



ONCOLOGY INSIGHTS (ISSN 3009- 3848, ISSNe 3009-383X)

JOURNAL POLICY

The policy of the Oncology Insights journal is approved and adopted by the Executive Committee of the Serbian Association for Cancer Research. Any change or addition to the journal's official policy also needs to be approved and adopted by the Executive Committee of the Serbian Association for Cancer Research. All editors and members of the Editorial council are required to agree to a document that represents the active and official policy of the journal.

General information

The journal **Oncology Insights (ISSN 3009- 3848, ISSNe 3009-383X)** is the official journal of the Serbian Association for Cancer Research.

Oncology Insights is a yearly oncological open-access peer-reviewed journal that publishes new research from different areas of oncology. It strives to provide a platform for the exchange of cutting-edge research and knowledge in the field of oncology. This journal aims to advance understanding, prevention, diagnosis and treatment through the dissemination of high-quality scientific discoveries.

Oncology Insights covers a wide spectrum of topics within the field of oncology, including but not limited to:

- Basic and Translational Research
- Clinical Oncology
- Radiation Oncology
- Surgical Oncology
- Pediatric Oncology
- Hematologic Oncology
- Palliative Care
- Epidemiology and Public Health
- Cancer Genetics
- Immunotherapy and Targeted Therapies
- Experimental Therapeutics
- Computational Biology and Artificial Intelligence

Oncology Insights welcomes various types of contributions including original research articles, review articles, case reports, case studies, clinical trials, registered reports, comments, brief communications, editorials, and letters to the editor, perspectives, and conference papers from a wide range of disciplines related to cancer research.

Contributions to the journal shall be submitted in English with summaries in English.

The Journal is issued once a year.

Oncology Insights is a Diamond Open Access (Diamond OA) Journal providing free access to readers and charging no article processing fees to authors (no APCs).

Editorial Office

The Editorial Office consists of the Editorial Board and the Editorial Council.

All editors are members of the Editorial Board.

The Executive Committee of the Serbian Association for Cancer Research is responsible for proposing and appointing the **Editor-in-Chief**. The Editor-in-Chief then proposes the appointment of **Associate Editor(s)**, **Managing Editor(s)**, and **Technical Editor(s)**, which is subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. The other **editors** are chosen and appointed by the Editor-in-Chief.

The term of the Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor(s), Managing Editor(s), and Technical Editor(s) is four years, with the possibility of extension, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. The mandates of other editors are renewed before the preparation of the new issue of the journal and have no fixed duration.

The Editor-in-Chief is authorized to appoint members of the **Editorial Council** upon official application. In case of a conflict of interest or any doubt, the decision is subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

The Editorial Council members' term is four years, with the possibility of extension.

All editors can be members of the Editorial Council at the same time.

Editorial Policies

EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for deciding which articles submitted to **Oncology Insights** will be published. The Editor-in-Chief is guided by the Editorial Policy and constrained by legal requirements in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism.

The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to decide not to publish submitted manuscripts in case it is found that they do not meet relevant standards concerning the content and formal aspects. The Editorial Office will inform the authors whether the manuscript is accepted for publication within two weeks from the date of the manuscript submission.

Editor-in-Chief and all other editors must hold no conflict of interest with regard to the articles they consider for publication. If an Editor feels that there is likely to be a perception of a conflict of interest in relation to their handling of a submission, the selection of reviewers and all decisions on the manuscript shall be made by the Associate Editors.

Editors shall evaluate manuscripts for their scientific content free from any racial, gender, sexual, religious, ethnic, or political bias.

Editors and Editorial Office must not use unpublished materials disclosed in submitted manuscripts without the express written consent of the authors. The information and ideas presented in submitted manuscripts shall be kept confidential and must not be used for personal gain.

Editors and the Editorial Office shall take all reasonable measures to ensure that the reviewers remain anonymous to the authors before, during and after the evaluation process.

AUTHORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Authors warrant that their manuscript is their original work, that it has not been published before and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Parallel submission of the same manuscript to another journal constitutes misconduct and eliminates the manuscript from consideration by **Oncology Insights**. Please note that posting of preprints on preprint servers or repositories is not considered prior publication. Authors should disclose details of preprint posting upon submission of the manuscript. This must include a link to the location of the preprint. Should the submission be published, the authors are expected to update the information associated with the preprint version on the preprint server/repository to show that a final version has been published in the journal, including the DOI linking directly to the publication.

In case a submitted manuscript is a result of a research project, or its previous version has been presented at a conference (under the same or similar title), detailed information about the project, the conference, etc. shall be provided in a footnote / Acknowledgements.

It is the responsibility of each author to ensure that manuscripts submitted to **Oncology Insights** are written with ethical standards in mind. Authors affirm that the manuscript contains no unfounded or unlawful statements and does not violate the rights of third parties. The Publisher will not be held legally responsible should there be any claims for compensation.

Reporting standards

Oncology Insights is committed to serving the research community by ensuring that all articles include enough information to allow others to reproduce the work. A submitted manuscript should contain sufficient detail and references to permit reviewers and, subsequently, readers to verify the claims presented in it - e.g. provide complete details of the methods used, including time frames, etc.

Authors are exclusively responsible for the contents of their submissions and must make sure that they have permission from all parties involved to make the content public. Authors are also exclusively responsible for the contents of their data/supplementary files. Authors affirm that data protection regulations, ethical standards, third party copyright and other rights have been respected in the process of collecting, processing and sharing data.

Authors wishing to include figures, tables or other materials that have already been published elsewhere are required to obtain permission from the copyright holder(s). This information must be stated in corresponding parts of the manuscript. Any material received without such evidence will be assumed to originate from the authors.

Authorship

Authors must make sure that only contributors who have significantly contributed to the submission are listed as authors and, conversely, that all contributors who have significantly contributed to the submission are listed as authors. If people other than authors were involved in important aspects of the research project and the preparation of the manuscript, their contribution should be acknowledged in a footnote or the Acknowledgements section.

As a guide, authors should refer to the criteria for authorship that have been developed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). In order to be named on the author list one must have:

- made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- contributed to the drafting of the work, or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- provided final approval of the version to be published; AND
- agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved; AND
- agreed to be named on the author list and approved of the full author list.

The addition or removal of authors during the editorial process will only be permitted if a justifiable explanation is provided to the editorial team and publisher. Attempts to introduce 'ghost', 'gift' or 'honorary' authorship will be treated as cases of misconduct.

Acknowledgment of sources

Authors are required to properly cite sources that have significantly influenced their research and their manuscript. Information received in a private conversation or correspondence with third parties, in reviewing project applications, manuscripts and similar materials must not be used without the express written consent of the information source.

When citing or making claims based on data, authors should provide the reference to data in the same way as they cite publications.

The use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies

Oncology Insights recognizes the potential of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies ("AI Tools") to support authors when used responsibly and with appropriate human oversight. These tools may help authors:

- Review and synthesize complex literature
- Gain educational or clinical insights
- Identify research gaps
- Organize content
- Improve language, clarity, and readability

However, AI Tools must not replace human expertise, critical thinking, or author responsibility.

Author Responsibility

Authors remain fully responsible for:

- The originality, accuracy, and integrity of their manuscript
- Ensuring AI outputs are factually correct and free from bias

- Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of data, manuscripts, and personal information
- Complying with intellectual property and copyright requirements
- Verifying that AI Tool terms do not grant rights to use materials for training or other purposes
- Ensuring AI use does not restrict future publication or dissemination

Manuscripts must reflect the authors' own insights and analysis.

Basic grammar, spelling, and punctuation checks do not require disclosure.

Mandatory AI Disclosure Statement

If AI Tools are used in manuscript preparation, authors must include a declaration at submission.

This statement must:

- Appear at the end of the manuscript, immediately above the references
- Be titled: "Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process"
- Specify:
 - o The name of the AI Tool
 - o The purpose of its use
 - o The extent of human oversight

This declaration will appear in the published article.

