

Journal policies – for all VILNIUS TECH journals

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1. *Authorship*

Anyone identified as an author must have made a substantial intellectual contribution to the research and to the writing of the article. They must be willing to take a shared responsibility in the research and in the article and approve the final version to be published. Anyone who does not fulfil these criteria but has contributed to either the research or the writing of the article should be acknowledged and thanked in the “Acknowledgements” section at the end of the article.

Any changes to authorship either during the peer review process or after acceptance must be confirmed by all named authors, and a reason for any addition/removal provided to the Editor-in-Chief.

Ideally, the contribution of each named author should be given in a “Contributor list” at the end of each article (e.g. “TS and SS conceived the study and were responsible for the design and development of the data analysis. TS, MG and SS were responsible for data collection and analysis. TS and SS were responsible for data interpretation. MG wrote the first draft of the article.”).

Information about article preparation and how to submit can be found in each journal’s section “Guidelines for authors”.

2. *Authors' warranties*

All authors are responsible for ensuring that:

- the manuscript is their own original work, and does not duplicate any other previously published work, including their own previously published work;
- the manuscript has been submitted only to this journal; it is not under consideration or peer review or accepted for publication or in press or published elsewhere;
- the manuscript contains nothing that is abusive, defamatory, libellous, obscene, fraudulent, or illegal.

Non-compliance with any of the above conditions will be considered misconduct and dealt with accordingly. Equally, if authors are found guilty of infringing any of the above, the publisher reserves the right to charge the authors with costs which the journal incurs for their manuscript at the discretion of the Journal's Editors and the publisher.

3. *Peer review*

Each submission is checked for suitability when received by the editorial office, and may be rejected without review if it is outside the scope of the journal, is obviously of insufficient quality, or is missing important sections.

The journal invites external experts (not only Editorial Board members) to review each article that is considered suitable for consideration. The publication decision is made by the Editor-in-Chief after receiving at least two external reviewer reports with recommendations.

Authors are encouraged to suggest suitable reviewers, but the Editor-in-Chief and the editorial office reserves the right to select different reviewers. The reason for asking authors to suggest reviewers is that they are best placed to know who is an expert in the field. In addition, the suggested reviewers may be suitable for other articles on the same topic. Therefore, obtaining these names can help the editorial office to ensure that it is approaching suitable people to review all articles.

The majority of VILNIUS TECH journals use double-blind peer review (neither the authors nor the reviewers know the identity of each other) to avoid bias. However, some journals use single-blind peer review which means that, by default, author names are revealed to reviewers but reviewer names are withheld from the authors. Authors can request to "blind" their names.

On receipt of at least two reviews, the Editor-in-Chief will make a decision of (1) accept, (2) minor revision, (3) major revision, or (4) reject. The reasons for the decision will be communicated to the authors.

When the decision of minor/major revision is made, and the authors do not revise their articles satisfactorily after receiving reviewer reports, then the Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to reject the article. When revised articles are received they will either be sent out for further review or the Editor-in-Chief will make a decision depending on the level of revision requested.

The time to review and make a decision is extremely variable since it is sometimes difficult to find suitable reviewers, and there may be delays in receiving reviewer reports. The Editor-in-Chief and editorial office make all efforts to minimize the time from submission to first decision.

Note that articles that do not report original research (e.g. letters to the editor, editorials) are not externally reviewed and the Editor-in-Chief makes the decision to publish.

4. *Author appeals*

If an author considers that a decision of Rejection was incorrectly made, they may appeal the decision. To appeal a decision the author must email the Editor-in-Chief or the publisher, giving reasons why they think the decision was wrong. The appeal will be considered by a member of the Editorial Board who was not involved in the original decision (nominated jointly by the Editor-in-Chief and the Publisher). There is only one chance to appeal, so it is very important that authors clearly explain the justification for making an appeal.

5. *Supplemental information*

The journal can accept supplementary files that support the submitted article (e.g. audio, movie, or text files: for example a survey questionnaire which is described in the article). Supplemental information should be provided with the submission. It will not be formally reviewed but will be considered to determine whether it is required by the article. Please note that authors take fully responsibility for the content of any supplemental information, and a disclaimer on the supplemental information must clearly state that they have not been formally reviewed.

6. *Data sharing*

We encourage all researchers to archive and share their data. Several grant funders now require this, and we believe that it benefits research by enabling other researchers to reuse and reinterpret data for the benefit of all. We encourage all authors to make their data available in suitable repositories (for example FigShare, or other similar repository) where the item will be safely archived and given a unique reference number (DOI or similar), so that it can be cited in the authors' articles.

7. *Permissions*

Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to reproduce anything (e.g. figure, table, text) that has been previously published or created by another person. On request from the Editorial Office or Publisher they should be able to supply evidence of such permission.

8. *Conflict of interest*

A Conflict of Interest is defined as a situation where personal relationships (e.g. friend, colleague or family), business relationships (e.g. working in a competing company), or

financial influences (e.g. funding) will affect the judgement of any person during the publication of the journal.

