# Journal of Digital Life Instructions to Authors



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# **Aims and Scope**

Digital technologies have dramatically changed fundamental aspects of society. The resulting challenges give rise to new questions that are best addressed through multidisciplinary research. The *Journal of Digital Life* aims to provide authors in academia, private enterprise, and public institutions a forum for their multidisciplinary research and endeavor. The journal publishes peer-reviewed, open access articles in the social sciences, life sciences, engineering, and frontier sciences. Research fields of interest include, but are not limited to, medicine, biochemistry, physiology, sports science, education, business management, information science, and civil engineering.

The *Journal of Digital Life*, which publishes articles online as soon as they are ready, brings together a broad global audience of the public, researchers, policymakers and those in the private sector.

# **Manuscript Types**

The journal welcomes five manuscript types, all of which are subject to peer review: Articles, Technical Articles, Review Articles, Secondary Publications, and Reports.

#### **Articles**

Articles describe new concepts and findings and reach clear conclusions based on supporting evidence.

# **Technical Articles**

Technical Articles contain novel data or new methods that justify publication. They may describe applied technologies for practical uses.

## **Review Articles**

Review Articles are overviews of the literature in a specific field. They should take a balanced approach to the issues raised and discussed.

# **Secondary Publications**

Secondary Publications are English translations of articles originally published in a language other than English. The full conditions for this manuscript type are described in the 'Secondary publication' section below.

# Reports

Reports contain preliminarily results or describe the process of research, and can comprise material such as white papers, working papers, and research notes.

# **Journal & Ethics Policies**

The journal upholds the highest standards in scholarly publishing.

Before submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors must ensure that they have read and complied with the journal's policies. The journal reserves the right to reject without review, or retract, any manuscript that the Editor believes may not comply with these policies.

The responsibilities of the journal's authors, editors, reviewers and publisher regarding research and publication ethics are described in full below.

Submission to the journal implies that the manuscript has not previously been published (in part or in whole, in any language), is not in press, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, except as described in the 'Secondary publication' section. The availability of a manuscript on a publicly accessible preprint server does not constitute prior publication (see 'Preprints'). However, authors must inform the editors if any related manuscripts are under consideration, in press or published elsewhere.

If authors choose to submit their manuscript elsewhere before a final decision has been made on its suitability for publication in the journal, they should first withdraw it from the journal.

# **Submission**

The journal welcomes manuscript submissions from authors based anywhere in the world.

Submission of a manuscript to the journal implies that all authors: have approved it, warrant it is factual, have agreed to its submission, and have the right to publish it.

# **Originality**

Submission to the journal implies that the manuscript is original work. The journal may use Crossref's Similarity Check plagiarism software to screen manuscripts for unoriginal material. By submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors agree to this screening. Any manuscript with an unacceptable level of unoriginal material may be rejected or retracted at the editors' discretion.

# **Preprints**

To support the wide dissemination of research, the journal encourages authors to post their research manuscripts on community-recognized preprint servers, either before or alongside

submission to the journal. This policy applies only to the original version of a manuscript that describes primary research. Any version of a manuscript that has been revised in response to reviewers' comments, accepted for publication or published in the journal should not be posted on a preprint server. Instead, forward links to the published manuscript may be posted on the preprint server.

Authors should retain copyright in their work when posting to a preprint server.

# **Scooping**

When assessing the novelty of a manuscript submitted to the journal, the editors will not be influenced by other manuscripts that are posted on community-recognized preprint servers after the date of submission to the journal (or after the date on which the submitted manuscript was posted on a preprint server, if the manuscript is submitted to the journal within 4 months).

# **Authorship**

Submission to the journal implies that all authors have seen and approved the author list. Any change to the author list after manuscript submission – such as the insertion or removal of an author, or a rearrangement of author order – must be approved by all authors and the editor.

Authors are encouraged to consider the Council of Science Editors (CSE) principles governing authorship. According to the CSE guidelines on <u>Authorship and Authorship</u> <u>Responsibilities</u> (and references therein), each author is expected have made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data; or have drafted the work or substantively revised it. Authors have also agreed to be held accountable for their own contributions to the work; can identify which coauthors are responsible for other parts of the work; have confidence in the integrity of the work; and have reviewed and approved the final manuscript and any resubmissions. Contributors who do not qualify for authorship may be included in the Acknowledgments section instead.

Authors are required to include an Author Contribution Statement that specifies the contribution of each author, as detailed in the template file.

Given that artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as large language models (LLMs) and various openly available services do not meet the requirements above, they cannot be listed as an author of a manuscript.

# Data falsification, data fabrication and image integrity

Authors must not falsify or fabricate data. Authors may digitally manipulate or process images, but only if the adjustments are kept to a minimum, are applied to the entire image, meet community standards, and are clearly described in the manuscript. All images in a manuscript must accurately reflect the original data on which they are based. Authors must not move, remove, add or enhance individual parts of an image. The editors reserve the right to request original, unprocessed images from the authors. Failure to provide requested images may result in a manuscript being rejected or retracted.

