviewed online journal.
2. As a first step, the Editorial Team checks whether the submitted paper meets the Journal's scope, parameters and expectations. The Editorial Team decides whether the paper qualifies for an external peer-review process. While the scope of the Journal is explained in the introduction to the Journal displayed on the website, other checks by the Editorial Team typically consider the following: The structure of the paper; research question(s); familiarity with key literature; the novelty of the theme, arguments, and contribution to the literature on the subject; maturity in writing and precision of the use of language.
3. If a paper qualifies for the peer-review process, a plagiarism check is conducted before its submission to external referees.
4. Articles and review articles are selected through double-blind peer review. Commentaries will be selected through a single-blind peer review. The Editorial Team selects book, film, and artwork reviews though it may seek external advice in making a selection.
5. Submission of a paper is acknowledged promptly. Usually, it takes up to three months to intimate the authors about the Editorial Team's decision to accept the paper for double-blind peer review or its rejection. The peer-review process may take four to six months though efforts are being made to reduce the time taken in this process.
6. The selection of peer-reviewers is the sole prerogative of the Editorial Team. As evidenced by their publication record, scholars who have done commendable work in the relevant field will be invited to review papers.
7. At each stage of the review, submissions will be handled in strict confidentiality.
8. The reviewers are requested to send their recommendation for selection or rejection of the paper based on, but not restricted to, the following parameters:
  - a) The structure of the paper.
  - b) Appropriateness of the title.
  - c) Formulation of the research question(s).
  - d) The author's familiarity with key literature on the subject and also specific references the author should consider.

- e) Appropriateness of the method and data used and relevance of the techniques used to examine the problems (if applicable).
- f) Appropriateness of results, narratives or interpretations of data/records/registers, etc. (if applicable).
- g) Logical flow (from framing the issue up to the conclusions).
- h) Overall contribution to the literature on the subject.
- i) Precision in the use of language.
- j) Possible data fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, redundant or duplicate publication, image manipulation, and unethical research.

Based on these parameters, the reviewer can recommend rejecting the paper, or its publication without revision, or with minor or major revisions.

9. Reviewers will be asked to declare if they have any conflicts of interest with the paper. They will be strongly advised not to reproduce information or any part of the paper under review in any of their own work prior to publication by the authors, not to use insulting, hostile, or defamatory language in their review, and to destroy submitted papers and all related material after they have reviewed them.
10. If two peer reviews are conflicting, the Editorial Team may alone or, by seeking comments from additional peer reviewers, make the final decision.
11. Authors may appeal against the editorial decisions. If the Editorial Team agrees with the appeal, it may override its earlier decisions following appropriate reconsideration of the editorial process and decision making, such as additional factual input by the authors, revisions, extra material in the manuscript, or appeals about conflicts of interest and concerns about biased peer review. However, author protest alone should not affect decisions, and unfounded appeals may be ignored. If needed, the editorial team may refer an appeal to the Editorial Board.

## **II. Copyright**

The copyright of the published papers will belong to the author. The Journal allows free of cost, open access to all its current and past issues. Any paper can be read online or downloaded. However, the author's written consent is mandatory to reproduce any paper published in the Journal. A soft/hard copy of the approval should also be sent to the Journal.

## **III. Equal Opportunity and Non-discrimination Statement**

The Journal is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. It will make all efforts to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the editorial processes and policies, including, but not limited to, ensuring diversity, equity and inclusivity within journals' editorial team, reviewer pool and authorship base. It does not tolerate harassment or discrimination against an individual based on caste, class, gender identity, sexual orientation,

ethnicity, age, colour, religious creed, physical or mental disability, national origin, race, and political affiliation.

#### **IV. Plagiarism**

The Journal presently uses “Turnitin” software to identify possible plagiarism. However, it may use any other appropriate software for plagiarism check. In case of rejection of a paper on the ground of plagiarism, the Editorial Team will send a plagiarism check report to the author along with its rejection letter. Authors are strongly advised to avoid reproducing verbatim content from their other publications.

