

## ABOUT THE JOURNAL

### Aims and Scope

*Horticulture Research* publishes original research articles and reviews on novel discoveries focusing on all major horticultural crops, including fruits, vegetables, ornamental trees and flowers, herbs, and tea trees, both in preharvest and postharvest stages.

The research primarily focuses on basic and fundamental aspects with broad international and disciplinary interests, including, but are not limited to, genetics, breeding, all types of “-omics” and evolution, origination and domestication of horticultural crops, biotechnology, biochemistry, physiology, cellular and molecular biology, and environmental biology including interactions with other organisms.

Original research articles will be published in the following headings:

- Genetics, breeding and germplasm;
- Biotechnology and genetic engineering;
- Genomics, proteomics and evolution;
- Whole plant physiology and source/sink relation;
- Cellular and molecular developmental biology;
- Biochemistry, metabolome and product quality;

- Interactions with environments and other biological organisms.

### Editorial Note

Research focuses on methodologies and techniques will be placed in the category of novel methodology and technology.

In addition, the journal will publish News and Views on current, significant events and topics in global horticultural fields with international interests.

### Journal Details

#### Editor-in-Chief:

Zong-Ming (Max) Cheng  
Joint Professor at Nanjing Agricultural University and  
University of Tennessee

#### Editorial office:

A305, Administrative Building  
Nanjing Agricultural University  
1 Weigang Rd, Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China  
[hortres@njau.edu.cn](mailto:hortres@njau.edu.cn)

## PREPARATION OF ARTICLES

### Article Types

#### Articles

Articles describe original research, and should be 3000-6000 words (excluding the abstract, tables, figure legends and references) and contain no more than 8 display items (such as figures or tables).

#### Review Articles

Review Articles cover a focused area on the current status of horticultural fields and provide a balanced view of historical and updated information that can be understood by researchers outside that specialty. They should be succinctly written and should not exceed 6,000 words. Reviews do not require 'Materials and methods' or 'Results and Discussion' sections but can be structured using short topical headings. Display items (no more than 2-3) can be included.

#### Correspondences

Correspondences present preliminary reports of unusual urgency, significance and interest, whose subjects may be republished in expanded form. They should contain no more than 900 words of text, one display item (figure or table) and a maximum of 10 references. Correspondences

do not contain an abstract, and apart from keywords there is no obligation to divide the text into sections. In all other respects, the directions for full papers should be followed.

#### Editorial Summaries

Editorial Summaries are provided by NPG and are professionally written, 100-150 word pieces that deliver an easily understood synopsis of the work and will accompany many of the articles published in the journal.

#### Editorials

Editorial articles are the opinion of the journal on a topical matter of concern to its readership. This is a commission only section.

#### News & Views

These articles inform non-specialist readers about new scientific advances, as reported in recently published papers (in *Horticulture Research* and elsewhere). This is a commission-only section.

#### Comments

Comments are an analysis of recently published papers of particular interest. This is a commission-only section.

## Article Requirements

### Cover letter

Each manuscript must be accompanied by a cover letter including statements that:

- Highlight of the current manuscript should be limited to no more than 2 short sentences;
- All authors agree with the submission;
- The work has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere, either completely or in part, or in another form or language;
- If material has been reproduced from another source, the authors have authorization from the copyright holder (usually the Publisher) to use it, and have included this authorization with their submission;
- Conflict of Interest Statement

### Organization of manuscript

For first submissions (i.e. not revised manuscripts), authors may choose to incorporate the manuscript text and figures into a single file (Microsoft Word, TeX/LaTeX or PDF) up to 30 MB in size – the figures may be inserted within the text at the appropriate positions, or grouped at the end. Supplementary Information should be combined and supplied as a separate file, preferably in Word format.

Alternatively authors can follow the guidelines outlined below, which must be followed when submitting files for revisions.

