

The policy of the *Legestic*

Table of content

A.	The general policy of the <i>Legestic</i>	3
B.	Publishing Ethics Policy and Publication Malpractice statement	4
I.	Duties of the Publisher	4
1.	Guardianship of the scholarly record	4
2.	Safeguard editorial independence.....	4
3.	Collaborate to set industry best practices	4
4.	Technical, procedural & legal support for Editors	4
5.	Educate researchers on publishing ethics	4
II.	Duties of Editors	4
1.	Publication decisions.....	4
2.	Peer review	5
3.	Fair play.....	6
4.	Journal metrics.....	7
5.	Confidentiality.....	7
6.	Declaration of Competeting Interests	7
7.	Vigilance over the Published Record	7
III.	Duties of Reviewers	8
1.	Contribution to Editorial Decisions	8
2.	Confidentiality.....	8
3.	Alertness to Ethical Issues.....	8
4.	Standards of Objectivity & Competing Interests	8
IV.	Duties of Authors	9
1.	Reporting Standards	9
2.	Data Access and Retention	9
3.	Author's Warranties.....	10
4.	Writing the Article.....	10
5.	Clarity of English.....	10
6.	Scientific Misconduct	10
7.	Originality and Acknowledgement of Sources, Citations	11
8.	Multiple, Redundant or Concurrent Publication	11
9.	Confidentiality.....	11
10.	Authorship and contribution of the Paper	11
11.	Ethical statement.....	13
12.	Declaration of Competing Interests.....	15
13.	Notification of Fundamental Errors	15

14.	Image Integrity	15
15.	Clinical Trial Transparency	15
C.	Other policies	16
1.	Journal Accessibility policy	16
2.	Journal Content Accessibility policy	16
3.	Article withdrawal, correction, retraction and removal policy	16
4.	Copyright policy	19
5.	Integrity and Completeness of the scholarly record policy	20
6.	Custom publications policy	20
7.	Digital Archive policy	20
8.	Editorial independence policy	20
9.	Sharing articles policy	21
10.	Hosting content policy	21
11.	Research data policy	21
12.	Metadata sharing policy	22
13.	Text and data mining policy	22
14.	Interlibrary loan policy	22
15.	Author name changes policy	22
16.	Open access licenses policy	22
17.	Patient informed consent policy	23
18.	Privacy policy	23
19.	Plagiarism policy	24
20.	Advertising policy	25
21.	Publication fee policy	26
22.	Conflict of interest / Competeting interest policy	27
23.	Personnel policy	27
24.	Allegations of misconduct policy	28
25.	Whistleblower policy	28
26.	Complaints and appeals policy	29
27.	Nutrition and health claims policy	30
28.	Harassment policy	31
29.	Use of third party materials policy	31
30.	Research involving protected heritage sites policy	31
31.	AI usage policy	31

A. The general policy of the *Legestic*

1. To publish articles and reviews articles from all areas of private and public law, such as civil law, criminal law, state law, civil law, business law, intellectual property law, medical law, culture and sports law and other areas of law. To publish comments on legal regulations, critical opinions, reflections, expert analyses, case law analyses, and studies on legislation's impact on citizens' and institutions' functioning. Articles can concentrate on legislative issues within a single jurisdiction but we prefer if they are relevant to other jurisdictions as well. Also, it is possible to publish high-quality, interdisciplinary articles by scholars in the Legestic journal. A combination of other relevant disciplines, such as legislative studies and political science, public policy, regulation, governance, economics, culture and sport, is of interest to our readers.
2. To publish original scientific articles meeting only the scientific criteria.
3. To be respectful to each author.
4. To publish articles in terms of publication ethics and publication malpractice statement.
5. To make no differences between authors of articles, institutions, universities, and departments from which the authors of published articles come.
6. To Ensure transparency in the publication process from article submission through the editorial process and article publication.
7. To ensure confidentiality and transparency in the peer-review process of articles.
8. To ensure open access for authors and readers.
9. To respect the law of the European Union and the Slovak Republic and the country of origin.
10. We have developed several sub-policies and mandatory statements to fulfil this general policy. The journal owner, publisher, editorial board members, editors, peer reviewers, and other staff must follow:
 - A. the general policy of the *Legestic*
 - B. the Publishing Ethics Policy and Publication Malpractice statement
 - C. other policies of the journalThese policies help us ensure the quality of published articles, the excellent reputation of the journal, and the services provided.
11. To fulfil the journal policy, we have implemented a quality management system based on the international standard ISO 9001: 2018. We have developed a quality manual and management system guidelines covering all processes.

Ing. Jozef Čapla, PhD. and doc. Ing. Peter Zajác, PhD. (Representatives of the Publisher: HACCP Consulting s.r.o.). In Nitra, Slovakia, on 1/January/2025

B. Publishing Ethics Policy and Publication Malpractice statement

Legestic is a peer-reviewed journal. We are committed to ethical standards following the COPE's Best Practice Guidelines https://publicationethics.org/files/u2/Best_Practice.pdf, and COPE's Core practices <https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>. Journal management and all staff must follow these principles.

I. Duties of the Publisher

1. Guardianship of the scholarly record

The journal takes its duties of guardianship over the scholarly record very seriously. Journal owners, editors, reviewers, and other staff should follow the ethical standards presented in the Ethics Policy and maintain the integrity of the scholarly records.

2. Safeguard editorial independence

Editorial decisions should not be influenced by economic interests, advertisements, commercial revenue or lobbying. The journal's Editorial Board works independently, and the journal owner should not affect the Editorial Board decisions.

3. Collaborate to set industry best practices

We are collaborating with other journals and Editors and following the decisions of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) <https://publicationethics.org/>. We are a member of Crossref <https://www.crossref.org/> and regularly vote for this organisation's representatives.

4. Technical, procedural & legal support for Editors

We are providing technical support for our editors. Editors have access to services such as Grammarly or Ithenticate. We provide training for Editors' regarding these services, PKP OJS editorial software, Microsoft 365, or any other IT requirements. Each new editor must undergo training to familiarise himself with the journal's policies and explain the editorial processes.

The journal owner has a lawyer who answers any questions at the Editorial board meetings.

5. Educate researchers on publishing ethics

Education and advice on publishing ethics standards are important for our journal. Once a year, we organise a webinar where ethical standards and current issues are explained to authors and editors.

II. Duties of Editors

1. Publication decisions

The editor is independently responsible for the initial assessment of the article. It decides whether the manuscript is thematically suitable for publication in the journal. The editor follows the journal's policies. The emphasis is on adhering to the journal's processes and criteria set by the Editorial Board. It focuses on whether the article's structure complies with the requirements specified in the article template. It checks compliance with legal

requirements copyright and checks the paper's originality through anti-plagiarism software iThenticate <https://www.ithenticate.com>. The editor can communicate with other editors or reviewers and then decide on the article. The editor is solely and independently responsible for whether the article will be published in the journal. The editor should clearly and transparently communicate the editorial decision to the authors. The Editor actively communicates with the corresponding author and can advise and help him improve the article's overall quality as needed.

2. Peer review

The Editor uses the peer review process for his decisions. We consider the peer-review process an essential element of our scientific journal. Each article published in the journal must be independently reviewed. Two reviewers must check each article. In case of disagreement, the Editor must request a third opinion. The records of the peer review process are communicated with the corresponding author and archived.

The editor should work responsibly, accurately, and quickly so that the peer review process is fair, unbiased, and timely. Two external reviewers should review articles submitted to our journal. If necessary, the editor should nominate the reviewer from the Editorial Board member list.

The editor will select reviewers who have adequate expertise in the relevant field of the research. The reviewer must not be from the author workplace. At least one reviewer must be from a different country. The editor should prevent the selection of fraudulent reviewers.

