



F.O.R.M.

OPEN SCIENCE RESOURCES

BECOMING AN OPEN PEER REVIEWER

Becoming an open peer reviewer is a fulfilling and impactful way to engage with the research community and help authors refine their work. Reviewing manuscripts or preprints can help you develop your peer review skills, build your public profile, and gain recognition as an open peer reviewer, especially if you're an early-career researcher (ECR).

UNDERSTANDING OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open peer review is considered a transformative approach to the traditional peer review process, characterized by its transparency. Open peer review promotes openness in several aspects:



OPEN IDENTITIES

The identities of authors and reviewers are disclosed, which promotes accountability and encourage constructive feedback from reviewers.

Review reports are made publicly available, allowing the wider community to see the feedback provided by reviewers and how it was addressed.



PREPRINT REVIEW

Reviewing of preprints can occur before formal publication, which enables early feedback and gives authors the opportunity to address major and minor issues with the study before journal submission.

Allows for continued discussion and feedback even after publication, which promotes further comments and refinement.



OPEN REPORTS



POST-PUBLICATION COMMENTARY

HOW TO BECOME A PEER REVIEWER

To become proficient in open peer review, start by engaging with preprint platforms, journals and communities that embrace open peer review practices. Here's how to get started:

Review Preprints

Begin by reviewing preprints on platforms like PREReview where you can provide feedback in a structured format. This will not only help you build your reviewing skills but also contribute to improving the quality of the study before it reaches formal publication.

Follow Guidelines

Familiarize yourself with the specific guidelines of the platform or journal you are reviewing for. Understanding the criteria for evaluation, the expected format of feedback, and the timeline for review will help you provide actionable reviews.

Participate in Training

Take advantage of online workshops, webinars and online or training courses that offer training in peer review. They cover key areas in open peer review from best practices to ethical considerations that can significantly enhance your reviewing capabilities.

Collaborate with Peers

Consider co-reviewing with more experienced reviewers and your colleagues. This can be a great way to learn and improve your reviewing skills.

Join Open Science and Peer Review Communities

Engage with communities like FORM, PREReview, Peer Community In, eLife, and ASAPbio. Joining these communities will provide support, resources, and opportunities to connect with active researchers and reviewers. Being part of such communities can also open doors to collaborative reviewing and learning from more experienced reviewers.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Open peer review addresses several challenges inherent in the traditional peer review process:

Accountability

By revealing reviewer identities and making reports public, open peer review promotes accountability on the part of the reviewers.

Bias Reduction

While open identities can introduce some bias, the transparency of open reports allows the community to scrutinize and mitigate these biases.

Transparency and Access

Open peer review makes the review process visible, building trust in the review process.

Quality

Open reports can lead to more constructive and quality reviews, as reviewers know their feedback will be publicly accessible.

Incentivization

The public nature of open peer review give reviewers the opportunity to gain recognition for their work.

Innovative Review

Open peer review allows more stakeholders to participate in the review process through various innovative approaches.

WRITING A REVIEW: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Writing an effective review involves several key steps:

1

Check Your Biases

2

Understand the Research

3

Identify Major and Minor Issues

4

Provide Clear, Constructive, and Actionable Feedback

5

Write a Coherent Review

6

Review and Finalise

RESOURCES

Learn more about how you can become an Open peer reviewer through these selected Open Access resources:

[PLOS's "How to write a peer review" guide](#)

[Foster, A., Hindle, S., Murphy, K. M., & Saderi, D. \(2021\). Open reviewers bias reflection guide.](#)

[Foster, A., Hindle, S., Murphy, K. M., & Saderi, D. \(2021\). Open Reviewers Review Assessment Rubric.](#)

[Forum for Open Research in MENA. \(2024\). Peer Review 101 Workshop](#)

ABOUT FORM:

The Forum for Open Research in MENA (FORM) is a non-profit membership organisation supporting the advancement of Open Science policies and practices in research communities and institutions across the Arab region.

Learn more by visiting us at www.forumforopen.org.

