

# Essential areas for better peer review

Equipping research journals for change—  
'integrity first, then impact'

World Conference on Research Integrity  
*Hong Kong, 5 June 2019*

Michael Willis  
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WILEY

# Who we are

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# Introducing our panel guests

Editor': Dr Zijian Zheng

*Institute of Textiles and  
Clothing at the Hong Kong  
Polytechnic University*



Reviewer': Professor Graeme Smith

*Professor of Nursing, University of  
Hong Kong*



'Author': Dr Shayuti Adnan

*School of Business and Maritime  
Management, University  
Malaysia Terengganu*



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## Today's agenda

- introduction to our panelists
- introduction to our 'better peer review' work at Wiley
- unwrapping integrity and ethics
- unwrapping fairness and usefulness
- concluding remarks and takeaways



# Who is attending our session?

- Publisher
- Funder
- Academic/researcher
- Research Integrity Office
- Communications
- Other

What does 'good' peer review look like?



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## Whatever answer we give...

It must be appropriate for **all peer review models**

It must be appropriate for **all subject areas**

It must be appropriate for **all geographical regions**

It must be appropriate for **all business models**

It must be appropriate for **all sizes and 'impactfulness' of journals**

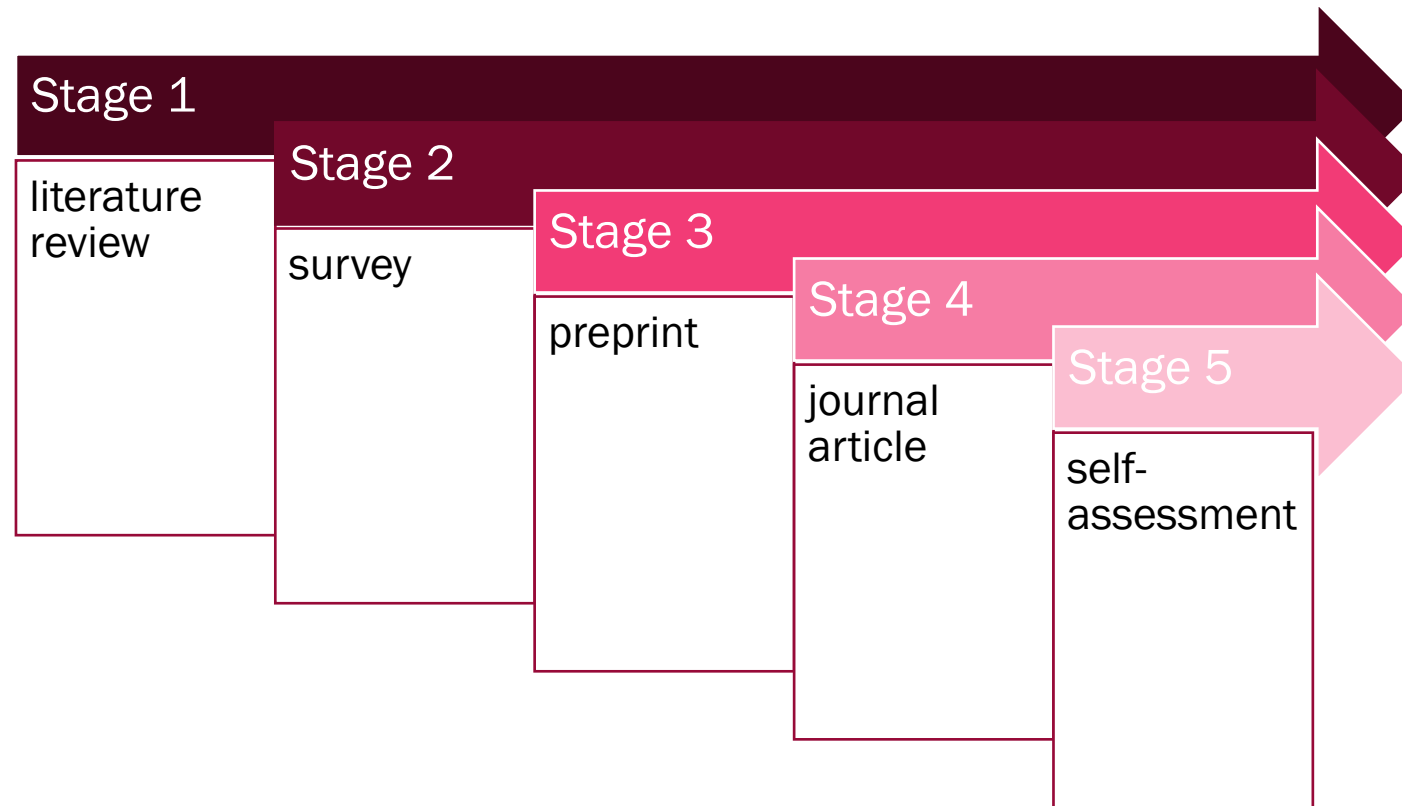
It must be appropriate for **all who interact with the content**