AI Use in the Research Process

If AI Tools are used as part of the research methods, this must be:

- Fully described in the Methods section
- Reported in a reproducible manner
- Include:
 - o Name of the AI Tool/model
 - o Version and extension numbers
 - o Manufacturer
 - o Detailed explanation of how the tool was used

Restrictions on AI Use for Images and Figures

Oncology Insights does not permit the use of generative AI or AI-assisted tools to create or alter images in submitted manuscripts.

This includes:

- Adding, removing, moving, obscuring, or enhancing image features
- Generating synthetic images
- Altering figures beyond acceptable adjustments

Permitted adjustments:

- Brightness
- Contrast
- Color balance

(only if no original information is obscured or removed)

Exception

If AI-assisted imaging is part of the research design (e.g., biomedical imaging analysis), this is allowed only if:

- Fully described in the Methods section
- Reproducible
- Includes tool/model details as described above

Authors may be asked to provide original, pre-AI image files for editorial review.

Ethical and Legal Compliance

Authors must:

- Avoid generating content that infringes copyrights
- Avoid duplicating real people, brands, or voices
- Follow the AI software's usage policies
- Provide proper content attribution where required

Editorial Commitment

Oncology Insights supports the ethical and thoughtful integration of AI technologies to improve the publishing process, with strong human oversight to ensure quality, integrity, and trust.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, where someone assumes another's ideas, words, or other creative expression as one's own, is a clear violation of scientific ethics. Plagiarism may also involve a violation of copyright law, punishable by legal action.

Plagiarism includes the following:

- Word for word, or almost word for word copying, or purposely paraphrasing portions of another author's work without clearly indicating the source or marking the copied fragment (for example, using quotation marks);
- Copying equations, figures or tables from someone else's paper without properly citing the source and/or without permission from the original author or the copyright holder.

Please note that all submissions will be thoroughly checked for plagiarism. Any manuscript that shows obvious signs of plagiarism will be automatically rejected.

In case plagiarism is discovered in a paper that has already been published by the journal, it will be retracted in accordance with the procedure described below under Retraction policy.

Conflict of interest

Authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might have influenced the presented results or their interpretation. If there is no conflict of interest to declare, the following standard statement should be added: 'No competing interests were disclosed'.

A competing interest may be of non-financial or financial nature. Examples of competing interests include (but are not limited to):

- individuals receiving funding, salary or other forms of payment from an organization, or holding stocks or shares from a company, that might benefit (or lose) financially from the publication of the findings;

- individuals or their funding organization or employer holding (or applying for) related patents;
- official affiliations and memberships with interest groups relating to the content of the publication;
- political, religious, or ideological competing interests.

Authors from pharmaceutical companies, or other commercial organizations that sponsor clinical or field trials or other research studies, should declare these as competing interests on submission. The relationship of each author to such an organization should be explained in the 'Competing interests' section. Publications in the journal must not contain content advertising any commercial products.

Fundamental errors in published works

When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in their own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal Editorial Office or Publisher and cooperate with the Editorial Board to retract or correct the paper.

By submitting a manuscript, the authors agree to abide by the **Oncology Insights** Editorial Policies.

Funding information

If a paper is a result of the funded project, authors are required to specify funding sources according to their contracts with the funder before the manuscript has been published. All corrections submitted after the manuscript has been published can be included in the next journal issue as a corrigendum.

REVIEWERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Reviewers are required to provide written, competent and unbiased feedback in a timely manner on the scholarly merits and the scientific value of the manuscript.

The reviewers assess manuscripts' compliance with the profile of the journal, the relevance of the investigated topic and applied methods, the originality and scientific relevance of information presented in the manuscript, the presentation style and scholarly apparatus.

Reviewers should alert the Editor-in-Chief to any well-founded suspicions or the knowledge of possible violations of ethical standards by the authors. Reviewers should recognize relevant published works that have not been cited by the authors and alert the Editor-in-Chief to substantial similarities between a reviewed manuscript and any manuscript published or under consideration for publication elsewhere, in the event they are aware of such. Reviewers should also alert the Editor-in-Chief to a parallel submission of the same manuscript to another journal, in the event they are aware of such.

