

## **Authorship, Gift or Honorary Authorship and Acknowledgement: Ethical Guidelines:**

An “author” is generally considered to be someone who has made *substantive intellectual contributions* to a published study. In addition, *an author must take responsibility for at least one component of the work, should be able to identify who is responsible for each other component, and should ideally be confident in their co-authors’ ability and integrity.*

Authors should meet all 3 conditions below *1) substantial intellectual contribution to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published.*

Intellectual contributions in data collection means not merely collecting data following a standard, recognized protocol, but entails developing the process by which data are collected or validated.

The senior author(s) should offer to each individual who has *intellectual contribution* to a paper the opportunity to participate in authoring, drafting, or critically reviewing the manuscript so as to avoid exclusion from authorship by lack of opportunity.

In multi-authored papers, the significance of the order in which authors are listed varies widely according to common practice in the field or to the policy established by the publisher and the journal and thus cannot reasonably be stipulated in these guidelines. However, in science and allied fields the tradition is for authors to be listed in descending order of their contribution to the paper, with the exception that the senior author is often listed last. Yet, in economics alphabetically listed authors usually imply equal contribution.

Co-authors have the right to withdraw their names from a manuscript at any time before acceptance of the manuscript by the editor. However, an author’s name should not be removed from a manuscript without his or her permission or without approval of the editor in cases involving possible misconduct. Once a manuscript has been accepted for publication, no change in authorship should occur without permission of the editor.

Some journals now request and publish information about the contributions of each person named as having participated in a submitted study, at least for original research.

**“Honorary authorship” is inconsistent with the definition of authorship.** An honorary author is an individual listed as an author who has not made a substantive intellectual contribution to the work. Honorary authorship is a misrepresentation, implying a substantial intellectual contribution that was not made. It also distorts the publication record, making it a less reliable measure of productivity. Honorary authors risk associating themselves with work that may later be the subject of a misconduct investigation and about which they have little knowledge.

**Claiming authorship on manuscripts to which an individual provided no intellectual contribution is dishonest and, therefore, unacceptable.**

Scientists, in particular senior scientists, serve important roles as facilitators of research and development studies by providing administrative support, by attracting and directing financial support, or by virtue of their reputation or position facilitating cooperative relationships with other research institutions. Furthermore occasionally they participate in a research project solely due the acquisition of funding for the research especially those who are a director of a centre or department, or research group and had no

significant role in the planning, conduct, and review of the research; or those who merely supervised the collection of data.

*None of these roles constitutes an intellectual contribution* to the published research worthy of claiming authorship. Although researchers may share materials such as reagents, animals, and tissues, the provision of such materials in and of itself does not constitute sufficient grounds for inclusion as an author.

**“Acknowledgements” provide an opportunity to note assistance that does not warrant authorship but does merit recognition.** Although only a limited number of people will qualify as authors of a manuscript there are many other types of contributions that can or even should be acknowledged in other ways. Acknowledgement of ideas or of comments provided about a draft of a manuscript is an appropriate indication of assistance provided and also may facilitate such interactions in the future. Other types of acknowledgements that may be appropriate are those for the donation of a critical reagent or for technical support.

*The above assortment of ideas on Gift or Honorary Authorship is composed from material obtained from the sites below:*

International Committee of biomedical journal editors:

[http://www.icmje.org/ethical\\_1author.html](http://www.icmje.org/ethical_1author.html)

Imperial College London

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/secretariat/policiesandpublications/otherpolicies/properscientificconduct>

[http://www.icarda.org/PDFs/Research\\_Pages/EthicsPolicy.pdf](http://www.icarda.org/PDFs/Research_Pages/EthicsPolicy.pdf)

Society for Neuroscience:

[http://www.sfn.org/index.aspx?pagename=responsibleConduct\\_authorsOfResearchManuscripts](http://www.sfn.org/index.aspx?pagename=responsibleConduct_authorsOfResearchManuscripts)

[http://www.sfn.org/index.aspx?pagename=guidelinesPolicies\\_PolicyonEthics](http://www.sfn.org/index.aspx?pagename=guidelinesPolicies_PolicyonEthics)