# The story so far

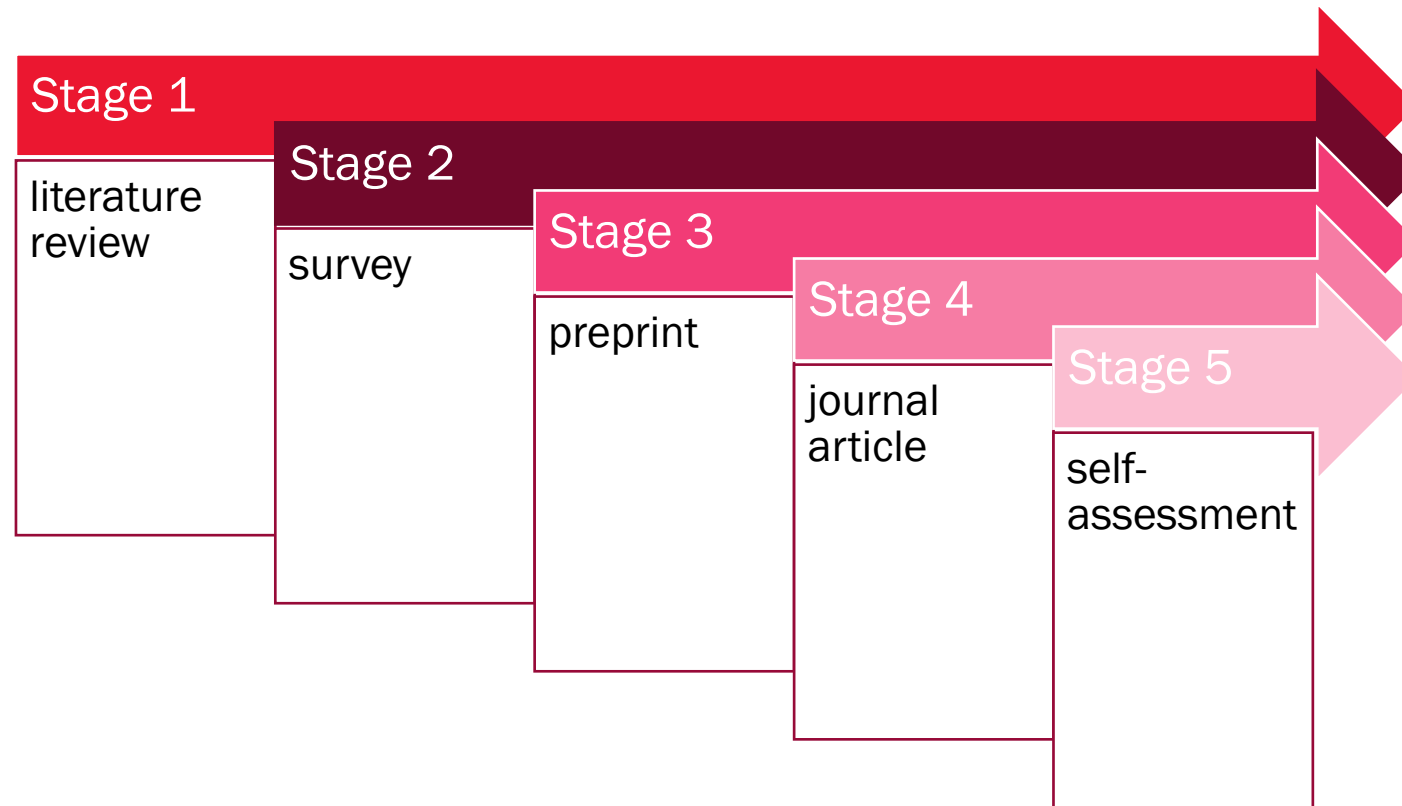




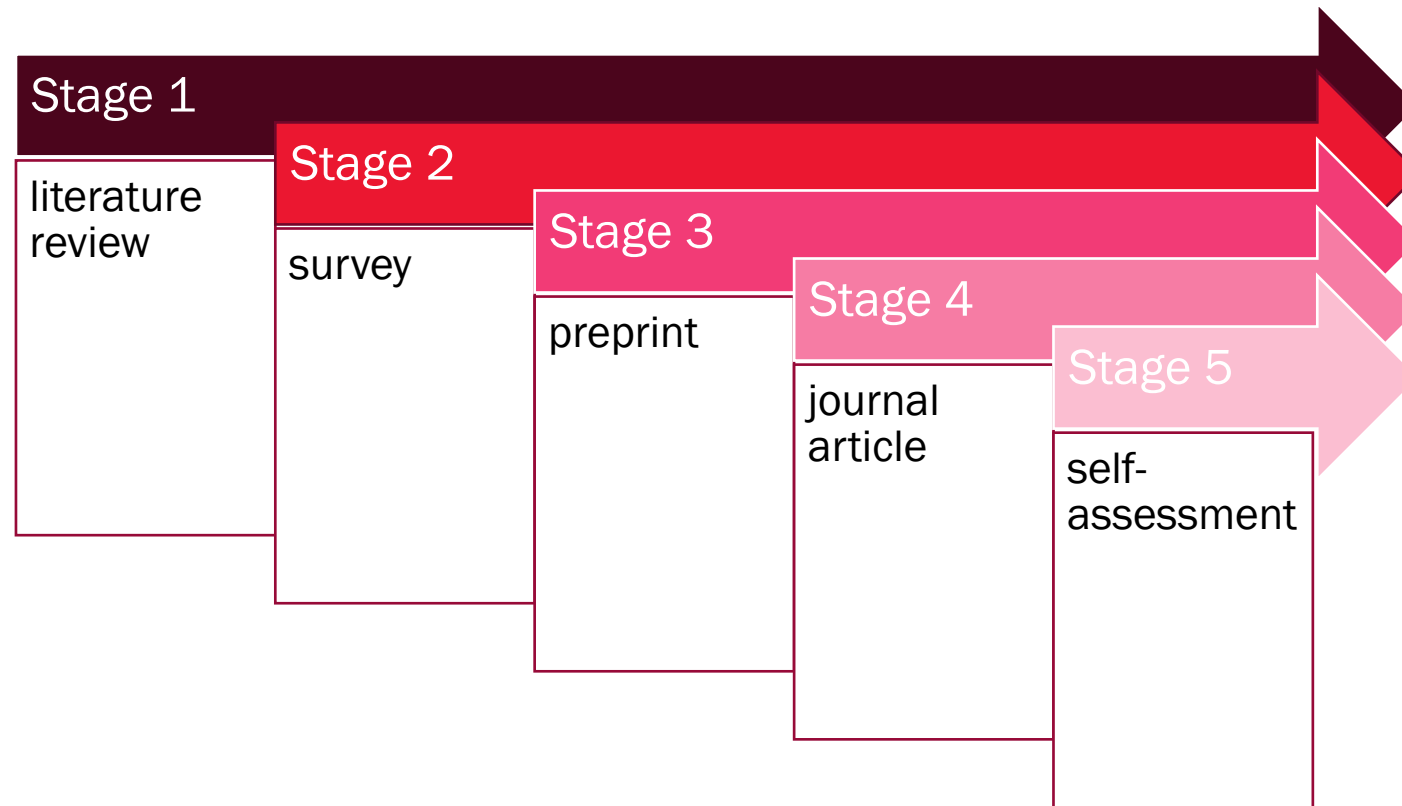
# Our methodology



# Our methodology

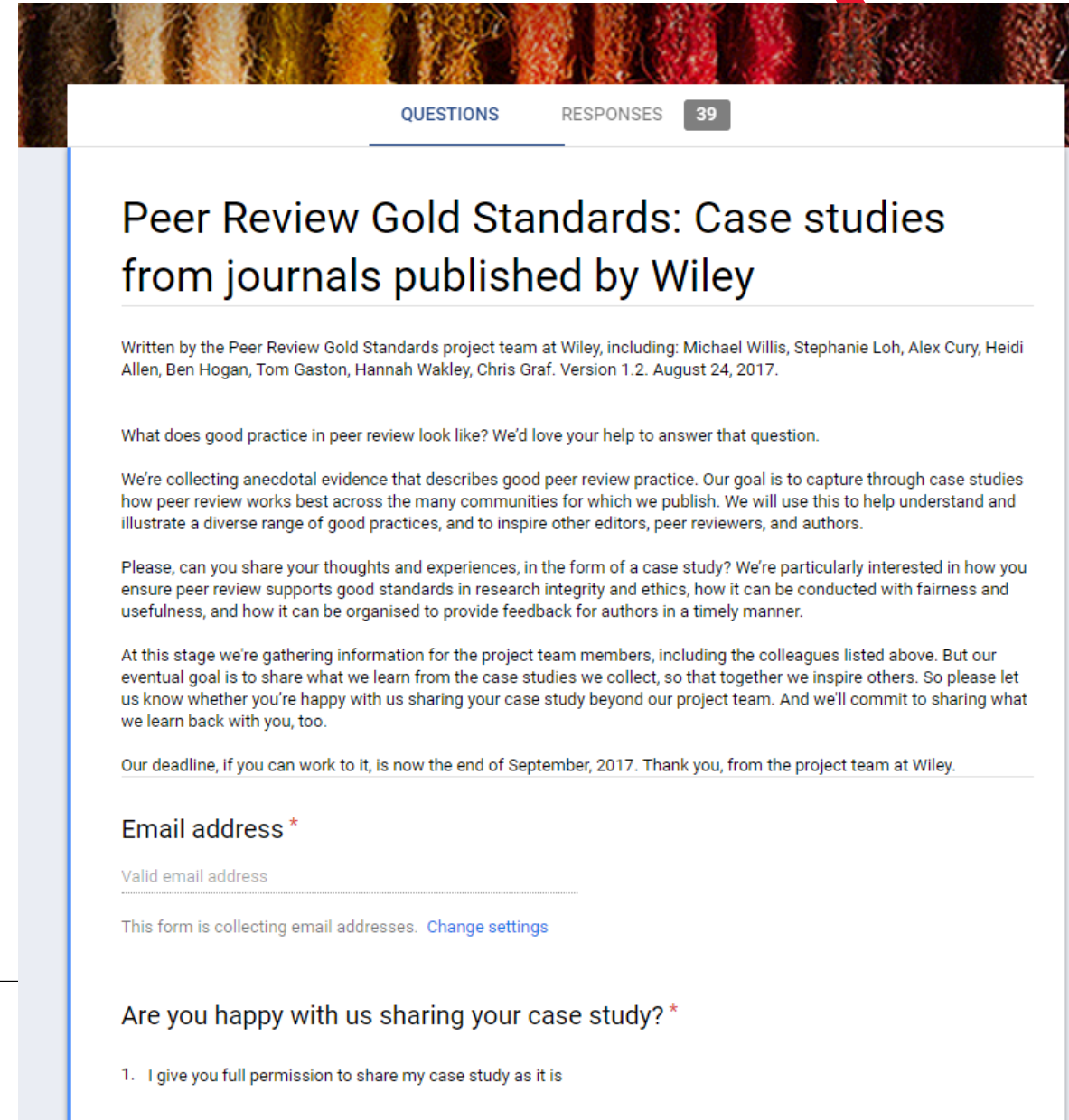


# Our methodology



# Stage 2: survey

- Google Form, no restriction
- available to anyone
- advertised via blog post



The screenshot shows a Google Form with a header bar containing 'QUESTIONS' and 'RESPONSES 39'. The title of the form is 'Peer Review Gold Standards: Case studies from journals published by Wiley'. Below the title, there is a paragraph of text: 'Written by the Peer Review Gold Standards project team at Wiley, including: Michael Willis, Stephanie Loh, Alex Cury, Heidi Allen, Ben Hogan, Tom Gaston, Hannah Wakley, Chris Graf. Version 1.2. August 24, 2017.' This is followed by a question: 'What does good practice in peer review look like? We'd love your help to answer that question.' Below the question, there are two paragraphs of text explaining the purpose of the survey and the project team's goals. The form then asks for an email address, with a text input field and a 'Valid email address' error message. At the bottom, there is a question: 'Are you happy with us sharing your case study? \*' and a list of options, with the first option being '1. I give you full permission to share my case study as it is'.

QUESTIONS RESPONSES 39

## Peer Review Gold Standards: Case studies from journals published by Wiley

Written by the Peer Review Gold Standards project team at Wiley, including: Michael Willis, Stephanie Loh, Alex Cury, Heidi Allen, Ben Hogan, Tom Gaston, Hannah Wakley, Chris Graf. Version 1.2. August 24, 2017.

What does good practice in peer review look like? We'd love your help to answer that question.

We're collecting anecdotal evidence that describes good peer review practice. Our goal is to capture through case studies how peer review works best across the many communities for which we publish. We will use this to help understand and illustrate a diverse range of good practices, and to inspire other editors, peer reviewers, and authors.

Please, can you share your thoughts and experiences, in the form of a case study? We're particularly interested in how you ensure peer review supports good standards in research integrity and ethics, how it can be conducted with fairness and usefulness, and how it can be organised to provide feedback for authors in a timely manner.

At this stage we're gathering information for the project team members, including the colleagues listed above. But our eventual goal is to share what we learn from the case studies we collect, so that together we inspire others. So please let us know whether you're happy with us sharing your case study beyond our project team. And we'll commit to sharing what we learn back with you, too.

Our deadline, if you can work to it, is now the end of September, 2017. Thank you, from the project team at Wiley.