The editor checks the reviews and identifies possible bias, inappropriate suggestions, or suggestions for reviewers' self-citations in the review. The editor evaluates the reviewer's work in the OJS content management system. The review must be well prepared by the reviewer in the prescribed form (reviewer checklist). Reviewers who do their work superficially must be excluded from further nominations, and in this situation, another review of the article should be performed.

In accordance with COPE recommendations on ethical editing for new Editors, Editors will assign any submissions they cannot handle (e.g. if they are the author of an article submitted to their own journal) to a member of the Editorial Board <https://publicationethics.org/node/19871>.

Transparency in Peer Review Process

Our journal is committed to enhancing the transparency of the peer review process while maintaining its integrity. Since our current peer review process allows reviewers to know the identity of the authors, we aim to introduce additional transparency measures as follows:

1. Publishing Peer Review Reports:

- We offer the option to publish peer review reports alongside the final article. These reports may include the reviewers' comments and the authors' responses, providing readers with additional insights into the evaluation and revision process. This practice enhances transparency and allows readers to understand the rigorous scrutiny the research has undergone.

2. Reviewer Acknowledgement:

- With the reviewers' consent, we may acknowledge their contributions to the peer review process by listing their names in the published article or in a yearly public acknowledgment on the journal's website. This recognizes the critical role reviewers play in upholding the quality of the research.

3. Optional Disclosure of Reviewer Identity:

- Reviewers can choose to disclose their identity to the authors and the public by signing their reviews. This option fosters accountability and can lead to more constructive feedback. However, reviewers who prefer to remain anonymous can continue to do so, and we will respect their choice to maintain confidentiality.

By incorporating these measures, we aim to promote greater openness in our peer review process while respecting the preferences and confidentiality of our reviewers. These practices help ensure the integrity of the review process and contribute to the trustworthiness of our journal's scholarly output.

3. Fair play

The editor must evaluate each submitted article regardless of country of origin, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political views of the authors.

Each potential new member of the editorial board must send a CV, photo and publications activities indexed in the SCOPUS <https://www.scopus.com/> and WOS <https://www.webofscience.com> databases. Subsequently, it is approved by the voting of Editorial Board members by the journal's needs. Emphasis is placed on the international representation and diversity of the editorial board members to represent individual areas of food science.

Editors, Editorial Board members, Authors, and Reviewers should follow the journal policies and understand their expectations.

The editor shall use the journal's standard electronic submission system for all journal communications.

The journal developed a standard procedure for authors' appeals if their article was rejected.

Our journal is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion across all aspects of our publication process. We strive to ensure that our editorial board, reviewers, and authors represent a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise.

Diversity and inclusion are essential for fostering innovation, ensuring balanced perspectives, and enhancing the quality of scientific research.

Editorial Board Membership: We are committed to including members from diverse geographical regions, disciplines, genders, and underrepresented groups to enhance the breadth of perspectives in our editorial decision-making process. To maintain a dynamic and representative editorial board, we regularly review and update its composition, ensuring it reflects the diversity of the global research community.

Reviewer Selection: We are dedicated to selecting reviewers who bring diverse viewpoints and experiences to the peer review process. This helps to ensure fair and balanced evaluations of submitted manuscripts. We actively recruit reviewers from underrepresented groups and provide training to ensure unbiased manuscript evaluations.

Author Engagement: We encourage submissions from authors of all backgrounds, and we are committed to providing an inclusive platform that supports diverse voices in research. Our editorial policies are designed to promote equitable opportunities for publication and to

ensure that all authors are treated with respect and fairness. We offer resources such as language support and fee waivers to reduce barriers to publication for authors from diverse backgrounds

By embedding diversity and inclusion into our journal practices, we aim to contribute to a more equitable and representative scientific community.

4. Journal metrics

The Editor must not influence the journal metrics and the journal's ranking. The editor must not require authors to include specific citations to articles published in the journal. Also, the editor must not need authors to include citations to the editor's articles, works or commercial products. We consider such a practice to be unethical.

5. Confidentiality

The editor and any editorial staff must not disclose any information present in the manuscript to third parties. The editor must only communicate with the correspondent author and, if not available, with other co-authors. Article information can only be provided by a nominated reviewer, assigned reviewer, editorial board member, editorial staff, and journal contractual partners involved in the publishing process.

The editor must not use unpublished manuscripts and materials for their research purposes.

Reviewers' identities may not be disclosed. The authors of the article must not know who reviewed their manuscript. The journal publishes a comprehensive list of reviewers at the end of the year in alphabetical order.

6. Declaration of Competing Interests

The Editor should follow our Conflict of interest / Competing interest policy. The assigned editor must declare a conflict of interest for several reasons, such as the same workplace, participation in a research project, etc. Editors can not cooperate with authors to research submitted and published manuscripts.

The Editor must not judge his work or the work of family members or members of the same workplace. Such manuscript must be subject to the same standard peer-review procedure and managed by an independent Editor.

7. Vigilance over the Published Record

The editor should work with the publisher to ensure the integrity of the published articles. The publisher has the software tool's environment and has implemented a process to ensure journal integrity.

Firstly, each article must be checked by antiplagiarism software immediately after submission. The editor can evaluate only articles which pass this control.

Secondly, any reported or suspected misconduct in research, publication, review, or editorial must be assessed and communicated to authors, reviewers, editors, publishers and, if necessary, to the interested third party.

The relevant complaints or claims are investigated communicated, and measures are taken in the case of scientific misconduct.

Any changes to published articles must be promptly, clearly, and transparently marked. The publication of a correction, retraction, expression of concern, or other correction to the record is made by the journal editorial system.

III. Duties of Reviewers

1. Contribution to Editorial Decisions

Reviewers are an essential part of the publication process in our journal. The opinions of qualified reviewers are very important and help the editor decide.

Any selected reviewer who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should notify the editor and decline to participate in the review process.

Reviewers must do a review honestly and transparently according to the usual scientific rules. The reviewer must use the prescribed review checklist and express formal and professional comments on the manuscript. If necessary, the reviewer should ask the Editor to extend the deadline for submitting the review.

2. Confidentiality

Any manuscripts received for review are confidential documents and cannot be provided to third parties. They must not be shown to or discussed with others except as authorised by the editor. Reviewers must not share the review or information about the manuscript with anyone or contact the authors directly without permission from the editor. Reviewers must protect the confidentiality of all material submitted to the journal. Also, any communication with editors is confidential. Unpublished results, photographs, ideas, or other materials must not be used in the reviewer's research.

Reviewers can communicate the reviewed research with colleagues, but the confidentiality of the authorship must be protected.

3. Alertness to Ethical Issues

The reviewer must check whether the article complies with ethical principles. Each article must have an ethical statement.

Reviewers should identify any discrepancies and literature sources that have not been cited. It also checks their relevance. The literary sources used should be from recent years. It must also assess whether all literature sources are correctly cited.

Any ethical problems must be identified in the review and communicated with the Editor.

4. Standards of Objectivity & Competing Interests

The reviewer must conduct the review objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Comments on the article must be clearly and concisely explained. The assigned reviewer must declare a conflict of interest for several reasons, such as the same workplace, participation in a research project, etc. The reviewer must not ask the author for citations to the reviewer's work. The reviewer cannot evaluate other works of the same author for one year.

IV. Duties of Authors

1. Reporting Standards

The author of the scientific work must present his results in a suitable form (tables, figures, pictures, dataset, text); he must not manipulate the results. The work results are commented on in the discussion of the article. It must not mislead when interpreting the results. The author must formulate scientific hypotheses in the article, which he confirms using appropriate statistical methods. He interprets the results of statistical analysis correctly. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour and are unacceptable. Scientific and professional papers from peer-reviewed journals, books and monographs should be prioritised when writing an article.