#### **V. Editorial Procedures and Ethical Practices**

1. The editorial team will have a zero-tolerance policy towards data fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, image manipulation, unethical research, reproduction of redundant or duplicate publications, conflicts of interest, and any attempts to manipulate the review process.
2. The Journal will compulsorily use a ‘persistent article identifier’. Presently, all published papers carry a DOI (Digital Object Identifier), provided by CrossRef, a major DOI registration agency.
3. The Journal welcomes comments and constructive criticism by the reader to promote debate and allow the reader to point out factual errors. The editorial team reserves the right to moderate the comments only for language or offensive content. The editorial team may communicate the comment/criticism to the author directly for clarification before publishing it. Usually, clarifications and rejoinders will be published in the comments box.
4. In case an author requests to carry out any correction or a genuine factual error is pointed out by a reader or expert, the editorial team, in consultation with the author, will make a decision. If a correction is to be carried out, a corresponding correction statement will be published and linked to the original article. Usually, changes will not be made directly in the published text.
5. In no case, a request by an author for revising or withdrawing a published paper will be entertained.
6. The Editorial Team, in collaboration with experts and peer-reviewers, and with the support of tools and technologies, will make all efforts to identify any data fabrication such as intentional misrepresentation of research data by making up findings, recording, or reporting of results, manipulation of research materials, including omitting and changing data, or inappropriate image manipulation to create misleading results when research data are collected as images. Authors must submit original unprocessed images alongside any images that have been processed.

7. In some rare cases, where retracting a published paper is deemed necessary by the Editorial Team, the matter will be referred to the Editorial Board for its final decision. Such situations may arise due to, but not limited to, fabrication or manipulation of data, plagiarism, containing material for which authorisation was either not sought or a fabricated certificate was produced, copyright infringement, unethical research, failure to disclose a conflict of interest, and pre-published paper without disclosure or obtaining permission for its republication. The Editorial Board may constitute an independent committee to review the matter and suggest the best option. If a paper is retracted, it will be notified on the website by explaining the reason behind the decision. The digital version of the paper (both HTML and PDF) will be masked from the website, making it unavailable for online reading, copying or downloading.
8. On rare occasions, it may be necessary for the Journal to impose sanctions on researchers who have engaged in questionable research practices or publishing ethics malpractice, putting the Journal's reputation demonstrably at risk. However, sanctions will be applied consistently and only after careful consideration.
9. If any author requests for a change of name, with valid reason and supporting documents, the same will be referred to the Editorial Board for its final decision.
10. The Editorial Team members and peer reviewers should disclose the presence or absence of interests that might affect their ability to review work objectively. These might include any financial, personal, political, or religious interests.
11. Editorial Team or Editorial Board members will not be involved in editorial decisions about their own scholarly work submitted to the Journal. The usual peer-review process will apply to their contributions as well.
12. The Editorial Team may decide to invite a guest editor(s) for a special issue of the Journal. However, the standard peer-review policy will apply equally to special issues edited by a guest editor.
13. Though the Journal is not yet a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), it voluntarily undertakes to follow its guidelines on publication ethics.

## **VI. Archiving of the Journal**

All published articles under different categories are archived under the section 'E-Resources' on the website of TISS Library. TISS undertakes to self-archive the Journal, which can be accessed at <http://library.tiss.edu/>. In a rare possibility of the Journal closing its publication, all the published material in the Journal will remain accessible through this archive.

## **VII. Functioning of the Editorial Team and Board**

1. The Editorial Team, including the Editor-in-Chief, will be appointed by the Editorial Board of the Journal, usually for a tenure of three years. The Board may extend the tenure of the Editorial Team members up to any number of times. However, the Editorial Team will be absolutely independent in making its editorial decisions, without any interference by the Editorial Board or the institution, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai.
2. The Director of TISS will chair the Editorial Board. The Editorial Board, in consultation with the Editorial Team, will lay down general editorial processes and policies. It will also discuss and decide on matters referred to by the Editorial team. The Editorial Board will induct a new member in case of any vacancy in the Board.