All textual content should be provided in a single file, prepared using either Microsoft Word or TeX/LaTeX; figures should be provided in individual files. The manuscript text file should include the following parts, in order: a title page with author affiliations and contact information (the corresponding author should be identified with an asterisk); the sections required for each content type (see information for different content types) then References, Acknowledgements (optional), Author Contributions (Articles only), Competing Financial Interests statement, Figure Legends and Tables. Footnotes to the text are not allowed and any such material should be incorporated into the text as parenthetical matter.

#### (i) Title page

The title page should include a succinct title (less than 200 characters); a concise running title (which should normally not exceed 50 characters); the full names of all authors including their given names; the affiliations (including city, state and country) of all authors; the email addresses of all authors, and the full contact details of the corresponding author (including telephone and fax numbers).

#### (ii) Abstract

A brief abstract (maximum 250 words) should state the purpose, basic procedures, main findings and principal conclusions of the study. The abstract should not contain abbreviations or references and should not be structured.

#### (iii) Keywords

Three to eight key words, for the purposes of indexing, should be supplied below the abstract, in order of relevance.

#### (iv) Introduction

The Introduction should summarize the rationale for the study and outline pertinent background material. The Introduction should not contain either results or conclusions.

#### (v) Materials and Methods

Materials and Methods should be described in sufficient detail to allow the experimental work to be reproduced in another laboratory, and to leave the reader in no doubt as to how the results were derived.

#### (vi) Results

The Results should be presented in a logical sequence in the text, tables and figures; repetitive presentation of the same data in different forms should be avoided. The Results should not include material appropriate to the Discussion.

#### (vii) Discussion

The Discussion should not reiterate Results, but rather should consider them in relation to any hypotheses advanced in the Introduction. This may include an evaluation of methodology and the relationship of new information to the existing body of knowledge in that field.

#### (viii) Acknowledgments

Authors should acknowledge the source of financial grants and other funding, and declare any industrial links or affiliations. The contribution of colleagues or institutions should also be acknowledged. Personal thanks and thanks to anonymous reviewers should not be included.

#### (ix) Conflict of interests

A conflict of interest statement must be included for each contributing author. Please see the Conflict of Interest guidelines in the Editorial Policies section for more information and for guidelines on what constitutes a conflict of interest.

#### (x) References

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the references. Only articles that have been published may be included in the references. References follow the Vancouver format (for using End-Note, please follow the Leukemia journal reference style). In the text, references should be cited using superscript Arabic numerals in the order in which they appear. If cited in tables or figure legends, references should be numbered according to the first identification of the table or figure in the text. References are listed sequentially at the end of the paper, according to the numbering and order of citations in the text. The first six authors are to be listed, after which, list only the first three authors and 'et al'. Abbreviations of journal names should conform to the Index Medicus style. The first and last page numbers for each reference should be provided. The following are examples of the reference style:

#### Journal Article

1 Boyne PJ, James RA. Grafting of the maxillary sinus floor with autogenous marrow and bone. *J Oral Surg* 1980; 38: 613– 616.

2 Horch HH, Sader R, Pautke C *et al.* Synthetic, pure-phase beta-tricalcium phosphate ceramic granules (Cerasorb) for bone regeneration in the reconstructive surgery of the jaws. *Int J Oral Maxillofac Surg* 2006; 35: 708–713.

#### Article not in English

3 Casals E, Cuenca E. [Is it possible to plan the workforce of dentists? An analysis of human resource trends and uptake of dental services in Catalonia 1991–2008.] *Revista Clinica Odontologica España* 2009; 14: 1–13. Spanish.

#### Book

4 Perez CA, Brady LW, Halperin EC *et al.* *Principles and practice of radiation oncology*. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2004.

#### Book Chapter

5 Harding SR, Fryer JL. Recurrent oral ulceration in Greenland natives. In: Casselli G (ed.) *Coeliac diseases*. 3rd ed. London: Stoma Press, 1982: 307–324.

#### Electronic Material

6 Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. *Guidance to changes to the Medical Devices Directive 93/42/EC with respect to custom-made devices statements*. London: MHRA, 2009. Available at <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/Howweregulate/Devices/RevisonstothemedicaldevicesandAIMDDirectives/index.htm> (accessed 22 July 2011).