Email address \*

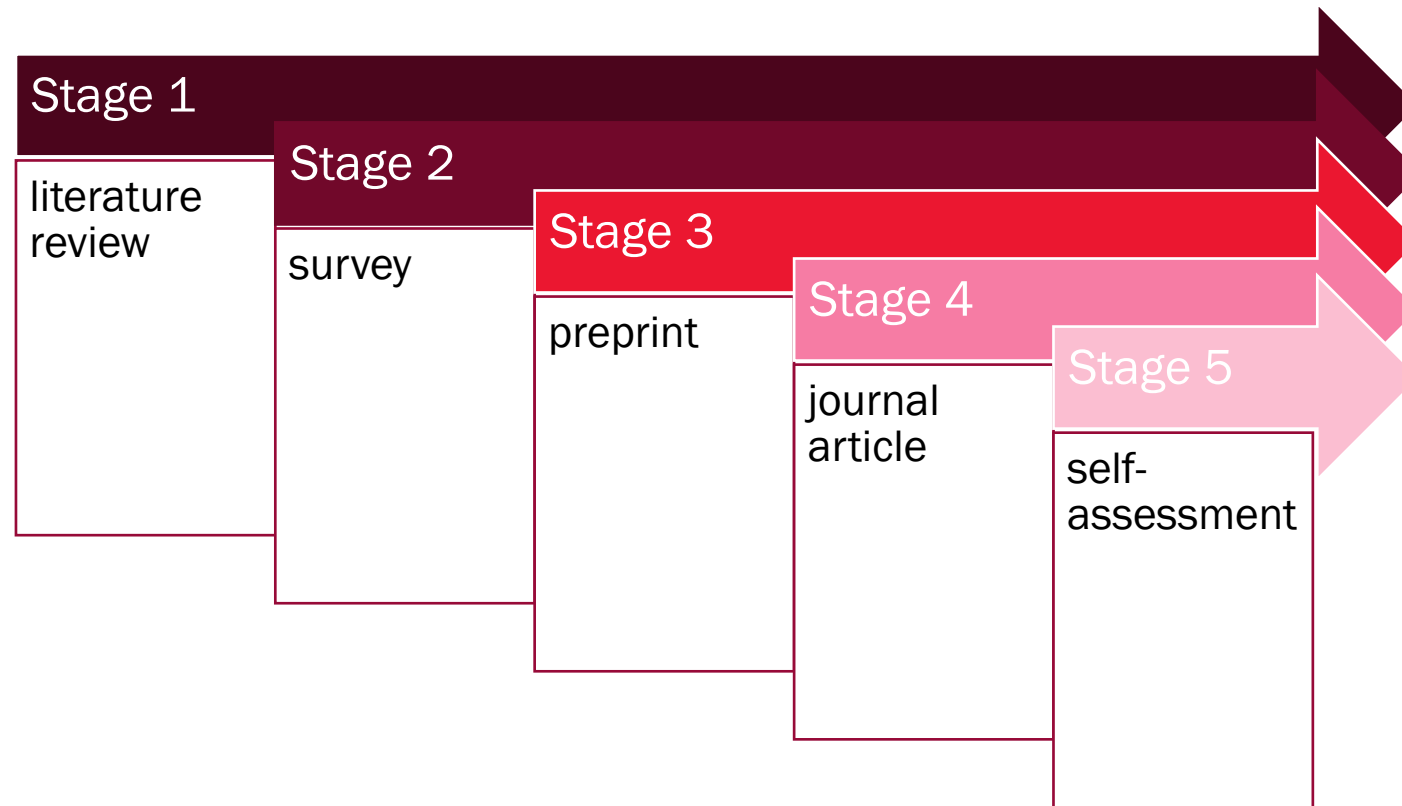
Valid email address

This form is collecting email addresses. [Change settings](#)