In the case of review articles, authors must use enough literary sources to formulate their conclusions objectively and correctly.

2. Data Access and Retention

To promote transparency and ensure the reproducibility of research, our journal requires authors to adhere to robust data-sharing practices. Authors must retain all relevant raw data and research materials for a minimum of ten years after publication. These data should be readily accessible to the journal's editors and reviewers upon request.

Mandatory Data Sharing

Data sharing is mandatory for research involving clinical trials, meta-analyses, systematic reviews, large datasets, or studies reliant on computational models, simulations, or machine learning. Authors conducting experimental research that generates primary datasets—such as raw sequencing data, laboratory measurements, or survey responses—are also required to share their data.

Data Availability Statement

All submissions for which data sharing is mandatory must include a clear "Data Availability Statement" specifying where and how the data supporting the findings can be accessed. This statement should detail any restrictions related to privacy, confidentiality, or legal considerations. Whenever possible, authors are encouraged to deposit their raw data in publicly accessible repositories that comply with recognized standards for data preservation and sharing. The selected repositories should be appropriate for the specific field of study.

Data Access and Retention

In cases of suspected unethical practices or to verify the integrity of the research, the editor or reviewers may request access to the original research data. Authors are obligated to provide these data promptly. If necessary, the original data may also be published alongside the article or linked via URL to a publicly accessible repository in the article's statements section.

Encouragement for Broader Data Sharing

Even for research types not covered by the mandatory requirements, authors are strongly encouraged to share their raw data to facilitate greater collaboration and transparency within the research community.

3. Author's Warranties

Authors of the article agree with the license to publish, which contains this statement: "The author warrants that the manuscript is original, written only by the stated author(s), has not been published before, contains no unlawful statements, does not infringe the rights of others, is subject to copyright that is vested exclusively in the author, and free of any third party rights, and that any necessary written permissions to quote from other sources have been obtained by the author(s). The author warrants that there is no scientific misconduct in the manuscript. The author warrants no conflict of interest between him, co-authors, reviewers, workplace, or any third parties. The author warrants that sources of financing are listed in the acknowledgement of the manuscript if necessary. "

4. Writing the Article

Authors should respect the criteria and requirements set by the journal. Authors must comply with legal and ethical requirements. Authors should use the prescribed article template to eliminate the fundamental mistakes. The article's structure must be under the journal's conditions and the article template. Authors should provide an abstract, an introduction, a scientific hypothesis, material and methodology, results and discussion, conclusions, contact information, funds, and ethical statement in the article. All information must be adequately cited by a numerical reference method. References should be nicely formatted following the APA style. Upon request, authors must also provide source raw data for their review by the editor.

5. Clarity of English

Authors must check the clarity of the English language of the article by a professional service. The authors submit the article into the journal publishing system and confirm English proofreading.

6. Scientific Misconduct

The authors should ensure that there is no scientific misconduct in the article. Integrity in science is one of the foundations of quality. Our journal readers should be assured that the authors of publications transparently, fairly, and honestly present the results of their work, regardless of whether they are the direct authors or using the aid of a specialised entity (natural person or legal).

Scientific misconduct (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_misconduct) violates the standard codes of scholarly conduct and ethical behaviour in professional scientific research. We are not accepting any fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, ghost-writing, or violation of ethical standards regarding human and animal experiments. All forms of scientific misconduct are not allowed with our Journal and will be solved by the Editorial board. Examples of misconduct include (but are not limited to):

- Affiliation misrepresentation
- Breaches in copyright/use of third-party material without appropriate permissions
- Citation manipulation
- Duplicate submission/publication
- "Ethics dumping"
- Image or data manipulation/fabrication

- Peer review manipulation
- Plagiarism
- Text-recycling/self-plagiarism
- Undisclosed competing interests
- Unethical research

7. Originality and Acknowledgement of Sources, Citations

The article submitted for publication must be original. Each article should pass the originality check through iThenticate plagiarism detection software <http://www.ithenticate.com/>.

The literature and data used from other authors should be cited appropriately following the journal requirements (citations by numbers and references formatted by APA style <https://apastyle.apa.org/>).

The author should cite all publications that have been used in the article.

Research and non-research articles must cite relevant, timely, and verified literature (peer-reviewed, where appropriate) to support any claims made in the article. You must avoid excessive and inappropriate self-citation or prearrangements among author groups to inappropriately cite each other's work, as this can be considered a form of misconduct called citation manipulation. Read the COPE guidance on citation manipulation <https://publicationethics.org/citation-manipulation-discussion-document>.

Plagiarism takes many forms, from 'passing off' another's paper as the author's paper, copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of another's paper (without attribution), and claiming results from research conducted by others. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical behaviour and is unacceptable. We do not tolerate plagiarism in our journal; we consider it unethical.

It is recommended for authors to use the Crossref simple text form <https://apps.crossref.org/SimpleTextQuery> to DOI links for all articles in the reference list and use the Crossref DOI Citatoin Formatter <https://citation.crosscite.org/> to correctly format the references.

8. Multiple, Redundant or Concurrent Publication

Authors must not submit the same article to another journal simultaneously. Also, the author should not submit for consideration in another journal a manuscript that has been published previously in another journal. We consider such activities unethical behaviour, and they are not acceptable.

9. Confidentiality

The author must not use confidential information in his work that he has obtained in his work without the author's written consent or the institution.

10. Authorship and contribution of the Paper

The article's authors are only those who made a significant contribution to the research activities and writing of the article, including the conception, design, execution, statistical analysis, or interpretation of the reported study. Authors should be listed on the title page and the contact section of the article too.

The maximum number of co-authors of an article is eight in original research papers and four in review papers. If the article contains more authors than listed in these criteria, it is considered as ghostwriting. Such articles will be automatically rejected by the editor.

All co-authors must internally agree on the article's final version before publication.

The order of the authors cannot be changed after the article submission. We consider the additional addition of authors to the article to be an unethical practice. The addition, deletion, or rearrangement of co-authors order after the manuscript submission is possible only with the Editor agreement. The corresponding author should clearly state the reason for this change, and all co-authors must agree with this decision.

Other persons who indirectly assisted in the research or control of the clarity of the English language should be mentioned in the acknowledgement section.

The authors are solely responsible for the content of the published article.

Each author should provide persistent digital identifier – ORCID iD registered in <https://orcid.org/>.

To ensure transparency and accountability, all submissions must include an Author Contributions Statement that adheres to the CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy). This taxonomy specifies individual roles in the research and publication process, allowing readers to understand the specific contributions of each author.

CRediT Roles Include:

- Conceptualisation: Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims.
- Methodology: Development or design of methodology; creation of models.
- Software: Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components.
- Validation: Verification of the overall replication/reproducibility of results/experiments and other research outputs.
- Formal Analysis: Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyze or synthesize study data.
- Investigation: Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments or data/evidence collection.
- Resources: Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, participants, or other analysis tools.
- Data Curation: Management activities to annotate, scrub data, and maintain research data.
- Writing - Original Draft: Preparation, creation, and presentation of the published work.
- Writing - Review & Editing: Critical review, commentary, or revision of the draft.
- Visualization: Preparation of figures, schematics, or visual representations.
- Supervision: Oversight and leadership in the research project and planning.
- Project Administration: Management and coordination of research activities.
- Funding Acquisition: Acquisition of financial support for the project.

Authors must assign themselves to one or more roles using the above taxonomy and include this information in a designated "Author Contributions" section in the manuscript. The corresponding author is responsible for ensuring accurate representation of each contributor's role(s).

All authors must approve the final statement of contributions before submission.

11. Ethical statement

Research involving humans

Authors must provide an ethical statement if the research activities have been carried out on humans, animals, tissue cultures, organisms, and plants.