Reviewers must not have conflict of interest with respect to the research, the authors and/or the funding sources for the research. If such conflicts exist, the reviewers must report them to the Editor without delay.

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-in-Chief without delay.

Reviews must be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Reviewers should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

Any manuscript received for review must be treated as confidential documents. Reviewers must not use unpublished materials disclosed in submitted manuscripts without the express written consent of the authors. The information and ideas presented in submitted manuscripts shall be kept confidential and must not be used for personal gain.

Peer Review

The submitted manuscripts are subject to a peer review process. The purpose of peer review is to assist the Editor-in-Chief and other editors in making editorial decisions and through the editorial communication with the author it may also assist the author in improving the manuscript.

The type of peer review process is double blind with at least two independent reviewers.

The choice of reviewers is at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor or Editor expert in given field. The reviewers must be knowledgeable about the subject area of the manuscript.

In the main review phase, the Editor sends submitted manuscripts to reviewers' experts in the field. The reviewers' evaluation form contains a checklist in order to help reviewers cover all aspects that can decide the fate of a submission. In the final section of the evaluation form, the reviewers must include observations and suggestions aimed at improving the submitted manuscript; these are sent to authors, without the names of the reviewers. All of the reviewers of a manuscript remain anonymous to the authors before, during and after the evaluation process.

Reviewers of a manuscript act independently and they are not aware of each other's identities. If the decisions of the two reviewers are not the same (accept/reject), the Editor-in-Chief may assign additional reviewers.

During the review process, the Editor-in-Chief may require authors to provide additional information (including raw data) if they are necessary for the evaluation of the scholarly merit of the manuscript. These materials shall be kept confidential and must not be used for personal gain.

The Editorial Office shall ensure reasonable quality control for the reviews. With respect to reviewers whose reviews are convincingly questioned by authors, special attention will be paid to ensure that the reviews are objective and high in academic standard. When there is any doubt with regard to the objectivity of the reviews or quality of the review, additional reviewers will be assigned.

Members of the Editorial Board are permitted to submit their own papers to the journal. In cases where an author is associated with the journal, they will be removed from all editorial tasks for that paper, and another member of the Editorial Board will be assigned responsibility for overseeing peer review.

POST-PUBLICATION DISCUSSIONS

Oncology Insights encourages post-publication debate either through letters to the editor, or on an external moderated site.

Procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals

Anyone may inform the editors and/or Editorial Office at any time of suspected unethical behavior or any type of misconduct by giving the necessary information/evidence to start an investigation.

INVESTIGATION

- Editor-in-Chief will consult with the Editorial Board on decisions regarding the initiation of an investigation.
- During an investigation, any evidence should be treated as strictly confidential and only made available to those strictly involved in investigating.
- The accused will always be given the chance to respond to any charges made against them.
- If it is judged at the end of the investigation that misconduct has occurred, then it will be classified as either minor or serious.

MINOR MISCONDUCT

Minor misconduct will be dealt with directly with those involved without involving any other parties, e.g.:

- Communicating to authors/reviewers whenever a minor issue involving misunderstanding or misapplication of academic standards has occurred.
- A warning letter to an author or reviewer regarding fairly minor misconduct.

MAJOR MISCONDUCT

The Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with the Editorial Board, and, when appropriate, further consultation with a small group of experts should make any decision regarding the course of action to be taken using the evidence available. The possible outcomes are as follows (these can be used separately or jointly):

- Publication of a formal announcement or editorial describing the misconduct.
- Informing the author's (or reviewer's) head of department or employer of any misconduct by means of a formal letter.
- The formal, announced retraction of publications from the journal in accordance with the Retraction Policy (see below).
- A ban on submissions from an individual for a defined period.
- Referring to a case to a professional organization or legal authority for further investigation and action.

When dealing with complaints and appeals, the Editorial Office will rely on the guidelines and recommendations provided by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE): <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Flowcharts>.