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Copies of all reproduction permissions must be included with the manuscript when it is first submitted to the journal.

# **Secondary publication**

One of the main ambitions of the journal is to ensure the dissemination of knowledge, especially knowledge that is otherwise inaccessible to the journal's broad international audience. Following the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) policy on 'Overlapping publications', the journal therefore considers articles that have been previously published in a language other than English if the following conditions are met:

- All authors of the original publication agree to the secondary publication, but understand that acceptance in the journal is not guaranteed.
- The manuscript undergoes full peer review.
- Editors from both journals approve of the re-publication.
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- A reasonable period of time has elapsed before publication of the English version, to maintain the priority of the original publication. An appropriate period will be decided by the editors of both journals.
- The journal's audience is different to the original publication's audience. Differentiating elements can include that the original publication and the original journal are published wholly in Japanese; the original journal is not listed in PubMed, the Science Citation Index Expanded (Clarivate Analytics), Scopus (Elsevier) or other large international database; and the original journal has a restricted distribution (e.g. in print to members of a society only). Authors should contact the Editor-in-Chief for clarification if needed.
- The secondary publication faithfully reflects the data and interpretations of the original publication.

Fulfilling these conditions ensures that the manuscript meets the novelty requirement for journal acceptance.

Secondary publications will include text that indicates they are fully peer-reviewed translations of an original publication and will contain a statement such as: "This article is based on a study first reported in [journal title, with full reference]."

# Availability of data and materials

Authors must disclose the source of publicly available data and materials, such as public repositories or commercial manufacturers, by including accession numbers or company details in a Data Availability Statement, as appropriate.

Authors may make their own data and materials available by linking from their manuscript to relevant community-recognized public databases or digital repositories. All data sets must be made available in full to the editors and reviewers during the peer review process, if necessary or upon request, and consideration made for them to be made publicly available by the date of publication. Authors commit to preserving their data sets for at least 3 years from the date of publication in the journal.

# Animal/human subject studies

Authors of manuscripts describing experiments involving humans or materials derived from humans must demonstrate that the work was carried out in accordance with the principles embodied in the <u>Declaration of Helsinki</u>, its revisions, and any guidelines approved by the authors' institutions. Where relevant, the authors must include a statement in their manuscript that describes the procedures for obtaining informed consent from participants regarding participation in the research and publication of the research. This includes the use of photographs or videos that show images of a person. Image processing or other methods are permitted to protect a person's privacy; any image processing methods should be described in an appropriate section of the manuscript. See the journal's article <u>template</u> for more information on the Institutional Review Board Statement and Informed Consent Statement.

Authors of manuscripts describing experiments involving animals or materials derived from animals must demonstrate that the work was carried out in accordance with the guidelines approved by the authors' institution(s).

# **Specimen collection**

Manuscripts describing the collection of archaeological, geological, paleontological or wildlife specimens or samples should include detailed information on their provenance and collection methods. Authors must include a statement in their manuscript describing the relevant ethics guidelines, local laws and collection permits under which the research was conducted.

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As per the COPE position statement on <u>Authorship and AI tools</u>, authors must disclose and fully describe any use of generative or non-generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (also known as large language models, or LLMs) in the Methods section. This includes, but is not limited to, using AI tools to collect or analyze data, produce or amend images or graphics used in the manuscript, or write all or part of the manuscript. Authors must describe which tools they used and how the tools were used. In general, the use of generative AI tools is allowed only where that use is an integral part of the research design or methods. Any other uses will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the editors. In all cases, authors remain responsible for all the content of their submitted manuscript.

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Authors should list all funding sources for their work in the Funding section of their manuscript. See the journal's article <u>template</u> for more information.

# Confidentiality

The journal maintains the confidentiality of all unpublished manuscripts. By submitting a manuscript to the journal, the authors warrant that they will keep all correspondence about their manuscript (from the Editorial Office, editors and reviewers) strictly confidential.

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## Advertising policy

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## **Privacy**

The personal information of the author who is registered as the corresponding author will be provided to the Editorial Board and reviewers as contact information. This personal information will also be displayed as part of the published article. When an author designates a co-author as a corresponding author, the author must clearly inform the co-author of the

purpose for which their personal information (e.g., name, e-mail address, affiliations) will be used and obtain their prior consent.

# **Peer Review Process**

# Editorial and peer review process

The journal uses single anonymized peer review. When a manuscript is submitted to the journal, the Editorial Office assigns it to an Editor with expertise in the relevant subject area. The Editor then selects two appropriate reviewers to assess the manuscript. The deadline for submitting reviewer reports is 2 weeks, regardless of the article type.