Journal requires the submission of the appropriate approval by the organisation's ethics committee. Such research was conducted following the country's legislation, regulations, and guidelines and the permits of the government control authorities in the country.

Detailed information on the authorisation of such a study must be provided in the article in the Ethical statement section.

The author should ensure that the research has been carried out by The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association (Declaration of Helsinki) for experiments involving humans.

WMA INTERNATIONAL CODE OF MEDICAL ETHICS: <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-international-code-of-medical-ethics/>

WMA DECLARATION OF HELSINKI – ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS: <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/>

WMA POLICIES: <https://www.wma.net/policy/current-policies/>

Any personal information or images can be published only with written consent. Identifying information and GDPR requirements are important for us. We require the anonymisation of personal data in the journal following the GDPR legislation of the European Union. All article participant names and other HIPAA identifiers. A statement confirming that informed consent to publish identifying information/images was obtained must be included in the methods section.

Written informed consent must be obtained from the parent or guardian of participants who cannot provide full informed consent. Age of legal adulthood is determined by the country where study participants are based. A statement to confirm informed consent has been obtained must be included within the manuscript.

Suppose the detailed clinical case report on an individual patient is present in the article and the level of details given in the manuscript can potentially identify the patient. In that case, explicit Consent to Publish is required to publish the case. Authors must obtain this from the patient. The CARE guidelines have to be followed <https://www.care-statement.org/>.

Survey studies. Researchers must ensure they have informed all participants of the survey study why the research is being conducted, whether or not anonymity is assured, and how the data they are collecting is being stored. The participant's right to confidentiality should always be considered and they should be fully informed about the aims of the research and if there are any risks associated. Their voluntary consent to participate should be recorded and any legal requirements on data protection should be adhered to.

Research involving animals should comply with the ARRIVE guidelines <https://arriveguidelines.org/arrive-guidelines> and the legislation of the European Union (EU Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2010/63/oj>) or any other legislation valid in the country where the experiments were performed.

Authors conducting research on animals are advised to consult appropriate guidelines on care and handling of laboratory animals <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/guide-for-the-care-and-use-of-laboratory-animals.pdf>

The principles on ethical animal research outlined in the Basel Declaration <https://www.basel-declaration.org/basel-declaration/> and the ethical guidelines by the International Council for Laboratory Animal Science (ICLAS) <https://iclas.org/ethics-and-animal-welfare-committee/> have to be applied.

Research involving tissues

Ethics guidelines described by the World Health Organization (WHO) (1) and the World Medical Association (WMA) (2) have to be followed.

Specifically, all studies involving transplantation of donated human organs should be conducted with ethical approval from an appropriate committee, and all sources of donor tissue must be provided in the submitted manuscript. Authors must include a statement within the manuscript to specify the source of transplanted organs, and must include a statement to confirm informed consent was obtained.

Specifically, all studies involving the human embryos, human stem cells and related materials must include a statement within the manuscript to provide details of the name of the ethics committee(s) which approved the study and include the reference/permit numbers where available, and must include a statement to confirm informed consent was obtained.

- (1) https://journals.lww.com/transplantjournal/fulltext/2010/08150/WHO_Guiding_Principles_on_Human_Cell_Tissue_and.1.aspx
- (2) <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-council-resolution-on-organ-donation-in-china/>

Authors must include the following in the Ethical Statement:

- Source of the tissue.
- Name of the ethics committee that approved the study.
- Reference/permit numbers.
- Confirmation of informed consent from donors.

Research involving organisms

For studies involving pathogenic microorganisms, authors must secure appropriate institutional permissions and comply with occupational health and safety guidelines relevant to their country.

Research involving plants

Research involving plants, whether cultivated or wild, must adhere to national or international regulations. For field studies, authors must secure permissions and licenses as required by local legislation. Details must be included in the manuscript's Ethical Statement section.

Research involving GMO

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are officially defined in the EU legislation as "organisms in which the genetic material (DNA) has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating or natural recombination". The EU Legislation on GMOs have to be followed. https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/genetically-modified-organisms/gmo-legislation_en

Authors must ensure full compliance and provide relevant details in their manuscripts.

Hazards

Research involving biosafety, biosecurity, or emerging biotechnology must consider associated hazards. Authors must adhere to institutional biosafety and biosecurity policies in line with national and international recommendations. For relevant studies, authors are encouraged to consult the WHO guidelines on responsible life sciences research <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-HSE-GAR-BDP-2010.2> and take steps to mitigate any risks associated with their work.

12. Declaration of Competing Interests

Authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflicts of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript.

If the project funded the research, the authors must indicate the grant number and the organisation name. Also, if the study was funded from the organisation's resources or private organisation's resources, this must be stated in the funding statement. It should be noted if the research was not performed with a funding source.

13. Notification of Fundamental Errors

When the authors find a major and significant error or inaccuracy in the article during the publication or the published article, they should promptly notify the journal editor to retract or correct it.

Suppose the editor or publisher learns that the published article contains an error. In that case, he must contact the author as soon as possible, explain the situation, and appropriately correct the error according to the editor's instructions.

14. Image Integrity

The standard corrections of brightness, contrast, colour balance or conversion to grayscale are allowed. Any other manipulation of the images is prohibited, and we consider it an unethical practice.

If necessary, the Editor can ask the authors for original images to be submitted and published with the article.

15. Clinical Trial Transparency

The CONSORT guidelines: <http://www.consort-statement.org/> and <https://www.bmj.com/content/340/bmj.c332> must be applied. All clinical trials must be approved by the ethical committee of the author's institution and registered by the appropriate institution in the country. Also, the relevant legislation of the country has to be fulfilled.

The policy for health and nutrition claims related to the food or commercial products in the research has to be fulfilled.

C. Other policies

1. Journal Accessibility policy

The general journal policy and other policies and guidelines should be available for the public on the journal's website.

Policies are mandatory for the publisher, editorial board, editors, reviewers, authors, readers, and anyone involved in the publishing process.

2. Journal Content Accessibility policy

The journal content should be nonstop available on the internet and permanently archived by the Webdepozit service <https://www.webdepozit.sk/> of the Slovak University Library in Bratislava <https://www.ulib.sk/> and the PKP Preservation Network <https://pkp.sfu.ca/pkp-pn/>.

The official journal website is <https://legestic.org>.

The journal's website and database maintenance is preferably performed offline so that the journal's contents are permanently accessible by users and readers. However, we reserve the right to temporarily suspend the journal's contents for technical reasons and maintenance. The journal performs regular security audits of systems (server set up, website code and database) to prevent the spread of viruses, malware, hacking of the journal's website and leakage of sensitive personal data of registered users.

We employ an IT specialist who provides expert support to our editorial team. We are using the PKP Open Journal System <https://pkp.sfu.ca/ojs/>, which is well established and tested by the developer of this software. This system has implemented the best publication practice and workflow. Crossref XML, DOAJ XML, and we are converting articles to the standard XML JATS format).

3. Article withdrawal, correction, retraction and removal policy

Our journal is committed to maintaining the integrity of the scholarly record through clear and fair policies for article withdrawal, correction, retraction, and removal.

Article Withdrawal

Article withdrawal may be applied during the publication process for several reasons, including:

- Accidental duplicate submission.
- Withdrawal by authors before completion of the submission process.
- Infringements of professional or ethical codes.

When an article is withdrawn, its content (in all published formats) will be removed and replaced with a notice stating that the article has been withdrawn according to this policy, along with a URL link to the policy.

Corrections Policy

Corrections may be issued to address significant errors that do not invalidate the findings of an article but require clarification or updates. We distinguish the following types of corrections:

1. **Publisher Correction (Erratum):** Notification of an important error made by the journal.
2. **Author Correction (Corrigendum):** Notification of an important error made by the author.
3. **Addendum:** Notification of additional information relevant to the published article.