Where a reference is to appear next to a number in the text, for example following an equation, chemical formula or biological acronym, citations should be written as (ref. X). Example: “expressed odontogenic genes such as Pax9, DMP1 and DSPP (ref. 3).”

References to unpublished data and personal communications should not appear in the list but should be cited in the text only (e.g. Smith A, 2010, unpubl. data).

#### (x) Figures

Figures and images should be labelled sequentially, numbered and cited in the text. Production-quality figures are not required at initial submission, but to avoid potential substantial revisions at later stages you may wish to note some of the guidelines below even at the initial submission stage.

It is recommended that you convert all your figures to JPEG before generating PDFs or uploading individual files. This will reduce the file sizes and the amount of time it takes the files to upload to our submission site and will also give you a closer approximation to the way your figures will appear on our site. If you choose to submit your files in PowerPoint format, please do not make a JPEG of these within PowerPoint. The conversion is more successful when a raw PowerPoint file is submitted.

#### General Figure Guidelines

Use distinct colors with comparable visibility and consider colorblind individuals by avoiding the use of red and green for contrast. Recoloring primary data, such as fluorescence images, to color-safe combinations such as green and magenta, turquoise and red, yellow and blue or other accessible color palettes is strongly encouraged. Use of the rainbow color scale should be avoided.

Use solid color for filling objects and avoid hatch patterns. Avoid background shading.

Figures divided into parts should be labeled with a lower-case, boldface 'a', 'b', etc in the top left-hand corner. Labeling of axes, keys and so on should be in 'sentence case' (first word capitalized only) with no full stop. Units must have a space between the number and the unit, and follow the nomenclature common to your field.

Commas should be used to separate thousands.

Unusual units or abbreviations should be spelled out in full, or defined in the legend.

#### Final Figure Submission Guidelines

Should your manuscript be accepted, you will receive more extensive instructions for final submission of display items. However, a summary of our guidelines for final figure preparation are included here.

- Each figure should be saved in a separate file. Figures including multiple parts (e.g. Fig.1a, 1b, 1c) should be saved in a single file (e.g. Figure1a-c). The figure number should be placed above each figure. Figure legends should be inserted in the article's text file.
- Images should be saved in RGB color mode at 300 dpi or higher resolution.
- Use the same typeface (Arial, Helvetica or Times New Roman) for all figures. Use symbol font for Greek letters.
- We prefer vector files with editable layers. Acceptable formats are: .ai, .eps, .pdf, .ps, .svg for fully editable vector-based art; layered .psd or .tiff for editable layered art; .psd, .tif, .jpeg or .png for bitmap images; .ppt if fully editable and without styling effects; ChemDraw (.cdx) for chemical structures.
- Figures are best prepared at the size you would expect them to appear in print. At this size, the optimum font size is 8pt and no lines should be thinner than 0.25 pt (0.09 mm).

Display items that contain chemical structures should be produced using ChemDraw or a similar program. Authors using ChemDraw should use our ChemDraw Template and submit the final files at 100% as .cdx files. All chemical compounds must be assigned a bold, Arabic numeral in the order in which the compounds are presented in the manuscript text.

#### (xi) Tables

Tables should be labelled sequentially as Table 1, Table 2, etc. Each table should be numbered, titled and cited in the text. Reference to table footnotes should be made by using Arabic numerals. Tables should not duplicate the content of the text. They should consist of at least two columns, and

each column should have a heading. Authors should ensure that the data in the tables are consistent with those cited in the relevant places in the text, totals add up correctly, and percentages have been calculated correctly. Unlike figures or images, tables may be embedded into the main manuscript file if necessary, or supplied as separate electronic files.

If a table or figure has been published before, the authors must obtain written permission to reproduce the material in both print and electronic formats from the copyright owner and submit it with the manuscript. This also applies to quotes, illustrations and other materials taken from previously published works not in the public domain. The original source should be cited in the figure caption or table footnote.