RETRACTION POLICY

The infringement of the legal limitations of the publisher, copyright holder or author(s), the violation of professional ethical codes and research misconduct, such as multiple submissions, duplicate or overlapping publication, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, fraudulent use of data and data fabrication, honest errors reported by the authors (for example, errors due to the mixing up of samples or use of a scientific tool or equipment that is found subsequently to be faulty), unethical research or any major misconduct require retraction of an article. Occasionally a retraction can be used to correct errors in submission or publication.

For any retracted article, the reason for retraction and who is instigating the retraction will be clearly stated in the *Retraction notice*. Standards for dealing with retractions have been developed by a number of library and scholarly bodies, and this practice has been adopted for article retraction by **Oncology Insights** in the electronic version of the retraction note, a link is made to the original article. In the electronic version of the original article, a link is made to the retraction note where it is clearly stated that the article has been retracted. The original article is retained unchanged; save for a watermark on the PDF indicating on each page that it is "retracted."

Research data policy

Oncology Insights encourages authors to share research data that are required for confirming the results published in the manuscript and enhance the published manuscript under the principle ‘as open as possible, as closed as necessary’. We accept supporting software applications, high-resolution images, background datasets, sound or video clips, large appendices, data tables and other relevant items that cannot be included in the article.

Authors may submit data together with the manuscript through our journal management system. In this case, the data will be made available to reviewers and published once the manuscript is accepted for publication online.

ETHICAL AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

If data access is restricted for ethical or security reasons, the manuscript must include:

- a description of the restrictions on the data;
- what, if anything, the relevant Institutional Review Board (IRB) or equivalent said about data sharing; and
- all necessary information required for a reader or reviewer to apply for access to the data and the conditions under which access will be granted.

Data protection issues

Where human data cannot be effectively de-identified, data must not be shared in order to protect participant privacy unless the individuals have given explicit written consent that their identifiable data can be made publicly available.

In instances where the data cannot be made available, the manuscript must include:

- an explanation of the data protection concern;
- any intermediary data that can be de-identified without compromising anonymity;
- what, if anything, the relevant Institutional Review Board (IRB) or equivalent said about data sharing; and
- where applicable, all necessary information required for a reader or peer reviewer to apply for access to the data and the conditions under which access will be granted.

In addition, data should be linked to from a Data Accessibility Statement within the submitted paper, which will be made public upon publication. If data is not being made available within the journal publication, a statement from the author should be provided to explain why. When depositing data for a submission, the following should be considered:

- The repository the data is deposited in must be suitable for this subject and have a sustainability model.
- The data must be deposited under an open license that permits unrestricted access (e.g., CC0, CC-BY). More restrictive licenses should only be used if a valid reason (e.g., legal) is present.
- The deposited data must include a version that is in an open, non-proprietary format.
- The deposited data must have been labeled in such a way that a 3rd party can make sense of it (e.g., sensible column headers, descriptions in a readme text file).
- Research involving human subjects, human material, or human data, must have been performed in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. Where applicable, the studies must be approved by an appropriate

Ethics Committee. The identity of the research subject should be anonymized whenever possible. For research involving human subjects, informed consent to participate in the study must be obtained from participants (or their legal guardian).

- A 'Data Accessibility Statement' should be added to the submission, prior to the reference list, providing details of the data accessibility, including the DOI linking to it. If the data is restricted in any way, the reasoning should be given.

Open Access policy

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The journal does not charge any fees at submission, reviewing, or production stages (**no APC**).

SELF-ARCHIVING POLICY

Authors can deposit author's preprint, author's postprint (accepted version) and publisher's version (PDF) of their work in an institutional repository, subject-based and general-purpose repository, author's personal website (including social networking sites, such as ResearchGate, Academia.edu, etc.), and/or departmental website prior or during the submission process, at any time after the acceptance of the manuscript and at any time after publication.

Full bibliographic information (authors, article title, journal title, volume, issue, pages) about the original publication must be provided and links must be made to the article's DOI and the license.

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

METADATA POLICY

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