Are you happy with us sharing your case study? \*

1. I give you full permission to share my case study as it is

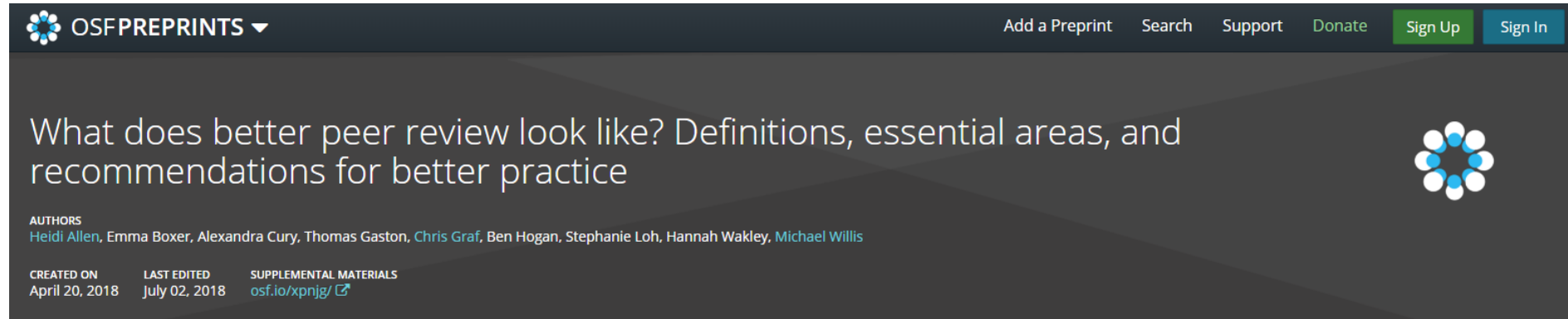
# Our methodology



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# Stage 3: preprint

<https://osf.io/4mfk2/>



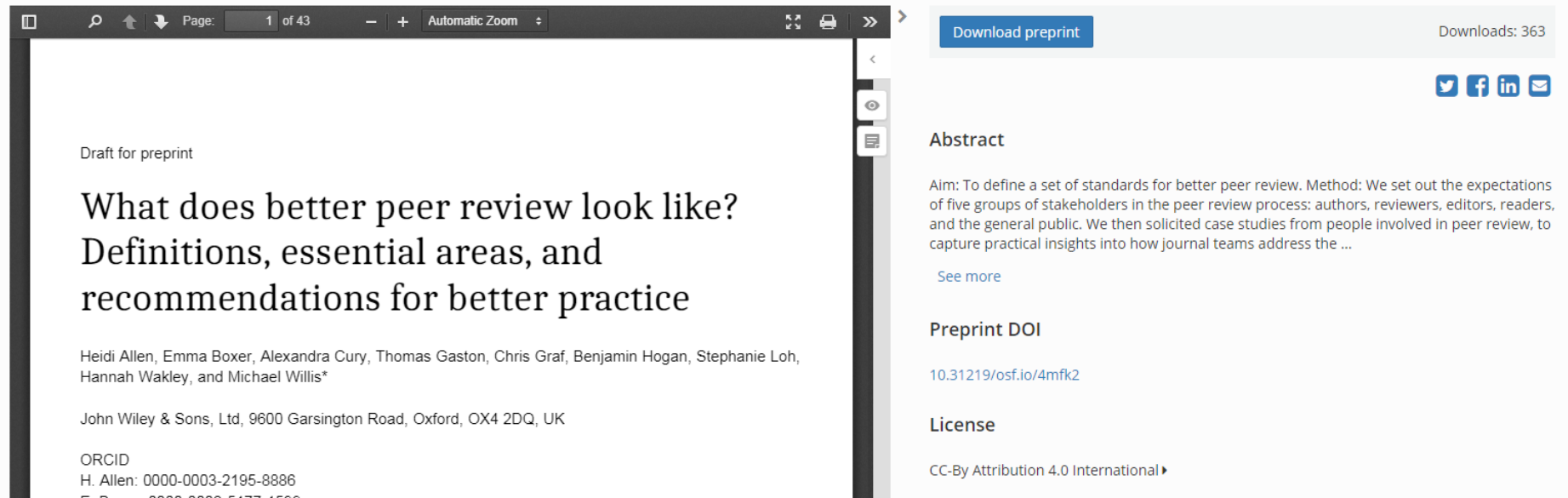
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## What does better peer review look like? Definitions, essential areas, and recommendations for better practice

AUTHORS  
Heidi Allen, Emma Boxer, Alexandra Cury, Thomas Gaston, Chris Graf, Ben Hogan, Stephanie Loh, Hannah Wakley, Michael Willis

CREATED ON April 20, 2018 LAST EDITED July 02, 2018 SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS [osf.io/xpnjg/](https://osf.io/xpnjg/)



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Abstract

Aim: To define a set of standards for better peer review. Method: We set out the expectations of five groups of stakeholders in the peer review process: authors, reviewers, editors, readers, and the general public. We then solicited case studies from people involved in peer review, to capture practical insights into how journal teams address the ...

See more

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Draft for preprint

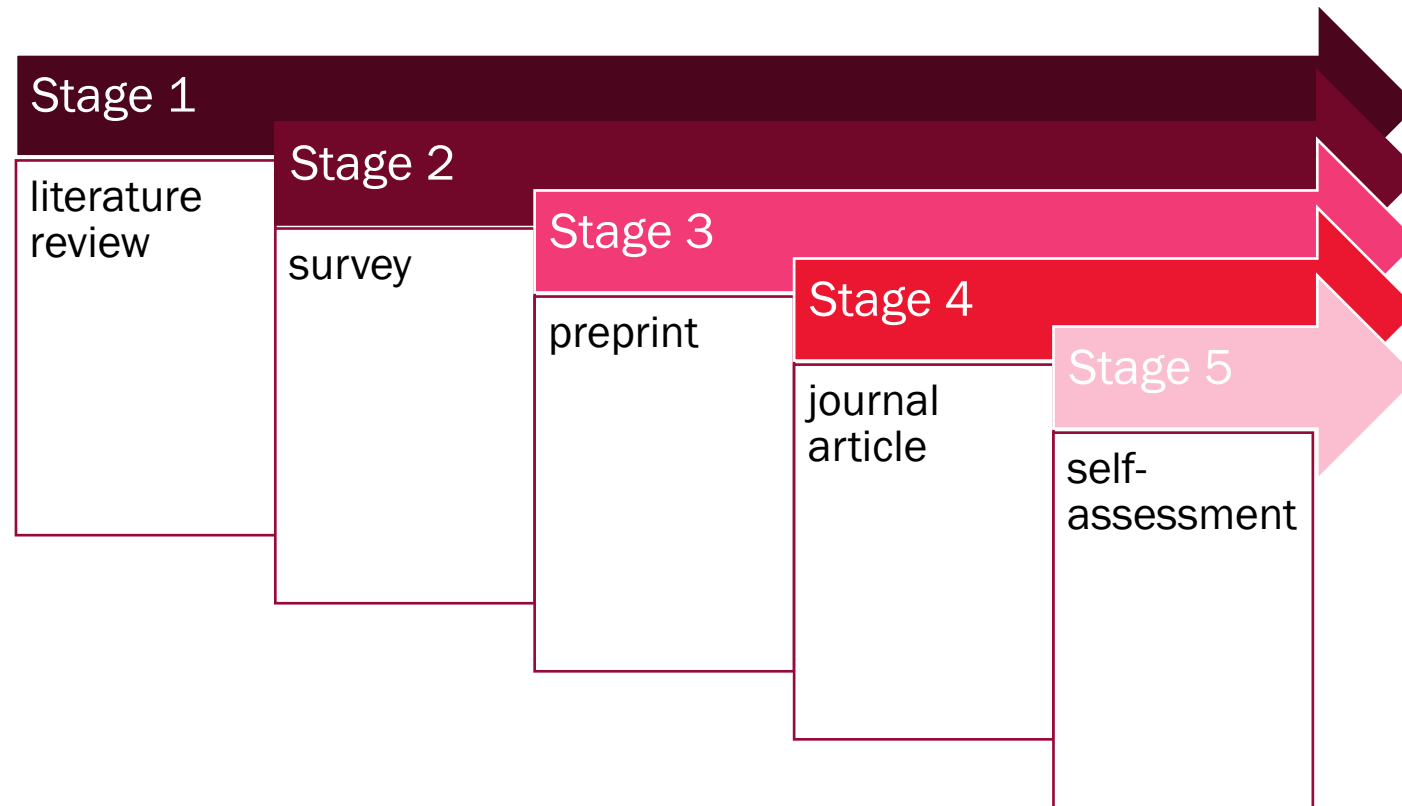
## What does better peer review look like? Definitions, essential areas, and recommendations for better practice