### Artwork Guidelines

#### Color figures

Color figures must be supplied in the following format.  
For Single Images:

<b>Width</b>	<b>500 pixels</b> (authors should select "constrain proportions", or equivalent instructions, to allow the application to set the correct height automatically.)
<b>Resolution</b>	<b>125 dpi</b> (dots per inch)
<b>Format</b>	<b>JPEG</b> for photographs <b>GIF</b> for line drawings or charts
<b>Filenaming</b>	Please save image with .jpg or .gif extension to ensure it can be read by all platforms and graphics packages.

For Multi-part Images :

<b>Width</b>	<b>900 pixels</b> (authors should select "constrain proportions", or equivalent instructions, to allow the application to set the correct height automatically.)
<b>Resolution</b>	<b>125 dpi</b> (dots per inch)
<b>Format</b>	<b>JPEG</b> for photographs <b>GIF</b> for line drawings or charts
<b>Filenaming</b>	Please save image with .jpg or .gif extension to ensure it can be read by all platforms and graphics packages.

#### Black and white images

- Image resolution of at least 300 dpi at publication size
- Images should be scanned at a minimum of 300 dpi

- During software manipulation of images, care should be taken that resolution is maintained
- Images may be rotated or scaled, but this must be the same in the x and y dimensions
- Contrast and brightness can be adjusted, but this must be uniform across the entire image, and must not result in the loss of any feature, band or spot. The background should still be visible
- If lanes are removed, and once separate parts of an image are joined together, a black, white or grey line should indicate clearly where the image was cut
- If black borders are drawn around the image, the lines should correspond to all edges where the image was cut
- Protein molecular weights or DNA fragment sizes should be indicated for all figure panels showing gel electrophoresis

### Graphs, Histograms and Statistics

- Error bars must be described in the figure legend
- Axes on graphs should extend to zero, except for log axes
- Statistical analyses (including error bars and p values) should only be shown for independently repeated experiments, and must not be shown for replicates of a single experiment
- The number of times an experiment was repeated (N) must be stated in the legend

### House Style

As the electronic submission will provide the basic material for typesetting, it is important that papers are prepared in the general editorial style of the journal.

1. Do not make rules thinner than 1 pt (0.36 mm)
2. Use a coarse hatching pattern rather than shading for tints in graphs
3. Color should be distinct when being used as an identifying tool
4. Use SI units throughout
5. Spaces, not commas should be used to separate thousands
6. Abbreviations should be preceded by the words for which they stand in the first instance of use and should not be used for terms used fewer than 4 times
7. Text should be double spacing with a wide margin
8. Use a common word-processing package (such as Microsoft Word) for the text. Embed tables converted into images at the end of the Word document, or as a separate file in whichever program you used to generate them
9. If you submit raw data, this can be done in Excel, or tab/comma delimited format
10. At first mention of a manufacturer the town, (state if USA) and country should be provided.
11. All pages and lines are to be numbered. To add page numbers in MS Word, go to Insert then Page Numbers. To add line numbers go to File, Page

Setup, then click the Layout tab. In the Apply to box, select Whole document, click Line Numbers then select the Add line numbering check box, followed by Continuous.

### **File Formats**

File formats for manuscript files, figures and tables that are acceptable for our electronic manuscript submission process are given on the online forms. Further advice on file types is also available from the [Tips](#) webpage. Please follow the artwork guidelines above for submitting figures, and use a common word-processing package (such as Microsoft Word) for the text. Either embed tables converted into images at the end of your Word document, or as a separate files in whichever program you used to generate them. If you submit raw data, this can be done in Excel, or tab/comma delimited format.

### **Supplementary information**

Supplementary information is peer-reviewed material directly relevant to the conclusions of an article that cannot be included in the printed version owing to space or format constraints. It is posted on the journal's website and linked to the article when the article is published and may consist of data files, graphics, movies or extensive tables. The article must be complete and self-explanatory without the supplementary information. Supplementary information enhances a reader's understanding of the manuscript but is not essential to that understanding. Supplementary information must be supplied to the Editorial Office in its final form for peer review. On acceptance the final version of the peer reviewed supplementary information should be submitted with the accepted manuscript.

