

STM statement on the increase of unethical and deceptive journal practices

The last decade has seen a worrying increase in the number of unethical research publications, as well as an exponential rise in so-called ‘predatory’ journals and publishers. High levels of trust are vital to ensuring that the publication and sharing of research results helps to advance research, the global pool of knowledge and the careers of researchers and investigators. Publication practices vary across both academic disciplines and countries, but there are common ethical standards and behaviours that ensure that articles that are published in trustworthy peer-reviewed journals are of the highest standards.

STM is committed to both the highest standards of conduct as well as to increasing the awareness of all stakeholders of the emerging issues that affect modern journal publishing. Not only does STM actively support both COPE and the Think. Check. Submit initiative, it also rigorously applies its [Code of Conduct](#) and policy on [International Ethical Principles for Scholarly Publication](#) to both prospective and existing Association members.

There is an emerging challenge for both editors and publishers to ensure that scholarly works are not only visible and impactful, but also crucially, trusted. As STM commences its 50th year, we not only reaffirm our commitment to common ethical standards, but also state our desire to work collaboratively, across the entire scholarly communication ecosystem, to ensure that peer-reviewed publication remains the ‘gold standard’ and that authors, editors and reviews receive the best possible training and support. Over the coming 12 months, STM will take a leading role in industry initiatives aiming to both lower the uptake of sub-standard journals, as well as to promote trustworthy, high quality publications that ensure the long-term integrity of the scientific record.

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