Heidi Allen, Emma Boxer, Alexandra Cury, Thomas Gaston, Chris Graf, Benjamin Hogan, Stephanie Loh, Hannah Wakley, and Michael Willis\*

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# Our methodology




# Stage 4: journal article

<https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1222>




The screenshot shows the top portion of a journal article page. At the top left is the 'LEARNED PUBLISHING' logo with the tagline 'Association of learned & professional societies publishers'. To the right of the logo is a green rectangular box. Below the logo, the text 'Research Article' is followed by 'Open Access' and three icons: a Creative Commons license, a person icon, and a lock icon. The article title is 'What does better peer review look like? Underlying principles and recommendations for better practice'. The authors listed are Heidi Allen, Alexandra Cury, Thomas Gaston (with an email icon), Chris Graf, Hannah Wakley, and Michael Willis. Below the authors, it says 'First published: 10 January 2019 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1222>'. At the bottom of the header area, there are three icons: a menu icon labeled 'SECTIONS', a PDF icon, and a share icon labeled 'SHARE'. The main content area below the header starts with the word 'Abstract' followed by a paragraph of text.


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## What does better peer review look like? Underlying principles and recommendations for better practice

Heidi Allen, Alexandra Cury, Thomas Gaston , Chris Graf, Hannah Wakley, Michael Willis

First published: 10 January 2019 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1222>

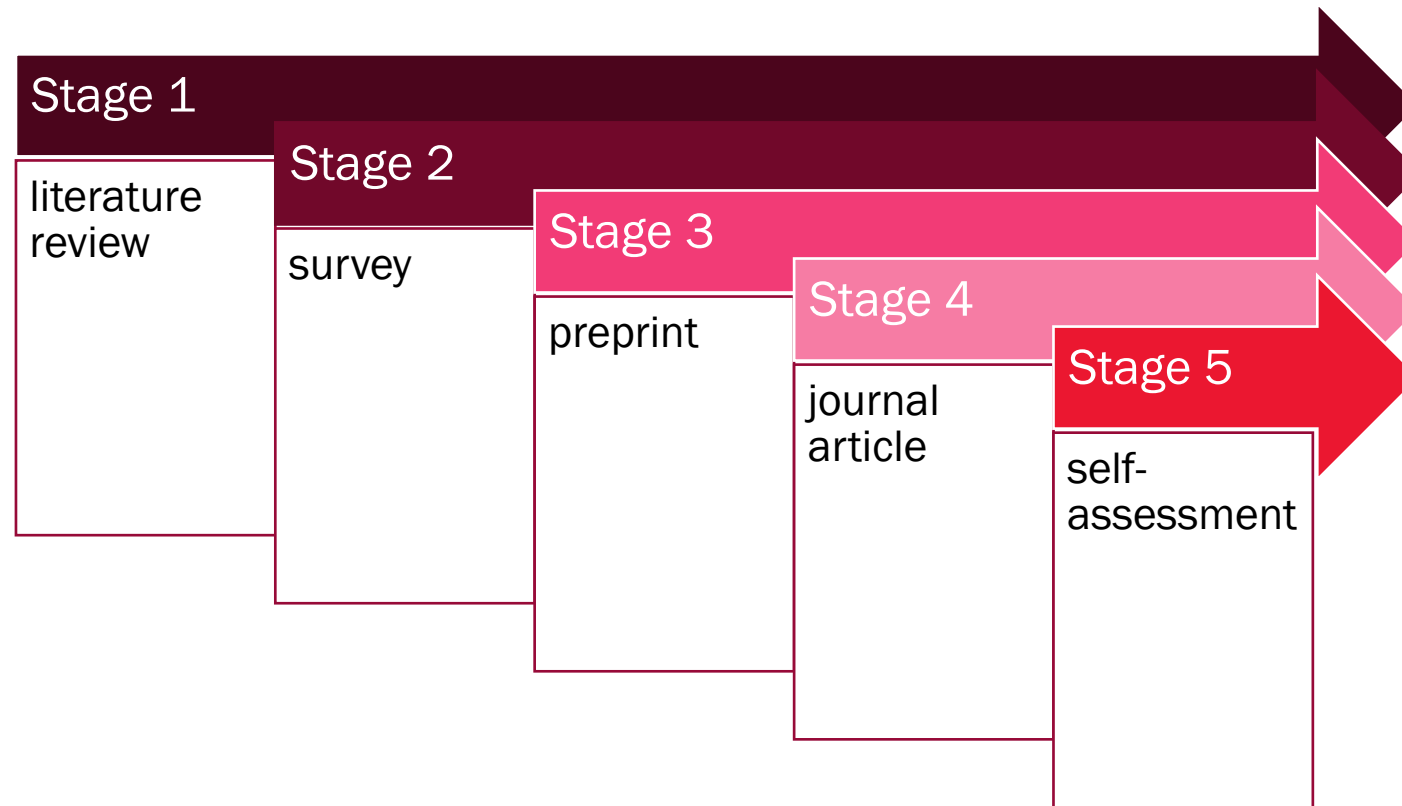
 SECTIONS  PDF  TOOLS  SHARE

### Abstract

We conducted a literature review of best practice in peer review. Following this research, we identified five principles for better peer review: Content Integrity, Content Ethics, Fairness, Usefulness, and Timeliness. For each of these principles, we have developed a set of recommendations to improve peer review standards. In this article, we describe the role of peer review and how our five principles support that goal. This article is



# Our methodology



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# Stage 5: self-assessment

<http://www.wiley.com/go/betterpeerreview>

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## Better Peer Review Self-Assessment (v2.0)

Read me first!

Welcome. This is our Wiley Better Peer Review Self-Assessment. You can use it to reflect on your work with peer reviewers, to reflect on your editorial policies, and to reflect on your work with authors. Your answers will help you identify areas where your practice is great, and areas where you may want to make improvements.

For each pair of questions we'll ask you to rate your practice, first. Then we'll ask you for an all-important narrative description of why you gave yourself that score, which is your opportunity for reflection.