To ensure that the contents of the supplementary information files can be viewed by the editor(s), referees and readers, please also submit a 'read-me' file containing brief instructions on how to use the file.

### **Supplying supplementary information files**

Authors should ensure that supplementary information is supplied in its FINAL format because it is not subedited and will appear online exactly as originally submitted. It can neither be altered, nor added to, after the paper has been accepted for publication.

Please supply the supplementary information via eJP, the electronic manuscript submission and tracking system, in an acceptable file format (see below).

Authors should:

- Include a text summary (no more than 50 words) to describe the contents of each file.
- Identify the types of files (file formats) submitted.

- Include the text 'Supplementary information accompanies the manuscript on the *Horticulture Research* website <http://www.nature.com/hortres> at the end of the article and before the references.

### **Accepted file formats**

- Quick Time files (.mov)
- HTML files (.html)
- MPEG movie files (.mpg)
- JPEG image files (.jpg)
- Sound files (.wav)
- Plain ASCII text (.txt)
- Acrobat files (.pdf)
- MS Word documents (.doc)
- Postscript files (.ps)
- MS Excel spreadsheet documents (.xls)

We cannot accept TeX or LaTeX (.tex) files

File sizes must be as small as possible, so that they can be downloaded quickly. Images should not exceed 640 x 480 pixels (approximately 23 x 17 cm at 72dpi), and we would recommend 480 x 360 pixels as the maximum frame size for movies. We also recommend a frame rate of 15 frames per second. If applicable to the presentation of the supplementary information, use a 256-color palette. Please consider the use of lower specification for all of these points if the supplementary information can still be represented clearly. Our recommended maximum data rate is 150 KB/s. The number of files should be limited to eight, and the total file size should not exceed 8 MB. Individual files should not exceed 1 MB. Please seek advice from the Editorial Office before sending files larger than our maximum size to avoid delays in publication.

### **Language Editing**

For editors and reviewers to accurately assess the work presented in your manuscript you need to ensure the English language is of sufficient quality to be understood. If you need help with writing in English you should consider:

- Asking a colleague who is a native English speaker to review your manuscript for clarity.
- Using a professional language editing service where editors will improve the English to ensure that your meaning is clear and identify problems that require your review. Two such services are provided by our affiliates [Nature Research Editing Service](#) and [American Journal Experts](#).

Please note that the use of a language editing service is not a requirement for publication in this journal and does not imply or guarantee that the article will be selected for peer review or accepted.

## **POST-ACCEPTANCE**

## Open access article processing charges (APCs) and license to publish (LTP)

*Horticulture Research* is an open access journal: authors pay an article processing charge (APC) for their accepted articles to be open access online and freely accessible, immediately upon publication, under a Creative Commons license.

Visit our [open research](#) site for further information about licenses, APCs, and our free OA funding support service:

- [About Creative Commons licensing](#)
- [Creative Commons license options and article processing charges \(APCs\) for \*Horticulture Research\*](#)
- [APC payment FAQs](#)
- [Help in identifying funding for APCs](#)
- [APC waiver policy](#)
- [Compliance with funding body requirements](#)

Once a manuscript is accepted the corresponding author must complete an Article Processing Charge (APC) payment form and an open access License to Publish (LTP) form on behalf of all authors, and return these to the editorial office. Forms will be provided upon acceptance of

the article. Failure to promptly return forms will result in delay of publication.

Government employees from the United States, UK, and Canada are required to sign and submit the relevant government open access licence to publish form.

Please note with regards to payment that usual credit terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice. Failure to pay your invoice within the stated credit term may result in such penalties as restrictions on your ability to publish with Springer Nature or *Horticulture Research* in the future, involvement of a third Party debt collection agency and legal proceedings.

## Manuscript deposition and self-archiving

To facilitate self-archiving Springer Nature deposits open access articles in PubMed Central and Europe PubMed Central on publication. Authors are also permitted to post the final, published PDF of their article on a website, institutional repository or other free public server, immediately on publication. Learn more about [self-archiving and deposition of papers published OA](#).