Procedure for Corrections:

- All corrections are issued as formal online notices linked to the original article.
- The correction notice will include:
 - Article title, authors' names, journal title, volume, issue, page numbers, DOI.
 - A clear description of the correction (erratum, corrigendum, addendum).
 - The page number where the correction is made.
 - Strikethrough text indicating invalid text and normal text representing valid text.
- The original article remains unchanged but is marked with a watermark on the PDF file indicating the correction. The HTML version of the original article will be removed.

Timelines for Corrections:

- Initial review of correction requests: **5 business days**.
- Decision communicated to the author: **7 business days**.
- Addendum review and decision: **15 business days**.
- Notice published alongside the article: **5 business days** after approval.
- All updates to indexing services: **10 business days** after the correction notice is published.

Corrections are issued to preserve the scientific integrity of the paper, the reputation of the authors, and the credibility of the journal and its editors.

Retraction Policy

Retractions are issued to address invalid results, ethical violations, or major errors that undermine the validity of the article.

Types of Retractions:

1. **Partial Retraction:** Issued when only a specific section or data within the article is inaccurate or misleading, while the remainder of the article remains valid and unchanged. The notice will clearly indicate which part is retracted and the rationale.
2. **Full Retraction:** Issued when the entire article is deemed invalid due to fraudulent data, ethical breaches, or major errors. The full retraction notice will replace the original article and mark the text as retracted in all journal records.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Authors:**
 - Promptly notify the editor of significant errors requiring retraction.

- Collaborate with the editor to prepare a transparent and detailed retraction notice.
- **Editors:**
 - Evaluate retraction requests thoroughly, consulting reviewers, editorial board members, or external experts if necessary.
 - Ensure the retraction notice is clear, transparent, and linked to the original article.
 - Manage the retraction process fairly, informing all relevant parties.
- **Institutions:**
 - Collaborate with the journal in cases involving misconduct to provide necessary documentation and accountability.

Retraction Process:

1. **Request Submission:**

Authors must provide a detailed explanation of the issue leading to the retraction request, including relevant facts and documentation.
2. **Investigation and Review:**

Editors will investigate the request within **30 days**, consulting relevant experts as needed.
3. **Decision Communication:**

The editor will communicate the final decision to the author within **45 days**. If a retraction is warranted, the editor will provide clear instructions for the next steps.
4. **Retraction Notice Drafting:**

The editor and author will draft a notice including:

 - Article title, authors, journal information (volume, issue, page numbers, DOI).
 - Clear explanation of the retraction (partial or full) and its rationale.
5. **Publication of Retraction Notice:**

The retraction notice will be published and linked to the original article within **10 business days** of the final decision.
6. **Marking the Article:**

The original article will be marked with a retracted watermark, and the HTML version will be removed while preserving metadata (title, authors, DOI).
7. **Communication with Relevant Parties:**

Retractions will be communicated to co-authors, affiliated institutions, and indexing services.

Article Removal

Article removal will only occur in limited circumstances, such as:

- The article infringes on legal rights.
- The article is subject to a court order.
- The article poses a serious health risk if acted upon.

In such cases, the article's text will be replaced with a screen indicating the removal, while metadata (title and authors) will be retained.

Post-Publication Discussions

We encourage ongoing scholarly dialogue through post-publication discussions. Authors, readers, and scholars are welcome to submit comments or critiques of published articles. If deemed appropriate, these contributions may be published as formal commentaries or letters to the editor.

Requirements for Discussions:

- Proper identification of contributors (name, affiliation, disclosures).
- Professional, respectful communication addressing the content of the article.

General Requirements

- **Response Time for Authors:** Authors must respond to editor requests within **10 business days**.

4. Copyright policy

Intellectual property, including copyright and publishing licenses, are clearly described in our journal.

Author rights

Authors who publish with this journal are copyright holders. The title page of each article should contain copyright information: © Year, Authors. The authors agree to the following.

1. Authors retain copyright and grant the journal right of first publication with the work simultaneously licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/> allows others to share the work to acknowledge the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal.

2. Authors can enter into separate, additional contractual arrangements for the non-exclusive distribution of the journal's published version of the work (e.g., post it to an institutional repository or publish it in a book), with an acknowledgement of its initial publication in this journal.

3. Authors are permitted and encouraged to post their work online (e.g., in institutional repositories or on their website) before and during submission. It can lead to productive exchanges and earlier and greater citation of published work.

Institution rights

The author's institution has the right to use articles for teaching the students or internal purposes.

Government rights

The government can use articles if the author is a government employee.

License to publish

License to publish is publicly present on the journal website and should be archived by the authors: <https://legestic.org/documents/license.pdf>

License to publish contains the following information: Journal Title, Journal Owner, Journal Publisher, License, Author's Warranties, User Rights, Rights of Authors, Co-Authorship, Termination, Royalties, Miscellaneous, Scope of the Commercial License.

5. Integrity and Completeness of the scholarly record policy

The integrity of published articles, the scientific journal's website, the database, and any records related to the published articles are very important. Any changes in published articles are clearly and transparently noted on the journal's website. Records of the review process must be available for at least ten years.

6. Custom publications policy

We are not publishing custom publications or commercial publications on the journal website.

7. Digital Archive policy

We have implemented solutions for permanent availability and preservation of published journal content. We are using standard commercial and non-commercial services and maintaining our digital archive.

CLOCKSS

It is an archive that stores the journal content <https://clockss.org/>. CLOCKSS can make this available as open access if the content is no longer available.

WEBDEPOZIT

It is an archive that stores the journal content <https://www.webdepozit.sk/>. The University Library in Bratislava, Slovakia <https://www.ulib.sk/> provides this service for journals. The *Legestic* was selected as the first journal from Slovakia to develop this deposit project. This service is widely available in Slovakia and is used to activate scholarly journals published in Slovakia.

PKP

The PKP PN (Public Knowledge Project Preservation) ensures that *Legestic* is preserved for long-term access <https://pkp.sfu.ca/pkp-pn/>.

Self-archive

We have implanted a time machine archive to archive all website content, including the journal database. We are regularly automatically backup the journal website <https://legestic.org> content and also manually downloading all content and retaining the archive of this content offline in local computer.

8. Editorial independence policy

Editorial independence is very important for us. The Journal owner selected the publisher responsible for the publishing process, the journal's economy, and commercial activities. Publisher and editors work together to ensure the smooth operation of the journal, with editors focusing exclusively on editorial and scientific management, while the publisher handles commercial and operational aspects. They should follow the duties and responsibilities present in this policy. To uphold editorial independence, periodic reviews are conducted by the journal's governance body to ensure adherence to these principles. Concerns about potential breaches of editorial independence can be reported anonymously and will be addressed transparently. The journal discloses all funding sources and clearly distinguishes editorial content from advertisements or sponsored content to maintain

transparency. Our commitment to editorial independence is unwavering, ensuring that the integrity and credibility of our scientific content remain paramount. The scientific editorial board of the journal is an independent body nominated by the journal owner. The Editor-In-Chief is the primary representative of this body with the highest decision-making power in the publication process. The Editorial Board is primarily responsible for the professional and scientific aspects of the journal. The Editor-In-Chief nominates the Editor, who manages the article submission. We are following the principles of editorial independence:

- the editorial decision-making process is separate from the commercial interests of the owner and publisher,
- any decisions regarding the submissions or published articles are managed only by the editorial board of the journal,
- the journal structure is mandatory and must be respected by the owner, publisher, and editorial board,
- no one on the commercial or executive side (owner or publisher) can get involved in, interfere with, or even comment on editorial decisions under any circumstances,
- deviating from the strict application of this principle in any individual situation would ultimately completely undermine the declaration of editorial independence's integrity.