Once the reviewers' reports have been received, the Editor determines whether the manuscript should be accepted, rejected, or revised. Authors who are asked to revise their manuscript must do so within 2 weeks, otherwise it may be treated as a new submission. The Editor may send revised manuscripts to peer reviewers for their feedback or may use his or her own judgment to assess how closely the authors have followed the comments on the original manuscript. The Editor then makes a final decision on the manuscript's suitability for publication in the journal.

One of the Editors-in-Chief acts as an arbitrator when necessary. Further details about the peer review process are available at the journal's peer review webpage.

## Reviewer selection, timing and suggestions

Reviewers are selected based on their expertise in the field, reputation, recommendation by others, and/or previous experience as peer reviewers for the journal.

Reviewers are asked to submit their first review within 2 weeks of accepting the invitation to review. Reviewers who anticipate any delays should inform the Editorial Office as soon as possible.

When submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors may suggest reviewers that they would like included in or excluded from the peer review process. The Editor may consider these suggestions but is under no obligation to follow them. The selection, invitation and assignment of peer reviewers is at the Editor's sole discretion.

# **Reviewer reports**

It is the journal's policy to transmit reviewers' comments to the authors in their original form. However, the journal reserves the right to edit reviewers' comments, without consulting the reviewers, if they contain offensive language, confidential information or recommendations for publication.

# Acceptance criteria

If a submitted or revised manuscript satisfies the journal's requirements and represents a significant contribution to the published literature, the Editor may decide to accept it for publication in the journal.

Articles in the journal must be:

• within the subject area of the journal's scope

- novel and original
- descriptions of technically rigorous research
- of high interest to the journal's audience
- important additions to the specific field explored in the manuscript.

Secondary publications are considered as per the details in the 'Secondary publication' section.

If a manuscript does not meet the journal's requirements for acceptance or revision, the Editor may decide to reject it.

# **Editorial independence**

The journal owner, Sankei Digital Inc., has granted the journal's Editorial Board complete and sole responsibility for all editorial decisions. Sankei Digital Inc. will not become involved in editorial decisions, except in cases of a fundamental breakdown of process.

Editorial decisions are based only on a manuscript's scientific merit and are kept completely separate from the journal's other interests. The authors' ability to pay any publication charges has no bearing on whether a manuscript is accepted for publication in the journal.

# **Appeals**

Authors who believe that an editorial decision has been made in error may lodge an appeal with the Editorial Office. Appeals are only considered if the authors provide detailed evidence of a misunderstanding or mistake by a reviewer or editor. Appeals are considered carefully by the Editor-in-Chief, whose decision is final. The guidelines of the <a href="Committee on Publication Ethics">Committee on Publication Ethics</a> (COPE) are followed where relevant.

# Confidentiality in peer review

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- use any data or information from the manuscript in their own work or publications
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In addition, reviewers will not reveal their identity to any of the authors of the manuscript or involve anyone else in the review (for example, a post-doc or PhD student) without first receiving permission from the Editor.

# Editor and reviewer conflicts of interest in peer review

A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an editor or reviewer's ability to act impartially when assessing a manuscript. Such circumstances include (but are not limited to) having a personal or professional relationship with an author, working on the same topic or in direct competition with an

author, having a financial stake in the work or its publication, or having seen previous versions of the manuscript.

Reviewers and members of the journal's Editorial Board undertake to declare any conflicts of interest when handling manuscripts. An editor or reviewer who declares a conflict of interest is unassigned from the manuscript in question and is replaced by a new editor or reviewer.

Editors try to avoid conflicts of interest when inviting reviewers, but it is not always possible to identify potential bias.

## **Errata and retractions**

The journal recognizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of published literature.

A published article that contains an error may be corrected through the publication of an Erratum. Errata describe errors that significantly affect the scientific integrity of a publication, the reputation of the authors, or the journal itself. Authors who wish to correct a published article should contact the editor who handled their manuscript or the Editorial Office with full details of the error(s) and their requested changes. In cases where co-authors disagree over a correction, the Editor-in-Chief may consult the Editorial Board or external peer reviewers for advice. If an Erratum is published, any dissenting authors will be noted in the text.

A published article that contains invalid or unreliable results or conclusions, has been published elsewhere, or has infringed codes of conduct (covering research or publication ethics) may be retracted. Individuals who believe that a published article should be retracted are encouraged to contact the journal's Editorial Office with full details of their concerns. The Editor-in-Chief will investigate further and contact the authors of the published article for their response. In cases where co-authors disagree over a retraction, the Editor-in-Chief may consult the Editorial Board or external peer reviewers for advice. If a Retraction is published, any dissenting authors will be noted in the text.

The decision to publish Errata or Retractions is at the sole discretion of the Editor-in-Chief.