# HOW TO SUBMIT

## Pre-submission Enquiries

Please submit via our [online manuscript submission system](#) or via e-mail to [hortres@njau.edu.cn](mailto:hortres@njau.edu.cn)

## Online Submission

We only accept manuscript submission via our online manuscript submission system. Before submitting a manuscript, authors are encouraged to consult both our Editorial Policies and the Submission Instructions for our online manuscript submission system. If you have not already done so, please register for an account with our online manuscript system. You will be able to monitor the status of your manuscript online throughout the editorial process.

## Submission of Revisions

Authors submitting a revised manuscript after review are asked to include the following:

- (1) A rebuttal letter, indicating point-by-point how you have addressed the comments raised by the reviewers. If you disagree with any of the points raised, please provide adequate justification in your letter.
- (2) A marked-up version of the manuscript that highlights changes made in response to the reviewers' comments in order to aid the Editors and reviewers.
- (3) A 'clean' (non-highlighted) version of the manuscript.

# EDITORIAL POLICIES

Submission to the *Horticulture Research* implies that all authors have seen and approved the full manuscript. Corresponding authors of accepted papers will be required to sign a License to Publish form on behalf of all authors (see below).

The *Horticulture Research* levies an article-processing charge (APC) for all submissions that are accepted for publication. Upon acceptance, it is mandatory that authors fill out and send back the payment form along with their license to publish form. Upon publication, the article is universally and freely accessible to all via the Internet, in an easily readable format. Further details are outlined below in the Open Access and Charges section.

To avoid unnecessary delays in the review process, please consider the following policies carefully before you submit your manuscript.

## Authorship

Requirements for all categories of articles largely conform to the standard practices of life sciences journals. A manuscript will be considered for publication with the understanding that:

1. all named authors have agreed to its submission
2. it is not currently being considered for publication by another journal

3. if the paper is accepted, it will not subsequently be published in the same or similar form in any language without the consent of publisher

Each author must have contributed sufficiently to the intellectual content of the submission. The corresponding author should list all authors and their contributions to the work. Any changes to the author list after submission, such as a change in the order of the authors, or the deletion or addition of authors, must be approved by a signed letter from every author. The corresponding author must confirm that he or she has had full access to the data in the study and final responsibility for the decision to submit for publication. To qualify as a contributing author, one must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Conceived and/or designed the work that led to the submission, acquired data, and/or played an important role in interpreting the results
2. Drafted or revised the manuscript
3. Approved the final version

Other individuals who made direct contributions to the work but do not meet all of the above criteria may be recognized in the Acknowledgments section of the manuscript.

Professional writers and industry employees can be contributors. Their roles, affiliations, and potential conflicts of interest should be included in the author list or noted in the Acknowledgments and/or Contributors section concurrent with their contribution to the work submitted. Signed statements from any medical writers or editors declaring that they have given permission to be named as an author, as a contributor, or in the Acknowledgments section is also required. Failure to acknowledge these contributors can be considered inappropriate, which conflicts with the editorial policy of the *Horticulture Research*.

### Plagiarism and fabrication

Plagiarism is when an author attempts to pass off someone else's work as his or her own. Duplicate publication, sometimes called self-plagiarism, occurs when an author reuses substantial parts of his or her own published work without providing the appropriate references. Plagiarism without dishonest intent is relatively frequent, for example, when an author reuses parts of an introduction from an earlier paper.

Because of some confusion as to the appropriate use of other authors' writing, we offer the following guideline in addition to the normal principles regarding plagiarism: if more than 5 consecutive words are taken verbatim from the text of another publication (including the authors' own work), this fact should be indicated by the use of inverted commas, as well as citation of the original source. It is not appropriate to make trivial changes to the wording instead. This rule can be relaxed slightly for descriptions of methodology from the authors' own papers, or for common phrases. If plagiarism is found, the journal will contact the author and, in some cases, the author's institute and funding agencies. The paper containing the plagiarism will be marked on each page of the PDF, and depending on the

extent of the plagiarism, the paper may be formally retracted.

