

ASSOCIATE EDITOR'S GUIDELINES FOR SEED TECHNOLOGY

The following information is to be used as a guideline by Associate Editors (AE). The purpose is to set up a review process which will allow for prompt and accurate reviews. The AE should work with authors to get papers revised so they will be of acceptable quality for the Journal.

A. Manuscript processing by Editor

1. The Editor will assign a manuscript number to each manuscript received and assign it to an Associate Editor (AE) based on subject area.
2. The Editor will send an electronic copy of the manuscript to the AE along with the following forms:
 - a. Guidelines for reviewers
 - b. Reviewer's report
 - c. Instructions to authors
 - d. Register and Record of Manuscript
 - e. Sample abstract

B. After AE receives manuscript from Editor

1. Examine the manuscript quickly to determine if you have difficulties processing it. Some possibilities to consider: Would there be the possibility or appearance of conflict of interest? While it is difficult to identify all conflicts of interests, if you do not believe you could give the manuscript an unbiased review, do not process that manuscript. Any manuscript that you would feel uncomfortable processing should be discussed with the Editor or Editor-in-Chief for possible reassignment to a different AE.
2. Note on the Register and Record of Manuscript (R&R) form the date you received the manuscript. Briefly review the manuscript to make certain the electronic copy is complete, in the proper format, and that any photomicrographs or other photos are prints, not photocopies. Review and note any problem areas outlined by the Editor. Also review the manuscript yourself and note any additional area to check later.
 - a. If there are any substantial problems with the quality of the English, presentation, statistics, or science, consider recommending to the Editor that the manuscript be declared "not ready for review". (Only the Editor has the authority to actually make that declaration). Discuss with the Editor the possibility of returning the manuscript to the author to correct the problems instead of wasting the time of reviewers. If this is the route to be taken, it

will help authors if you edit a few pages before returning it to the Editor to show the authors the major problems.

- b. Make sure the registration number is on each manuscript sent out for review and on any figures or tables that are not attached to the manuscript. **The Associate Editor is expected to be one of two reviewers.** Select one additional peer reviewer and ask them to complete review **within 3 weeks**. If the AE and this reviewer do not agree a third reviewer may be used.
3. It is our policy that the entire review process be completed and the manuscript returned to the author for revisions **within three months of author submission**. Please do everything in your power to help the journal abide by that policy. Each time you have a manuscript in your possession, try to complete each function, i.e., selection of and mailing manuscript to reviewers, accept-release decision and drafting the revision letter to the author or rejection recommendation to the Editor - **within one week** of receipt of the manuscript.
4. Contact reviewers by email to determine if they would be able to review a manuscript in the next 3 weeks.
5. Send each reviewer one manuscript and a completed copy of the *Guidelines for Reviewers, Reviewers Report Form and Sample Abstract*. Enter into the R&R form the name and address of each reviewer and the date you sent the manuscript to him or her.

C. Selection of Reviewers; Some Guidelines

1. Consider some of the authors listed in the paper's Reference section. Consult the Seed Technology Editorial Review Board list. Solicit suggestions from Editor, Editor-in-Chief or colleagues.
2. If the reviewer you are considering has a reputation for procrastination, try to avoid that person. If you cannot, call and get a definite time commitment before selecting him or her.
3. Avoid choosing reviewers who may have the appearance of a conflict of interest.

D. While waiting for the return of reviews

1. Complete your AE review so that your opinion will not be biased by the words of the other reviewers.
2. Check your calendar weekly to make certain no reviews are overdue; call or send reminder letters to any reviewers who are.

E. Upon return of reviews

1. On the R&R form, record the date you received each review. Evaluate the quality of each review as you received it. Was the reviewer competent and did he/she give sufficient reasons for his/her recommendation? If the first review received agrees with your review, proceed immediately to either return manuscript to author for revision or send it to the Editor with your recommendation. In those cases when you were unable to reach agreement with the first reviewer, proceed immediately to complete another review.
2. Check the review comments for harsh, unkind, or unfair wordings. The Editor has the discretion to black out unkind comments and/or indicate in the cover letter to the author that certain comments may be ignored.

F. When the manuscript needs minor revisions

1. Send to corresponding author:
 - a. All reviewer comments and suggestions **WITHOUT IDENTIFYING REVIEWER**
 - b. A cover letter that includes:
 1. Your suggestions, comments, and recommendations
 2. Summarized statement of the main reviewer comments
 3. Reminder of the **one-month deadline** for the author to return revised manuscript.
 4. Request that reviewer comments be both noted and dealt with. Those comments that were included in the revision should have their location noted by page and line number on a copy of the reviewer comments. Those the author chooses not to incorporate into the text should be answered in the return cover letter.
 - c. As many of the following handouts as may be necessary:
 1. Instructions to authors
 2. Sample Abstract
2. As the end of the one-month deadline draws near, email or call the author to remind him/her of that deadline. Use your judgment if the author requests additional time. Try to be fair; it is all right to extend a deadline for legitimate reasons; please keep the Editor informed of any extensions you grant. Authors who delay unnecessarily may have their papers released.

G. When a manuscript requires major revisions

If you believe the manuscript eventually could be published, follow the instructions given for minor revision (above), but emphasize to the author the need for the major corrections in the manuscript. Be careful not to give assurance that the paper will be accepted if those revisions are made. If you believe the paper cannot be salvaged, follow the procedure outlined below for release of a paper.

H. AE recommendation on acceptance or release

The AE recommends acceptance or release of a paper, but only the Editor and Editor-in-Chief have the authority to actually accept or release a paper. When conflicting recommendations are received from reviews, the AE should consider their recommendations carefully, because such decisions are sensitive. When at least one reviewer and the AE recommend acceptance or release of a paper, the AE prepares the following material to send to the Editor:

1. A cover letter from you summarizing the reasons for acceptance or the main problems that would cause a paper to be released.
2. Copies of the reviewers' cover letters.
3. Copies of the reviewers comments regarding the manuscript, including all concerns about figures, tables and photographs.
4. The original R&R form after filling out your part of it including names and addresses of reviewers.

I. Final Decision

The Editor and Editor-in-Chief will always makes the final decision of acceptance or release. Thus, the AE should not correspond with the authors about decisions on their manuscripts.