# Editors as authors in the journal

Any member of the journal's Editorial Board, including the Editor-in-Chief, who is an author on a submitted manuscript is excluded from the peer review process. Within the journal's online manuscript submission and tracking system, they will be able to see their manuscript as an author but not as an editor, thereby maintaining the confidentiality of peer review.

A manuscript authored by an editor of the journal is subject to the same high standards of peer review and editorial decision making as any manuscript considered by the journal.

# Responding to potential ethical breaches

The journal will respond to allegations of ethical breaches by following its own policies and, where possible, the guidelines of <u>COPE</u>.

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There are many costs associated with publishing scholarly journals, such as those of managing peer review, copy editing, typesetting and online hosting. To cover these costs in the absence of journal subscriptions, authors (or their representatives) are asked to pay article processing charges (APCs). There is no submission fee.

The APCs are:

Article, Review Article, Secondary Publication, Report: 150,000 Japanese yen per article Technical Article: 20,000 Japanese yen per page

Additional publication fees (15,000 Japanese yen per page) may be charged for manuscripts of more that 10 journal-typeset pages.

Authors of accepted manuscripts will be invoiced for the APC before publication of their manuscript, and publication is dependent on the successful remittance of any outstanding invoices.

# **Manuscript Submission**

All manuscripts must be submitted via the journal's online submission system, Editorial Manager: <a href="https://www.editorialmanager.com/digitallife/default.aspx">https://www.editorialmanager.com/digitallife/default.aspx</a>. The original or revised manuscript text may be uploaded as a PDF or Microsoft Word file, but a Word file is required for the final manuscript text. Figures may be submitted separately in several other formats.

If you encounter any problems with online submission, please contact the Editorial Office at the details provided in the Contact section.

# **Manuscript Preparation**

Authors should follow the instructions in this section to ensure the prompt and accurate peer review and production of their manuscripts. The journal's Microsoft Word <u>template</u> should be used. It contains descriptions of the necessary contents and layouts of manuscripts, As well as information about the author declarations that are required (i.e. Author Contributions, Funding, Institutional Review Board Statement, Informed Consent Statement, Data Availability Statement, Acknowledgments, Conflicts of Interest statement).

A <u>sample PDF</u> of the journal's style is also available, as are other guides available from the journal's website.

Authors can include video files with their manuscripts (.mp4, .mov or .avi). The duration of videos should be limited to one minute.

# **Style**

Manuscripts should be prepared in Microsoft Word or other appropriate software using double line spacing throughout, with margins of at least 3 cm.

As a general rule, the length of manuscripts should not exceed 10 pages on A4-sized pages. The title, abstract, text, references, tables, and figures must be included within the page count.

# **English standard**

Manuscripts should be written in clear, grammatically correct English. If a manuscript is not clear due to poor English, it may be rejected without undergoing peer review.

## **Format**

The first page of each manuscript should contain: Title, authors' full names, affiliations, key words, and the name and full address (including e-mail address) of the corresponding author. The main text and other sections should follow the format described below and in the Microsoft Word template and sample PDF.

#### Title

The title should describe the content of the article briefly but clearly. A concise, descriptive title is important for search purposes by third-party services. Do not use the same main title with numbered minor titles, even for a series of papers by the same authors. Do not use abbreviations in the title, except those used generally in related fields.

#### **Authors**

For each author, provide their full given and family names, and any middle initials.

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Provide the full name and address of each author's institution(s) (including laboratory, department, institute and/or university, city, state and country). When authors belong to different institutions, their respective addresses should be indicated by superscript numbers. When an author has a new address, it should be listed in a footnote and indicated by a superscript symbol (such as \* and \*\*).

# **Key words**

A maximum of 5 key words should be provided.

#### **Abbreviations**

Each abbreviation should be defined in parentheses after its non-abbreviated term when it first appears in the text (except in the Title and Abstract).

#### Units

The International System of Units (SI) or SI-derived units should be used. More information on SI units is available from the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM).

# Supplementary material

Supplementary materials provide additional content that enhances the understanding of a manuscript, though they are not essential. These materials may include data, text, audio, or video files.

Since supplementary materials undergo peer review, they must be submitted in their final version along with the manuscript. Once a manuscript is accepted for publication, authors will not be allowed to make any changes to the supplementary materials.

# **Accepted Manuscripts**

Manuscripts that are accepted for publication are copyedited and typeset by the journal's production team before publication. The journal is published continuously online as articles are ready for publication. All communication regarding accepted manuscripts is with the corresponding author. The date of acceptance is the date when the Editor formally accepts the manuscript for publication in the journal.

## **Proofs**

Page proofs are sent to the corresponding author, who should check and return them within 7 days. Only essential corrections to typesetting errors or omissions are accepted; excessive changes are not permitted at the proofing stage.

## Contact

To contact the Editorial Office or the Editor-in-Chief, please write to:

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