CrossCheck is a multi-publisher initiative to screen published and submitted content for originality. *Horticulture Research* uses CrossCheck to detect instances of overlapping and similar text in submitted manuscripts. To find out more about CrossCheck visit [www.crossref.org/crosscheck.html](http://www.crossref.org/crosscheck.html)

### Duplicate publication

Material submitted to the journal must be original and not published or submitted for publication elsewhere in any language. This policy applies to material submitted elsewhere while the contribution to *Horticulture Research* is under consideration.

Authors submitting a manuscript should notify the editor(s) if part of their contribution has appeared or will appear elsewhere, or if any related material is under consideration or in press elsewhere.

If a submission contains a figure that is published elsewhere or that is copyrighted, the author must provide documentation that the previous publisher or copyright holder has given permission for the figure to be re-published. The editors consider all material in good faith, and assume that the journal has full permission to publish every part of the submitted material, including illustrations.

### Conflicts of interest

In the interests of transparency and to help readers assess any potential bias authors must declare any competing financial interests in relation to the work described. Referees are also asked to indicate any potential conflicts they might have in reviewing a particular paper.

### Electronic manipulation of images

Digital image enhancement is acceptable practice, although it can result in the presentation of unrepresentative data as well as in the loss of meaningful signals. During manipulation of images a positive relationship between the original data and the resulting electronic image must be maintained. If a figure has been subjected to significant electronic manipulation, the specific nature of the enhancements must be noted in the figure legend or in the 'Materials and methods' section. The editors reserve the right to request original versions of figures from the authors of a paper under consideration.

### Supplementary information for editors and reviewers

Any manuscripts under review or accepted for publication elsewhere should accompany the submission if they are relevant to its scientific assessment.

Authors should also provide upon submission any kind of supplementary material that will aid the review process.

### Peer review policy

All contributions that are selected for peer review are sent to two or more independent reviewers. The identity of reviewers is confidential and manuscripts are considered private information. Papers may be rejected without external review at the Editor's discretion. Authors are

encouraged to suggest or recommend for exclusion reviewers at the time of submissions.

### Anonymity

Reviewers' identities are not released to authors, except when reviewers specifically ask to be identified. If reviewers wish to reveal their identities while the manuscript is under consideration, this should be done through the Editor. Should a reviewer contact an author directly, we ask authors to inform the Editor as soon as possible. We prohibit any attempt by authors to confront reviewers or determine their identities. Our own policy is to neither confirm nor deny any speculation about reviewers' identities, and we encourage reviewers to adopt a similar policy.

### Selection of peer reviewers

Reviewer selection is critical to the publication process, and we base our choices on many factors, including expertise, reputation, and specific recommendations.

### Correction and retraction policy

We recognize our responsibility to correct errors. Content published online is final and cannot be amended. The online version is part of the published record; therefore the original version must be preserved and changes to the paper should be made as a formal correction. If an error is

noticed after online publication an HTML (or full-text) version of the correction will be created and linked to the original article. Please note the following policy for making corrections to online peer-reviewed content:

- **Erratum.** Notification of an important error made by the journal that affects the publication record or the scientific integrity of the paper or the reputation of the authors, or of the journal.
- **Corrigendum** Notification of an important error made by the author that affects the publication record or the scientific integrity of the paper or the reputation of the authors or of the journal.
- **Retraction.** Notification of invalid results. All co-authors must sign a retraction specifying the error and stating briefly how the conclusions are affected.

Decisions about corrections are made by the Editor (sometimes with advice of peer reviewers) and this sometimes involves author consultation. Requests to make corrections that do not affect the paper in a significant way or impair the reader's understanding of the contribution (a spelling mistake or grammatical error, for example) are not considered. In cases where co-authors disagree about a correction, the Editor will take advice from independent peer reviewers and impose the appropriate correction, noting the dissenting author(s) in the text of the published version.