Authors are required to declare (within the article and to the Editor-in-Chief) any Conflict of Interest (COI) that may have affected their research (e.g. funding) or decision to submit to the journal.

Reviewers are required to declare if they have any Conflict of Interest (COI) that may affect their judgement of any article they review. The COI may not prevent them reviewing the article, but must be declared to the Editor-in-Chief as soon as it is known.

Editors are excluded from any publishing decision in which they may have a Conflict of Interest (COI). For example, if an article by a colleague of the Editor-in-Chief is submitted to the journal, the peer review and all editorial decisions will be managed by another editor.

9. Plagiarism and copyright infringement

Authors are responsible for ensuring that their works are unique, and that they fully acknowledge the source of any content which is not entirely the authors' own. The journal will check articles for plagiarism (i.e. reproducing any content without attribution and permission) using Crosscheck/iThenticate and considers the inclusion of plagiarised content to be misconduct by the authors.

10. Editorial independence

The editors have a right to select which articles to consider for publication and which to accept and/or reject without influence from the publisher or other external bodies.

11. Editorial responsibilities

The journal editors have a duty to treat all submissions confidentially, and to ensure that judgements are made free of bias, and in a timely manner. Decisions on which articles to be published are the responsibility of the editors who also have a responsibility not to bring the journal into disrepute (by knowingly accepting bad quality or unethical articles or by failing to comply with the journal policies). The appointment of the Editorial Board is the duty of the Editor-in-Chief.

12. Publisher responsibilities

The publisher has a duty to ensure the journal meets international standards with respect to technology, archiving, data protection, and ethical policies. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University as the publisher is responsible for appointing the Editor-in-Chief.

13. Fees and charges

VILNIUS TECH supports Open Access and covers major part of journal publishing costs. For eight journals all publication fees are covered by Vilnius Gediminas Technical University and sponsors (Lithuanian Academy of Sciences). However, the part of the cost of publication is funded by Article Publication Charges (APCs) paid by authors or their institutes. These are levied for seven VILNIUS TECH journals and cover the costs of publication to allow for articles to be made freely available Open Access to all readers, anywhere in the world.

The detailed information about the APC can be found in each journal's section "Fees and charges".

14. Open Access

VILNIUS TECH journals are published Open Access under a [CC-BY 4.0](#) licence which allows readers to reuse the content without restriction. Open Access allows for unrestricted sharing of scholarly information and helps to promote knowledge throughout the world. VILNIUS TECH supports Open Access as an equitable means of ensuring that scholarly research, usually funded by public institutions, is made available to all. Open Access publications are more likely to be discovered, read, cited, and used for future research than those published in closed journals, and we believe it is in the best interests of authors and their parent institutions, as well as the journals themselves, to make all our content freely available and reusable.

15. Corrections

If an error is discovered after publication, it will be corrected by an erratum, retraction or in-line (dated) correction. Authors and readers are encouraged to inform the publisher and Editor-in-Chief if they notice anything that should be corrected.

Where an erratum or retraction notice has been issued, this will be indicated using the industry-standard Crossmark logo. This logo will indicate if any update has been issued: by clicking the logo readers will be informed if the version they are reading is the most up-to-date, or if there is any revision they need to be aware of. For more information about Crossmark, see the Crossmark website: <https://www.crossref.org/services/crossmark/>

Reported errors will be investigated by the publisher and Editor-in-Chief, and discussed with the authors. The appropriate correction will be made after this consultation.

Articles will be retracted following the COPE

(Committee on Publication Ethics) retractions policy. Retractions are made if the content of the article is unreliable "either as a result of misconduct (e.g. data fabrication) or honest error (e.g. miscalculation or experimental error)", if the contents have been plagiarised, or if the article reports unethical research. See

<https://publicationethics.org/files/cope-retraction-guidelines-v2.pdf>

Authors may request their articles to be retracted if they have valid reasons why it should be removed.

16. Misconduct

VILNIUS TECH journals follow the recommendations and core practices of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, <https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>) regarding ethical policies and dealing with misconduct. Misconduct includes falsifying data, plagiarising others' works, and breach of confidentiality. Each case will be considered by the publisher and Editor-in-Chief, and in all cases the author (or reviewer) will be contacted directly. However, the publisher reserves the right to speak directly to the author's or reviewer's institution or other appropriate organization if severe misconduct is suspected.

Note that if misconduct is suspected during the review process the manuscript will be held until any concerns have been resolved. If misconduct is confirmed during the review process the manuscript will be immediately rejected. If misconduct is proved after publication then the article will be retracted.

17. Complaints

Where an author, reviewer, reader, or other person has a complaint against the journal or editors, they should speak directly to the publisher in the first instance. Wherever possible, the complaint will be dealt with by the relevant publishing or editorial person. Where a resolution is not satisfactory it will be passed to a more senior person for resolution.