9. Sharing articles policy

Authors and sharing organisations must follow the Sharing articles policy and Hosting content policy.

The authors can publicly share the published content on commercial and non-commercial platforms.

The authors are fully responsible for changes in the shared articles when the publisher makes corrections, retractions, or withdrawals. The integrity of the published content must be maintained. Any manipulation of the article content is prohibited.

Authors can share their accepted manuscripts immediately.

The shared article should have a DOI link present on the title page.

10. Hosting content policy

The published articles can be hosted on institutional websites or intranets. Commercial organisations must not share the entire content of the journal, including the journal's website, visuals, and logos, without written permission.

The integrity of the shared content must be maintained. Any manipulation of the article content is prohibited.

A shared article should have a DOI link on the title or shared content page.

11. Research data policy

Authors can share their raw research data outside the research article with other researchers. These research data can be published as a separated galley in ZIP format. This policy can help other researchers critically review the research data and fasten other research activities.

Research data can include raw data, processed data, software, algorithms, protocols, methods, tools, and materials. We apply these principles for research data:

- research data should be free of charge,

- the use of research data should not be limited,
- research data must not be manipulated,
- other researchers should properly cite research data.

Our policy is to help authors share research data when they would like to publish them with the article.

Community-endorsed public repositories: authors should submit the datasets to the appropriate repositories if necessary and they should provide the accession numbers in the paper.

Custom computer codes, software tools, and mathematical algorithms: To enable full assessment of submissions, you must make available on request to Editors and/or reviewers any custom computer codes, software tools, or algorithms which have been used to generate the results and conclusions that are reported in your manuscript.

12. Metadata sharing policy

We are providing metadata of published articles in several formats: ATOM 1.0, RSS 1.0, RSS 2.0, Crossref XML, DOAJ XML. These metadata are available for the public and can be shared without limitation.

13. Text and data mining policy

Our policy is that Everyone can search and download open access content from our journal. We have implemented a search engine that readers can use. The search field is available in the main menu of the journal home page.

Searching the content of our database is only possible through this search field. Any unauthorised access to our database is prohibited. We have implemented various security measures against compromising the content of our database.

14. Interlibrary loan policy

The library can share the journal content and metadata with the public and share this content with another library without the publisher's written permission. The library should follow this policy, including the Hosting content policy.

15. Author name changes policy

We hold the principle of retroactivity in the journal. Changing the author's name in a published article is not allowed. This policy preserves the integrity of the published content.

The author's name can be changed only during the publication process on a written request stating the reason, which the journal's editorial board will assess.

16. Open access licenses policy

The journal content is OPEN ACCESS and is published within the Creative Commons license CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>:

- You can read, print, and download the article.
- You can share — copy and redistribute the article in any medium or format.
- You can translate the article.
- You can download article for text and data mining purposes.
- You may not use the material for commercial purposes.
- If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you may not distribute the modified material.

Each article has formal copyright information on the head of the title page.

The journal is indexed by DOAJ THE DIRECTORY OF OPEN ACCESS JOURNALS <https://doaj.org/>.

17. Patient informed consent policy

Appropriate informed consent or permissions must be obtained where authors wish to include case details or other personal information or images of patients and other individuals. Patient identifiers will not be published unless written informed consent is given and the content is essential for the scientific purpose and merit of the manuscript. The Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons regarding the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data must be met. Also, applicable laws and regulations concerning the privacy and security of personal information valid in the country where the research was realised must be met.

Authors should follow this journal's Hazards and Human or Animal Subjects policy in the Duties of Author section.

Recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) (1), which emphasizes that patients and study participants have a right to privacy that should not be infringed without informed consent.

Principles outlined in the Nuremberg Code (2), the Belmont Report (3), and the American Anthropological Association (4), informed consent must be voluntarily obtained from the participant who should be fully informed of the study including any of the benefits and risks involved.

- (1) <http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/protection-of-research-participants.html>
- (2) <http://www.cirp.org/library/ethics/nuremberg/>
- (3) <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/read-the-belmont-report/index.html>
- (4) <https://www.americananthro.org/ParticipateAndAdvocate/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=13144>

18. Privacy policy

The names and email addresses entered in this journal site (Author user profile) will be used exclusively for the stated purposes of this journal. They will not be made available for any other purpose or to any other party.

The person concerned in accordance with Act no. 18/2018 Coll. Slovak Republic https://dataprotection.gov.sk/uouu/sites/default/files/2019_10_03_act_18_2018_on_personal_data_protection_and_amending_and_supplementing_certain_acts.pdf on the protection of personal data, as amended, Directive (EU) 2016/680 <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2016/680/oj> of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the competent authorities for the purposes of crime prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution or criminal sanctions and on the free movement of such data and repealing Council Framework Decision 2008/977 / JHA, Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data Directive 95/46 / EC (General Data Protection Regulation), is giving the consent to the provider of <https://legestic.org> HACCP Consulting s.r.o., Slivková 12, 951 Nitrianske Hrnčiarovce, Slovakia, European Union, Company registration ID: 55118771, Company registration VAT number:

SK2121871257, to process personal data for the purpose of providing publication services. This consent is valid for the duration of the services offered and subsequent archiving of the submitted personal information and published articles. Authors are aware that they may withdraw consent to processing personal data at any time in written form. The personal data cannot be deleted from the published articles, metadata and websites, and databases of third indexation services. The stated data are not confidential and may be provided to the Ministry of Education, Sports, Science, and Research of the Slovak Republic under valid legal regulations. The article full texts and metadata can be provided to the third companies (SCOPUS, WOS, EBSCO HOST, FAO, libraries, and other indexation services) under the <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

At the same time, the author acknowledges that the processed data will be archived and disposed of under the valid regulations of the Slovak Republic and with the proper rules of the EC / EU.

19. Plagiarism policy

The article submitted for publication must be original. Each article should pass the originality check through iThenticate plagiarism detection software <http://www.ithenticate.com/>

Our journal does not tolerate any form of plagiarism by authors. Plagiarism is a severe breach of ethics. Incidents of plagiarism in a manuscript or published paper, whether detected or reported, will be dealt with severely under the following Plagiarism Policy procedure:

1. Classification of problems:
 - a) Minor: problems with references, citation issues, pictures authorship, etc.
 - b) Major: problems with the originality of the article identified by antiplagiarism software or reported to the Editor.
2. The editor examines the severity of the situation. Identifies whether the article is still in the publishing process or has already been published.
 - a) The article is in the publication process:
 - minor problems
 - The editor makes the decision and communicates with authors to make corrections.
 - The article should be corrected.
 - The editor checks the corrections.
 - major problems
 - Editor communicates with the Editorial board.
 - The article should be declined.
 - Editor communicates with the authors.
 - b) Published articles:
 - minor problems
 - The editor makes the decision and communicates with authors to make corrections.
 - The article should be corrected.
 - The correction is made in the article and journal website in an erratum.
 - major problems
 - Editor communicates with the authors

- The author should send a "Letter to the Editor" and describe the situation and all questions.
 - Editor communicates with the Editorial board
 - The article should be corrected
 - The article should be retracted from the journal, and a notice containing the reason for the retraction will be given to readers.
 - Editor communicates with indexing services to remove the article from databases.
- c) Penalisation: Authors may not publish in a journal for two years.

Rules to solving the problem with publication ethics and malpractice

1. The editor must decide if the violation is minor or severe.
2. Minor violations can be solved directly with the Editor.
3. The serious violations must be solved by at least three members of the Editorial Board, who give an opinion to the editor. The Editor must make the final decision.
4. A decision must be communicated to the corresponding author by e-mail or mail.
5. In the case of plagiarism, the below is stated. Plagiarism policy must be applied.

