

## **Criteria of Academic and Publishing Ethics of the *GeolInfo* Journal**

The primary aim of the *GeolInfo* journal is to introduce specialists and researchers in the fields of engineering surveys for construction, geological risks, geotechnical engineering, and territorial protection to advanced achievements of the Russian and international scientific and professional community, which can be applied in daily practice. To ensure high publication quality, to avoid plagiarism, and to prevent dissemination of unreliable information, the editorial staff, members of the editorial board, the editor-in-chief, authors, and external reviewers engaged by the journal are obliged to follow common, internationally recognized ethical standards, rules, and principles, and to take all necessary measures to prevent violations. This approach guarantees the protection of the rights of both authors and the publisher, public recognition of research results, and contributes to the overall quality of the *GeolInfo* journal.

### **1. Principles of Professional Ethics for the Publisher**

The publisher is responsible for ensuring the functioning of the editorial office of the journal and its hosting portal and must adhere to the following principles:

- 1.1. Recognize that the journal is not solely a commercial project and must not place profit above the quality and scientific significance of published materials. When combining the roles of publisher and editor-in-chief, ethical editorial responsibilities take priority.
- 1.2. Be prepared to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions, and apologies when necessary.
- 1.3. Provide the editorial office with the ability to exclude publications containing plagiarism or unreliable data and not object to rejecting manuscripts unanimously declined by expert reviewers.
- 1.4. Retain the right to reject a manuscript or request revisions if it violates the established rules of the journal.
- 1.5. Accepted articles are published in open access. Copyright remains with the authors, but republication in other outlets is permitted only after three years from the date of publication or with explicit permission from the publisher.
- 1.6. Publish information on funding sources when such information is provided by the author.
- 1.7. Coordinate editorial corrections with the author before final publication.
- 1.8. Avoid unjustified delays in the release of the journal.

### **2. Ethical Principles for Authors Submitting to *GeolInfo***

Authors (or groups of authors) agree that they are responsible for the novelty and reliability of their research, that their manuscript contains no prohibited material, and that all co-authors consent to its publication. Authors are expected to observe the following principles:

- 2.1. Provide accurate and reliable research results. Fabricated or falsified data are unacceptable.
- 2.2. Ensure originality of submitted manuscripts. Any use of third-party materials must include proper attribution. Excessive borrowing and all forms of plagiarism, including unreferenced quotations, paraphrasing, or appropriation of research results, are unethical and unacceptable.
- 2.3. Present only genuine facts and data; provide sufficient detail for verification and replication; avoid use of unpublished data without permission; refrain from fabrication or falsification.
- 2.4. Avoid duplicate publication. Authors must state in the cover letter that the work is original and unpublished. If elements of the manuscript have been published previously, proper references must be given and differences made explicit.
- 2.5. Acknowledge contributions of all individuals and organizations that influenced the research, citing relevant sources.
- 2.6. Maintain ethical standards when commenting on or criticizing other researchers' work; personal attacks are unacceptable.
- 2.7. List as co-authors only those who made significant contributions to the research; honorary authorship is prohibited.

- 2.8. Respect the work of editors and reviewers, and respond to comments by correcting or justifying the content.
- 2.9. Submit manuscripts in accordance with the journal's rules, accompanied by a recommendation letter from the leading organization.
- 2.10. If significant errors are discovered at any stage, authors must promptly notify the editorial office to prevent the spread of incorrect information.

### **3. Ethical Principles for Reviewers**

Reviewers evaluate submitted manuscripts and must act impartially, adhering to the following principles:

- 3.1. Draw the editor's attention to substantial similarities or overlaps with previously published works, or missing references.
- 3.2. Provide objective, constructive, and well-founded comments aimed at improving the manuscript.
- 3.3. Assess the personal contribution of the author(s) to the research problem.
- 3.4. Base judgments on clear evidence, providing supporting arguments.
- 3.5. Decline review if lacking sufficient expertise or in case of conflict of interest.
- 3.6. Treat reviews as confidential. Reviewer identity is disclosed only to the editorial team and is not shared publicly, except as required by law.

### **4. Ethical Principles for the Editor-in-Chief**

The editor-in-chief is responsible for the overall quality of the journal, accuracy of published information, and integrity of the editorial process. Principles include:

- 4.1. Decisions on publication are based on reliability and scientific significance, supported by reviewers' assessments and, when needed, editorial board consensus.
- 4.2. Evaluate manuscripts regardless of authors' race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, origin, nationality, social status, or political views.
- 4.3. The editor-in-chief must:

- continually improve the journal;
  - uphold freedom of opinion;
  - address the needs of readers and authors;
  - prevent commercial or political interests from influencing editorial decisions;
  - ensure manuscripts meet the journal's scope, relevance, novelty, clarity, reliability, and completeness;
  - safeguard confidentiality of personal data;
  - consider reviewers' recommendations while retaining final responsibility for publication decisions;
  - justify acceptance or rejection decisions;
  - provide authors the opportunity to defend their position.
- 4.6. Together with the publisher, respond to complaints and resolve conflicts to protect rights of all parties.

### **5. Editorial Principles for Article Publication**

- 5.1. Adherence to publishing ethics by the editor-in-chief, editors, and publisher.
- 5.2. Clear principles for article rejection.
- 5.3. Maintenance of academic integrity.
- 5.4. Protection of intellectual and ethical standards despite commercial interests.

5.5. Willingness to publish corrections, clarifications, and apologies when necessary.

5.6. Prevention of plagiarism and fraudulent data publication.

## **6. Conflict of Interest**

All participants in the publication process must avoid conflicts of interest. Such conflicts may arise when authors, reviewers, or editorial members have financial, academic, or personal relationships that could affect their judgment.

### **Violations**

Any suspected violation of publication ethics by editors, authors, or reviewers requires mandatory investigation, regardless of whether the material is published or unpublished. The editorial board must request explanations while avoiding involvement of individuals with potential conflicts of interest.