

Policy on Conflicts of Interest for IO Editorial Team

International Organization seeks the highest level of integrity in its editorial practices. The intent of this policy is to avoid situations that could reasonably be interpreted as placing a submission to *IO* at an unfair advantage or disadvantage. This document clarifies what constitutes a conflict of interest between editors and authors and then outlines *IO*'s policy for preventing such conflicts from potentially biasing or creating the perception of bias in the editorial process.

- **Editorial Team.** For the purposes of this policy, the *IO* editorial team includes the Editor(s) and Associate Editors, if any, who individually and together manage the journal on behalf of the International Organization Foundation (IOF). All such members of the editorial team are referred to hereafter simply as Editor.
- **Conflict of Interest.** A conflict of interest (COI) is a transaction or relationship which may present an incompatibility between an Editor's obligations to treat all submissions fairly and the Editor's personal, professional, third-party or other interests. Such COI's potentially bestow a benefit or impose a cost on an author for reasons that are not based solely on the merits of the submitted work. These potentially include transactions that are financial or in-kind, as well as relationships that are professional and/or personal. COIs include but are not limited to: current or former dissertation committee chair or committee member (ever); current colleagues at the same institution; professional research, teaching or funding collaborators within the last five years; and current or former spouses or partners. Of particular concern, a COI also exists when either an author or an Editor exert unethical forms or power or influence over the other. This policy specifically includes situations in which an Editor may have engaged in sexual harassment of a submitting author, whether prior to or during the consideration of an author's manuscript at *IO*.
- **Appointment of an Ethics Committee.** A three-person Ethics Committee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Executive Committee to serve staggered 2 year terms. The Ethics Committee will be charged with carrying out this policy.
- **Disclosure of Claims by Editors.** The intent of this policy is to assure that any ethical claims made against an editor that may potentially affect their ability to perform editorial responsibilities are both disclosed and insulated from the editorial process. *IO* will follow existing practices in flagging any potential COIs that arise from professional and personal networks, which typically includes screening by the Managing Editor and assigning any manuscript with a potential COI to a member of the Editorial team who does not have a COI. The Editor is blinded from the process. In the rare circumstances in which Editors (as opposed to the author(s)) flag a COI that cannot be handled within the editorial team, Editors can request that the Ethics Committee oversee the review process.
- **Report of Conflicts of Interest by Authors.** Should any author (including co-authors) submitting a paper to *International Organization* believe they have a conflict of interest with any Editor that they, the author, fears may compromise the objectivity of the review process, the author has the right to disclose this conflict to the Ethics Committee and to request that the submission be handled under the alternate review process, procedures for which are discussed below. Under rules of strict confidentiality, the Ethics Committee may request additional information about the COI from any Editor or the submitting author. The submitting author may request that the Editor not be informed about the alternative review process request. In reviewing the information provided and the potential COI, the Ethics Committee will determine whether a COI exists and recommend appropriate action to the Executive Committee. The membership of the Ethics Committee and their contact information will be published on the journal's website.

- **Review of Conflicts.** *IO*'s Ethics Committee is responsible for supporting the editorial team in the implementation of this policy. The committee will review any disclosed or claimed potential conflicts of interest to determine if they require an alternate editorial review process, which could include assigning an alternate editor for that manuscript.
- **Alternate Procedures for Review.** In the event that an author reports a COI and the Ethics Committee concurs, the manuscript will be reviewed by an alternate editor selected by the Chair of the Editorial Board. This editor must not be implicated by the COI in any way. Under most circumstances, the alternate editor will be another member of the serving editorial team. If on the advice of the Ethics Committee the Chair of the Board believes no unbiased editor from the current team is available, the Chair may ask a former editor of the journal to manage the submission. If a manuscript has an alternate editor assigned and it is accepted and published, the fact that an alternate editor was assigned will be noted in the journal, at the discretion of the ethics committee.
- The Ethics Committee will review this policy annually and make recommendations on procedural and definitional changes as necessary.
- All new Editors, Executive Committee Members, Ethics Committee Members and Editorial Board Members will receive a copy of this policy and indicate in writing that they have received it, understand it, and will endeavor to uphold it.

Adopted by the International Organization Board on 31 August, 2019