20. Advertising policy

1. Advertising materials are constantly reviewed in advance and approved by the editor. Advertising for the following categories is prohibited:
 - a) Alcohol
 - b) Tobacco
 - c) Weapons, firearms, ammunition
 - d) Fireworks
 - e) Gambling and lottery
 - f) Pornography or related themes
 - g) Political and religious advertisements
 - h) Advertisements that claim to have a "miracle" cure or method
 - i) Ads that make unsubstantiated health claims for the products advertised
 - j) Advertisements directed at children
2. Each advertisement is assessed individually to ensure compliance with applicable laws and ethical principles.

Review and Approval Process: All advertising materials undergo a thorough review and approval process by the editor to ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards. Each advertisement is assessed individually to confirm adherence to the relevant regulations.

Editorial Independence Disclaimer: We maintain a clear separation between advertising and editorial content. Advertisements do not influence our editorial decisions or content in any way. Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the journal, its editors, or affiliated organizations.

By upholding these standards, we ensure that our advertising practices align with the legal requirements of the European Union and the Slovak Republic, as well as our commitment to integrity and transparency.

21. Publication fee policy

The journal does not charge any Article Processing Charges (APCs). Articles are published free of charge. On the other hand, we have developed this general publication fee policy if we decide to start publication fee in the future.

This policy ensures transparency and fairness in handling author payments and maintains the integrity of the editorial and peer-review process.

Payment Terms and Procedures

- **Timing of Payment:**

Authors are billed for the publication fee only after the completion of the peer-review process and acceptance of the article for publication.

- **Billing Information Submission:**

Authors must provide complete billing information at the time of article submission. This ensures clarity and prevents delays during the publication process. Articles lacking this information may not proceed to review, as full transparency regarding payment responsibility is required.

- **Required Billing Information:**

- **For Payments by an Organization:**

- Organization name and address
- Organization ID number (if applicable)
- Internal order number (if issued)
- VAT ID (if applicable)
- Bank account number and SWIFT code
- Preferred payment method (e.g., PayPal or Bank Transfer)

- **For Payments by an Individual:**

- Full name and address
- Email address
- Bank account number and SWIFT code
- Preferred payment method (e.g., PayPal or Bank Transfer)

- **Transparency in Responsibility:**

The corresponding author must identify the party responsible for payment at the time of submission. Authors must also ensure they understand the source of funds used for the publication fee.

Ethical Considerations:

Failure to disclose payment information during submission is considered non-compliance with journal policies and may result in the article being excluded from review. Transparency in payment information is essential to maintain ethical publishing practices.

The journal provides significant discounts for authors only on the occasion of conferences. However, even in this case, our editors reserve the right to peer-review and quality control of articles. The qualitative criteria must be met.

22. Conflict of interest / Competing interest policy

Our journals require a conflict of interest statement in each article. If there is a conflict of interest, the authors must declare it. We are following the COPE's requirements: <https://publicationethics.org/competinginterests>.

Conflict of interest is a financial and non-financial interest that could affect the publication's objectivity, integrity, and reputation. This may happen when the author or the author's organisation has a relationship with funders or organisations that may influence the research activities and author work leading to the tendentious decisions in the article, not correct data presentation and their interpretation.

Conflict of Interest Statement

We require an indication of the conflict of interest in the article. Examples of statements are present in our article template: <https://legestic.org/documents/template.docx>

Funding Statement

We require an indication of the source of research funding in the article. The grant number and the organisation name must be provided. If the research was funded from the organisation's resources, the declaration must state this.

23. Personnel policy

Application to Peer-Reviewers

Only a person who is a recognised expert can be an article reviewer. Each reviewer should send the curriculum vitae with the request. The Editor-In-Chief reviews the application and, if the candidate meets the requirements, it is included in the internal database of reviewers. The reviewer must declare a potential conflict of interest if he finds himself involved in an article assigned to him for review.

Application to Editorial Board Members and Editors

Only a person who works at a university, research institution, or recognised expert can be an Editorial Board Member and the Editor. Each applicant should send the curriculum vitae with the request. The Editor-In-Chief reviewed the application and approved it by the Editorial Board Members. The candidate's publishing activity also belongs to the criteria assessed. If the candidate meets the requirements, the personnel certificate is issued, and the person is added to the journal website to the Editorial Board Member or Editor list. This person should declare any interests that might influence their editorial activities. They should exclude themselves from manuscripts if they have a conflict of interest.

Editorial Board Term Limits

To ensure the continuous infusion of fresh perspectives and the maintenance of high standards, our journal has implemented term limits for Editorial Board and Editors members.

Term Limits:

- **Editorial Board Members:** They serve a term of 5 years, renewable for one additional term based on performance and the journal's needs.
- **Editors:** Serve a term of 5 years, renewable for one additional term based on performance, contributions, and mutual agreement.

At the end of their terms, members may be invited to serve in an advisory or emeritus capacity, ensuring continuity while allowing for the introduction of new expertise and ideas into the journal's editorial process.

24. Allegations of misconduct policy

We take allegations of misconduct in pre-publication and post-publication seriously. The allegations of misconduct from whistleblowers should handle following this procedure:

- Initial assessment of the allegation (should be performed by the Editor-In-Chief, the evidence related to the submission or published article is investigated, and the initial determination can be made on how to proceed),
- Communication with authors (should be performed by the Editor-In-Chief, the authors must answer the questions asked; the authors must explain the situation and, if necessary, provide evidence in their defence)
- Panel investigation (should be performed by at least three Editorial board members, and the Editor-In-Chief is acting as a chairman; panel members may not have a conflict of interest in the matter; they will maintain the confidentiality of the process; the solution of the problem or sanctions are prepared by the Editor-In-Chief and agreed by a vote of the members involved; article withdrawal, correction, retraction and removal policy should be applied),
- Sanctions (Appropriate action, which may include disciplinary action, may be taken against
 - a) the authors where the allegation of research misconduct was upheld,
 - b) to anyone whose allegation of research misconduct was found to be malicious,Minor problem: warring notice.
Major problem: publication ban for two years for all co-authors, submission or article withdrawal.
- Communication with authors (the final decision and sanctions must be communicated to authors only by Editor-In-Chief),
- Appeals (Authors cannot appeal against the decision made by the Panel).

25. Whistleblower policy

Purpose: This Whistleblower Policy is designed to encourage and protect individuals who report unethical behavior, misconduct, or violations of the journal's policies. It aims to ensure that all reports are handled confidentially and without fear of retaliation.

Scope: This policy applies to all members of the journal community, including editors, reviewers, authors, and staff.

Policy:

1. Reporting Misconduct:
 - o Individuals who become aware of any unethical behavior, research misconduct, or violations of journal policies are encouraged to report their concerns promptly.
 - o Reports should be made in good faith and can include concerns about plagiarism, falsification of data, ethical breaches, conflicts of interest, or any other form of misconduct.
2. Confidentiality:
 - o All reports will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The identity of the whistleblower will be protected to the fullest extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct a thorough investigation.

3. No Retaliation:
 - The journal strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports misconduct or participates in an investigation. Retaliation includes any form of adverse action taken against the whistleblower in response to their report.
4. Investigation Process:
 - Upon receiving a report, the Editor-in-Chief will conduct a preliminary assessment to determine if a full investigation is warranted.
 - If necessary, a panel of at least three editorial board members, excluding those with conflicts of interest, will be convened to investigate the matter.
 - The investigation will be conducted fairly and promptly, with a focus on maintaining confidentiality and protecting the rights of all parties involved.
5. Outcome:
 - If the investigation confirms misconduct, appropriate actions will be taken, which may include correction or retraction of published articles, disciplinary action, or reporting to relevant authorities.
 - The whistleblower will be informed of the investigation's outcome, provided that doing so does not breach the confidentiality of those involved.
6. False Reports:
 - While the journal encourages reporting of misconduct, it also reserves the right to take action against individuals who knowingly make false or malicious reports.