We've noted an "essential area" for each question. This refers to the essential areas for better peer review – namely integrity, ethics, fairness, usefulness, and timeliness – defined in our open access article published in the peer-reviewed journal Learned Publishing <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/leap.1222>.

When you get to the end, we'll ask you for some feedback, and you'll get to view your own results immediately.

Last, you should soon also be able to get your journal a badge. Our plan is to take your self-assessment, and

# Our results

- 40 case studies from survey, from a variety of journals, disciplines, regions and roles
- Five 'essential areas' identified, based on literature review and case studies
- Self-assessment responses from 136 journals to date, representing many disciplines

# Five 'essential areas'

- Integrity: peer review establishes that the work is reliable and potentially reproducible.
- Ethics: peer review establishes that the work was conducted ethically.
- Fairness: peer review is objective and impartial.
- Usefulness: peer review is constructive and helpful.
- Timeliness: peer review provides timely feedback for authors.

# Conclusions and next steps

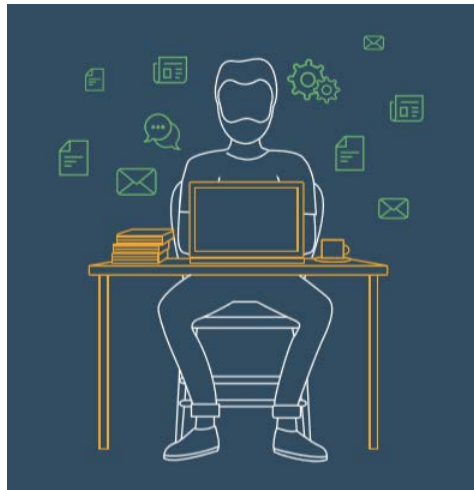
Helping journals to improve their peer review processes:

- equip journal teams to assess how well they currently perform in the five essential areas for better peer review
- encourage journal teams to consider how they can improve in the five essential areas for better peer review

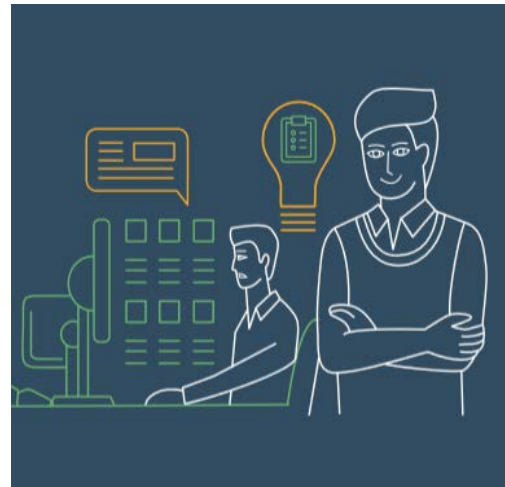
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# Our panel

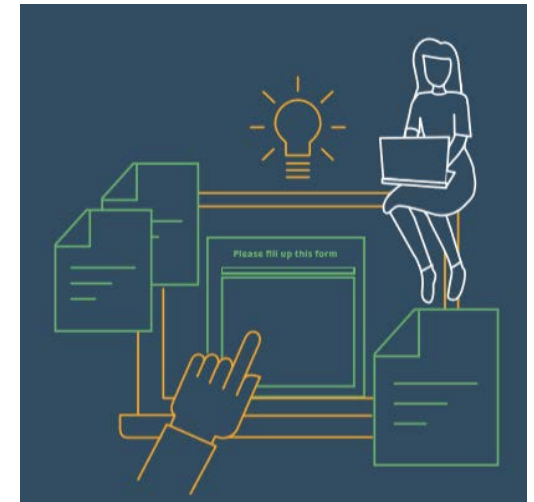
‘Editor’: Dr Zijian Zheng



‘Reviewer’: Professor Graeme Smith



‘Author’: Dr Shayuti Adnan



# Integrity and ethics

Peer review establishes that the work is reliable and potentially reproducible.

Peer review establishes that the work was conducted ethically.

# Audience poll:

Who has the primary responsibility for safeguarding integrity and ethics in published research?

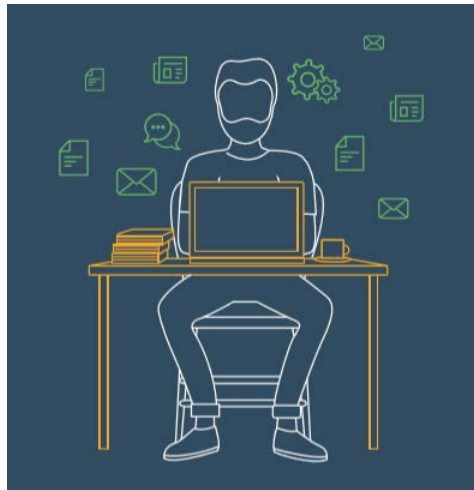
- Editor
- Reviewer
- Author



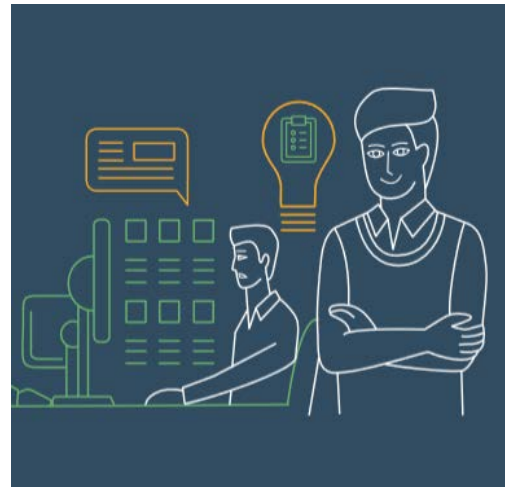
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# Our panel

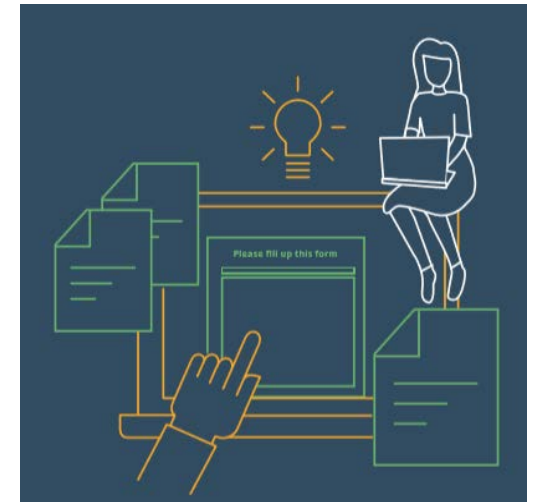
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# Fairness and usefulness

Peer review is objective and impartial.

