

Conflict of Interest

Policies on Conflict of Interest, Human and Animal Rights, and Informed Consent

Purpose:

The **Axis Journal of Agriculture & Biological Sciences (AJABS)** is committed to ensuring the highest standards of ethical conduct, integrity, and transparency in all research it publishes. To uphold this commitment, we require comprehensive disclosures from all authors, reviewers, and editors regarding any potential conflicts of interest and strict adherence to ethical principles for research involving human participants or animal subjects.

Definition of Conflict of Interest:

A conflict of interest exists when an individual's personal, financial, or professional relationships or affiliations could reasonably be perceived as having the potential to unduly influence their objectivity, judgment, or actions in the research or publication process.

Disclosure Requirements:

- **Authors:** Must disclose all financial interests (e.g., employment, consultancies, stock ownership, patents, research funding) and personal relationships that could be perceived as influencing the submitted work. This includes affiliations with agribusinesses, seed/fertilizer companies, or funding bodies with a stake in the research outcomes.
- **Reviewers and Editors:** Must disclose any conflicts that may affect their impartial assessment or editorial handling of a manuscript and recuse themselves when a significant conflict exists. Disclosures must be comprehensive and submitted at the time of manuscript submission using the journal's declaration form.

Management of Conflicts of Interest:

All disclosed conflicts of interest will be published alongside the article to ensure full transparency for readers. In cases of significant potential bias, the journal may implement measures such as recusing a reviewer or editor, seeking additional independent reviews, or publishing an explanatory editorial note.

Human and Animal Rights Policy:

- **Research Involving Human Participants:** Studies must be conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Authors must obtain approval from an appropriate institutional or regional ethics committee and provide the approval number within the manuscript.
- **Research Involving Animal Subjects:** Experiments must adhere to internationally accepted guidelines for the care and use of laboratory and farm animals (e.g., those from ICB, AALAS). The manuscript must state that all efforts were made to minimize suffering, and must include a statement of approval from an institutional animal care and use committee.

Informed Consent Policy:

- **Requirement:** For all research involving human participants, voluntary, informed consent must be obtained prior to their involvement. For studies where individual details, images, or videos are published, specific informed consent for publication must also be secured from the participant (or their parent/guardian).

- **Documentation:** Authors must include a statement in the manuscript confirming that informed consent was obtained. The journal may request to see the consent forms upon request.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Authors must protect the anonymity and privacy of participants by omifying identifying information unless explicitly agreed upon for publication.

Implementation:

- **Submission Process:** Authors are required to submit completed conflict of interest disclosure forms, statements of ethical approval, and informed consent confirmations alongside their manuscript.
- **Verification:** The AJABS editorial team will verify compliance with these policies during the peer-review process. Non-compliance is grounds for immediate rejection of the manuscript or revocation of acceptance.
- **Publication:** All published articles will contain statements confirming adherence to these policies on conflict of interest, ethical treatment of human and animal subjects, and informed consent, thereby informing readers of the rigorous ethical standards upheld.

This policy framework ensures that the **Axis Journal of Agriculture & Biological Sciences** maintains a rigorous, transparent, and ethically sound approach to scholarly publishing, fostering trust within the scientific community and the public.
