PLOS ONE

Invitations to Handle Manuscripts

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MANUSCRIPT INVITATION ANATOMY

Invitations to handle manuscripts are sent to you by email. Please ensure emails from plosone@plos.org or em@editorialmanager.com are not marked as spam.

Below is the template that most invitations follow. It can vary depending on the type of manuscript and any previous history. Please read these invitations carefully before responding.

Subject: PLOS ONE: Invitation to handle manuscript [Ms #]

Body:
Dear [Title] [Last Name],

We would like to invite you to act as the Academic Editor for the following manuscript:

Manuscript Number: [Ms #]
Title: [Title]
Author List: [Names of all authors]

If you would like to view this submission, click this link to access your "New Invitations" folder in Editorial Manager: Log in to New Invitations Folder. Please accept or decline this assignment within 24 hours.

PLOS invites authors to publish the peer review history of their articles. Please note that, if this manuscript is accepted for publication and the authors opt-in to publishing the peer review history, all decision letters - which may include comments from you as the Academic Editor - will be published, along with the authors' responses to reviewer comments

To ACCEPT to handle this paper, please click: Accept Editor Invitation
Please note; if another Academic Editor has agreed to handle the manuscript the link will not appear on your homepage.

To DECLINE to handle this paper, please click: Decline Editor Invitation

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Kind regards,
PLOS ONE
plosone@plos.org

Keywords: [keywords]
Abstract: [abstract]

Invitation subject lines typically start with "PLOS" and contain the manuscript number

Check the author list to see if you have a competing interest. If so, please decline to handle the manuscript.

You can click this link to go to Editorial Manager where you can:

- download the full submission (the keywords and abstract are in the invitation below)

- accept or decline the invitation (This is useful if you have multiple invitations to respond to)

This is a guideline. On behalf of the authors, we ask that you respond as soon you are able.
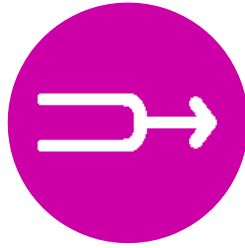
This is information about published peer review history.

You can accept an invitation directly from your email. Clicking this link will navigate you to Editorial Manager, where you can then take action on the paper.

You can decline an invitation directly from your email. Clicking this link will navigate you to Editorial Manager, where you enter a decline reason.

Academic Editors are invited in queues paced automatically by Editorial Manager or triggered when an AE earlier in the queue declines the invitation. It sometimes happens that another editor has already accepted the invitation before you had the chance to respond.

This always the best to contact with questions at any stage of a manuscript. Questions will get routed to the appropriate contact.

PLOS MATCH ALGORITHM

For most *PLOS ONE* submissions, invitations are sent by a natural language processing algorithm, known as **PLOS Match** (Match). Match compares a manuscript's text with editors' publications and keywords to create a similarity score and build a queue of editors to invite.

Match uses the text of your authored papers, classifications, keywords, and over time, published papers you have handled for *PLOS ONE*.

If the algorithm does not match an editor within ten days, PLOS staff will manually send invitations informed by your classifications, keywords, and sections in Editorial Manager. It's important to keep these terms up to date.

Read more about PLOS Match and manuscript invitations and participate in the discussion on *PLOS ONE* Discourse, a private forum for Editorial Board members.
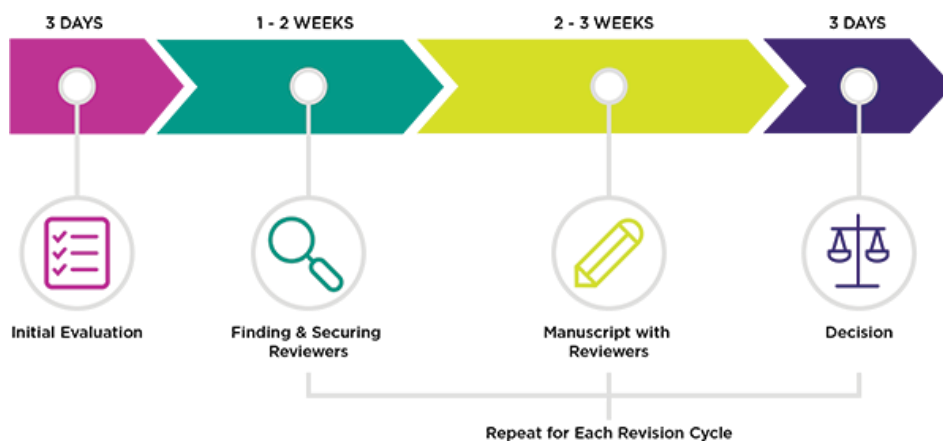
You may also occasionally receive personal invitations directly from PLOS staff to handle manuscripts requiring special attention. In these cases, the message will include clear and detailed information describing the circumstances and any specific handling requests.

RESPONDING TO MANUSCRIPT INVITATIONS

Generally, we ask that you accept 1-2 new manuscript invitations per month, however you always have the choice whether to accept or decline invitations.

Below is a typical peer review timeline and guidance to help you decide whether to accept or decline an invitation.

✔ Consider accepting an invitation when...	✘ Consider declining an invitation when...
✔ You have time to handle the submissionall the way through to a final decision	✘ You are too busy, either with external commitments or with other *PLOS ONE* assignments
✔ It's in your area of expertise*	✘ It's outside your area of expertise*
✔ You have no competing interests	✘ You have a real or perceived competing interest
✔ It's not suitable for peer review**	

* Due to the interdisciplinarity of *PLOS ONE* and algorithmic nature of most invitations, it's likely that you'll receive invitations that are outside your core area of expertise. If you feel confident enough that you can identify suitable reviewers and put their comments in context for the authors, we suggest accepting the invitation and prioritizing comprehensive expertise in the reviewer panel. On the other hand, if you do not feel able to identify reviewers with the necessary expertise or are concerned about your ability to interpret their comments, please decline the invitation.

** If you feel a manuscript is in your area of expertise and you have the time, but is not suitable to send out for peer review, we ask that you accept the invitation and issue a reject decision citing the appropriate publication criteria. This helps the authors receive swift feedback and decide on the next steps for their manuscript.

Frequently Asked Questions & Comments

How many invitations am I expected to agree to handle?

You are not expected to accept all invitations that are sent to you. We expect editors to strive to agree to handle an average of **1-2** new manuscript assignments per month and a minimum of **6** per year.

Volume of invitations varies due to submission volume, composition and availability of editors in your subject area, and term-based matching to submissions. If you do accept an invitation, please handle the manuscript through to a final decision.

I am receiving too many, too few, and/or outside-my-expertise invitations.

Most invitations are sent through term-based matching so may not always be perfectly in your area of expertise.

Please let us know if you are having a poor experience with invitations: you may be receiving too many, too few, or those frequently far outside of your expertise. Contact us at edboardsupport@plos.org

The invitations say, "Please accept or decline this assignment within 24 hours." This is a fast turnaround.

This is a guideline; we understand you have competing demands on your time. On behalf of the authors, we do ask that you respond to invitations (accept/decline to handle a manuscript) as soon as possible.

I agreed to handle a manuscript but it says it is no longer available.

Academic Editors are invited in queues paced automatically by Editorial Manager or triggered when an AE earlier in the queue declines the invitation. It sometimes happens that another editor has already accepted the invitation before you have had the chance to respond.

Proceed to Initial Evaluation

More Resources for Editors

Need help? Contact plosone@plos.org