Peer review is constructive and helpful.

# Audience poll:

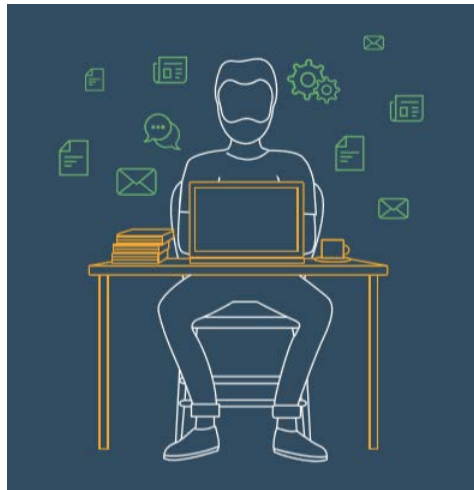
Has your experience of peer review been that it's *mostly*:

- fair
- useful
- fair *and* useful?
- *neither* fair *nor* useful?

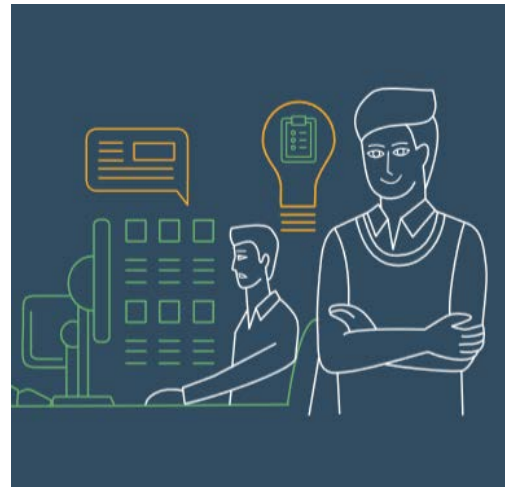
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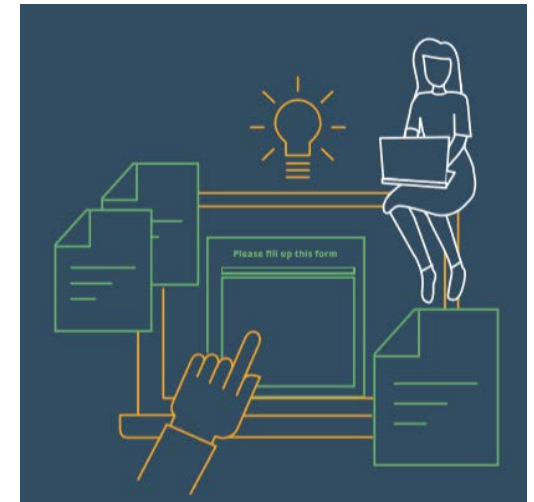
‘Editor’: Dr Zijian Zheng



‘Reviewer’: Professor Graeme Smith



‘Author’: Dr Shayuti Adnan



# What might journals do differently?

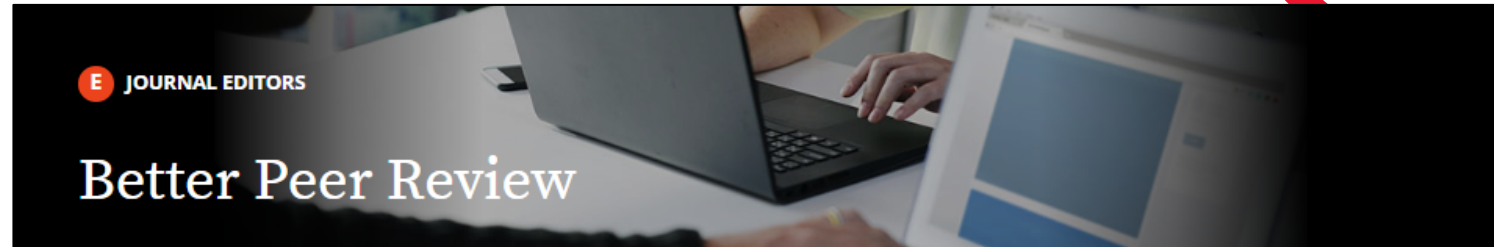
## Examples from our Wiley colleagues

- Publish a brief description of peer review process on the website
- Give more frequent updates to authors about the status of their manuscript
- Translate instructions to authors in other languages
- Publicly recognise good reviewers
- Give more detailed review feedback to authors about how they can improve their manuscript (even if their manuscript is rejected)
- Solicit reviewers for feedback on the process
- Broaden editorial boards / reviewer panels

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# Our website

<http://www.wiley.com/go/betterpeerreview>



## Introducing the Better Peer Review Self-Assessment

The Better Peer Review Self-Assessment is designed for you if you're a member of a journal team. It focuses on how you deliver your research publishing service to researchers, and on five essential areas of practice: integrity, ethics, fairness, usefulness, and timelines. (You can read more about our essential areas in our peer reviewed, open access article [here](#)).

The Better Peer Review Self-Assessment is a service for you and your team members so you can reflect on your entire peer review publishing process, including and extending beyond the act of peer review itself.

The Better Peer Review Self-Assessment gives you feedback. That feedback helps you and your team to contextualize your evaluation of your own practices with those from your peers in other journal teams.

The Better Peer Review Self-Assessment helps you to identify and celebrate where you are doing brilliantly. It offers you advice on how you might consider making improvements when you decide they will be beneficial.

## What do we have to do now, to get started?

Just send us an email. We'll share a link that will take you directly to the self-assessment. Please, email Elisha Morris and the Better Peer Review team at [betterpeerreview@wiley.com](mailto:betterpeerreview@wiley.com) now, and we'll be in touch directly. More information to help you understand what it's all about is below.



Thank you for listening and contributing!

(and please send us your feedback)

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[miwillis@wiley.com](mailto:miwillis@wiley.com)