Contact Information: Reports of misconduct can be submitted confidentially via email to the Editor-in-Chief.

26. Complaints and appeals policy

This policy outlines the procedure for handling complaints against the journal, its staff, editorial board, or publisher. Our aim is to address all complaints and appeals transparently, fairly, and promptly, while safeguarding the integrity and confidentiality of the process.

Anonymous complaints will not be processed. Complainants must provide their full name, email address, institutional affiliation, and any relevant documentation. All complaints and appeals must be substantiated with real evidence. Unsubstantiated elements such as hearsay, rumors, or unproven accusations will not be considered. Complainants are expected to report facts truthfully and accurately. Proven false statements will result in the termination of the complaint or appeal process. Additionally, persistent or querulous behavior that hinders constructive resolution will lead to the dismissal of the complaint.

All information related to complaints or appeals will be treated as confidential, and both parties are expected to maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

The procedure for handling complaints and appeals begins with an initial assessment by the Editor-in-Chief, who will evaluate the validity of the complaint or appeal and gather relevant evidence. If necessary, the Editor-in-Chief may request additional information from the complainant. Following the initial assessment, the Editor-in-Chief will communicate the complaint to the respondent, providing them an opportunity to respond and submit supporting evidence.

If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, it will be referred to a panel investigation. The panel, chaired by the Editor-in-Chief and consisting of at least three members of the Editorial Board, will review all evidence, consult with the involved parties, and deliberate on the matter. Panel members must have no conflicts of interest in the case. After careful review, the panel

will vote on the resolution, and the decision will be communicated to both the complainant and the respondent within 30 days of the complaint's submission.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution, they may request an escalation to an independent advisory body. The complainant must submit a written request detailing the unresolved issues and the reasons for dissatisfaction. The case will then be referred to an external advisory body composed of experts with no affiliation to the journal or the parties involved. The external body will review the case, including all submitted evidence, correspondence, and the decisions made by the internal panel. If necessary, the body may request additional documentation or interviews during the review process. The final decision of the external advisory body will be communicated to both the complainant and the journal within 60 days of escalation. This decision will be considered binding and final.

We are committed to handling complaints and appeals fairly, impartially, and promptly. Decisions and the rationale behind them will be communicated transparently to all involved parties to ensure the integrity of the journal's processes.

27. Nutrition and health claims policy

All nutrition and health claims will be subject to peer review by reviewers.

The European Union rules on nutrition and health claims https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/labelling-and-nutrition/nutrition-and-health-claims/health-claims_en established by Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2006/1924/2014-12-13> have to be fulfilled.

Nutrition claims: is Any claim which states, suggests or implies that a food has particular beneficial nutritional properties.

Health claims: A health claim is any statement about a relationship between food and health. The requirements of the European Commission have to be fulfilled:

Also, the Policy - Guidelines for use of Nutrition and Health Claims of the World Health Organization has to be fulfilled: <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en/node/25361>

The only nutrition claims permitted shall be those relating to energy, protein, carbohydrate, and fat and components thereof, fibre, sodium and vitamins and minerals for which Nutrition Reference Values (NRVs) have been laid down in the Codex Guidelines for Nutrition Labelling.

Health claims should be permitted provided that all of the following conditions are met: Health claims must be based on current relevant scientific substantiation and the level of proof must be sufficient to substantiate the type of claimed effect and the relationship to health as recognised by generally accepted scientific review of the data and the scientific substantiation should be reviewed as new knowledge becomes available. The health claim must consist of two parts:

1) Information on the physiological role of the nutrient or on an accepted diet-health relationship; followed by

2) Information on the composition of the product relevant to the physiological role of the nutrient or the accepted diet-health relationship unless the relationship is based on a whole food or foods whereby the research does not link to specific constituents of the food.

Any health claims present in the research article have to be reviewed and supported by relevant data, otherwise, they should be removed from the article.

28. Harassment policy

We do not tolerate any kind of sexual harassment of our authors, editors, reviewers, staff, or vendors related to the work and publication process.

29. Use of third party materials policy

Authors must obtain the necessary written permission to include material in the article that is owned and held in copyright by a third party. The example of this material is: any proprietary text, illustration, table, or other material, including data, audio, video, film stills, screenshots, musical notation, and any supplemental material.

30. Research involving protected heritage sites policy

Researchers working on protected heritage sites must obtain all necessary permits from relevant authorities for access to sites and/or specimens prior to conducting the work. Authors must include a statement within the manuscript to confirm that all necessary permits were obtained, and must include the name of the authority which provided it. The process of data collection, deposition and handling specimens must be described.

Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains have to be taken into account <https://www.babao.org.uk/assets/Uploads-to-Web/14-Updated-Guidelines-to-the-Standards-for-Recording-Human-Remains-digital.pdf>

31. AI usage policy

Purpose: The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in research and publication is becoming increasingly prevalent. This policy is established to guide the ethical use of AI tools in research, data analysis, manuscript preparation, and the publication process. The aim is to ensure transparency, integrity, and adherence to ethical standards in all aspects of AI utilization.

Scope: This policy applies to all authors, reviewers, editors, and other stakeholders involved in the publication process.

Policy:

1. Transparency in AI Usage:

- Authors must clearly disclose the use of AI tools at any stage of their research, including data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation. This disclosure should include the specific AI tools used, their version, and the role they played in the research process.
- The disclosure should be included in the bottom parts of the article in the statement section, with a statement such as: "AI tools (e.g., [name of the tool]) were used for [specific purpose, such as data analysis, image processing, or text generation]."

2. Adherence to Ethical Guidelines:

- The use of AI must align with all relevant ethical guidelines, including but not limited to the principles of fairness, accountability, transparency, and privacy. Authors should ensure that AI tools do not introduce bias into the research process or its outcomes.
- If AI is used for data analysis, authors must validate the results with conventional methods to ensure accuracy and avoid over-reliance on AI outputs.

3. Avoidance of AI Misuse:

- AI tools should not be used to fabricate or manipulate data, generate misleading results, or create text that misrepresents the author's knowledge or expertise.
 - Authors must not use AI tools to generate text that replaces significant portions of the manuscript, especially in sections requiring critical analysis, interpretation, or original thought. AI may assist in language editing or formatting but should not be the primary author of any part of the manuscript.
- 4. AI in Peer Review:**
- Reviewers are encouraged to disclose if they use AI tools to assist in the review process. However, the primary responsibility for the evaluation of the manuscript lies with the reviewer, not the AI tool.
 - Reviewers must ensure that the use of AI in the review process does not compromise the quality or integrity of their assessment.
- 5. Data Privacy and Security:**
- When using AI tools that involve data processing, authors must ensure that data privacy and security standards are maintained. This includes anonymizing personal data and complying with all relevant data protection regulations.
- 6. AI-Generated Images and Data:**
- Any images, graphs, or data generated using AI must be clearly labeled as such in the manuscript. The methods used to generate these visuals must be described in detail to allow replication and validation by others.
- 7. Review of AI Usage in Submissions:**
- The journal reserves the right to review and verify the AI tools and processes described in submitted manuscripts. Authors may be required to provide additional information or justification for their use of AI.
- 8. Ethical Responsibility:**
- Authors, reviewers, and editors share the ethical responsibility to ensure that AI is used appropriately and ethically in the research and publication process. Any suspected misuse of AI will be investigated according to the journal's misconduct policy.

This policy aims to promote the responsible use of AI in research and publication, ensuring that the integration of AI tools enhances the quality and integrity of scholarly work without compromising ethical standards. The journal will periodically review and update this policy in response to advancements in AI technology and emerging ethical considerations.