

# Reviewer Guidelines - Biofarma

Reviewers are usually suggested by the authors following certain reviewer criteria.

## Scope and article eligibility

Biofarma publishes articles in Portuguese, Spanish and English at the intersection of pharmacy, biology, medicine, psychology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis and neuroscience, without editorial bias, including articles reporting unique results, replication studies, and null or negative results. Reviewers are asked to assess the scientific validity of the article, rather than the novelty or interest levels. All articles and peer review reports are Open Access and published under a CC-BY license.

Our formal invited open peer-review process occurs after the article is published. Before publication, articles undergo checks by the in-house editorial team to ensure they meet our basic criteria. Our pre-publication checks include:

- Eligibility to publish – authors must be active researchers (scientists, scholars or clinicians) and the research must have been carried out at a recognised institution.
- Article types – articles are checked whether they meet the criteria and format of specific article types.
- Readability – as we do not copy edit articles, the standard of language and readability must be sufficient for readers to be able to follow the article.
- Plagiarism – articles are checked for plagiarism before publication.
- Methods section – we check that details of methods and resources are provided, so the work can be assessed (we will ask you as an expert reviewer to comment whether more information would be required for others to reproduce the work).
- Policies – we check that articles publishing research involving humans or animals adhere to our [ethical policies](#).
- Data – we check that the [source data](#) underlying the results are made openly available (we will ask you as an expert reviewer to comment whether the source data are appropriate for others to reproduce the work).

## Reviewer eligibility

Reviewers are chosen based on suggestions from the article authors, with the editorial team ensuring that they meet our reviewer criteria. We recognise that early career researchers may not fit some of our criteria but may still possess the expertise to review. In such cases we encourage co-reviewing alongside a more senior colleague, or if you have reviewed in other journals, ask authors to submit articles to Biofarma indicating you as their reviewer.

## Peer reviewer code of conduct

The peer review process is a vital component of scholarly publishing. To help ensure that peer review at Biofarma is constructive and beneficial to authors, readers and other reviewers, we ask that reviewers:

- Read the article fully – please read the full text of the article and view all associated figures, tables and data;
- Be thorough – a peer review report should discuss the article in full as well as individual points, and should demonstrate your understanding of the article;

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- Be specific – your comments should contain as much detail as possible, with references where appropriate, so the authors are able to fully address the issue;
- Be constructive in your criticism – do not hesitate to include any concerns or criticisms you may have in your review, however, please do so in a constructive and respectful manner;
- Avoid derogatory comments or tone – review as you wish to be reviewed and ensure that your comments focus on the scientific content of the article in question rather than the authors themselves.
- Be objective and impartial – please focus your review on the academic content of the article itself. Avoid being influenced by your own personal opinions of either the article or the authors or the opinions they might express.

We would also recommend that reviewers familiarise themselves with the Committee On Publication Ethics' (COPE) [ethical guidelines for peer reviewers](#). If the editorial team are concerned that a review does not meet the standards above, we will contact the reviewer before publication of their peer review report.

## Guidelines for reviewing

When you agree to review an article published by Biofarma you will receive an email with a link to the article, a proposed deadline, and information on how to submit your report. You should also [register](#) an account with us at this stage. If you already have an account with us the request will also appear in your My pages.

### Approval status

We ask reviewers to choose an approval status, which both helps directly determine whether an article is indexed with sites such as PubMed and Scopus, and provides readers with an at-a-glance view of your thoughts on the article. The rating should be based on whether the reported findings or analyses are correct and valid, not on the novelty or importance of an article. The approval statuses to choose from are:

- **Approved:** No or only minor changes are required. This means that the aims and research methods are adequate; results are presented accurately; and the conclusions are justified and supported by the data or supporting material.
- **Approved with Reservations:** The reviewer believes the paper has academic merit, but has asked for a number of small changes to the article, or specific, sometimes more significant revisions.
- **Not Approved:** The article has fundamental flaws that seriously undermine the findings and conclusions. It requires crucial substantial revisions for it to become academically valid.

### Writing a comment

We also ask reviewers for a report which reflects their assessment of the article, including any constructive criticisms they may have and suggestions for improvement.

For the benefit of the authors, readers, and other reviewers we ask that reports meet the following standards:

- Reviews should be understandable and well-written - the editorial team will be in touch if we need further clarification or detail.
- Reviews should be detailed offering a summary of the article under review as well as an assessment of its quality.
- Reviews should **not** be based on novelty but on the quality of the article under review. Each article type has its own guidelines for review to help with this assessment.
- Reviews should be structured, constructive, and offer clear points for authors to address.

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- Requests for citations of other articles should be justified and reviewers should explicitly state their reasoning when asking authors to cite their own work.

## **Guidelines for reviewing specific article types**

Biofarma asks reviewers a set of questions tailored to each article type, as different article types may require a different focus.

### Research Article

- Is the work clearly and accurately presented and does it cite the current literature?
- Is the study design appropriate and does the work have academic merit?
- Are sufficient details of methods and analysis provided to allow replication by others?
- If applicable, is the statistical analysis and its interpretation appropriate?
- Are all the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?
- Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the results?

### Brief Report

- Is the work clearly and accurately presented and does it cite the current literature?
- Is the study design appropriate and does the work have academic merit?
- Are sufficient details of methods and analysis provided to allow replication by others?
- If applicable, is the statistical analysis and its interpretation appropriate?
- Are all the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?
- Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the results?

### Genome Notes

- Are the rationale for sequencing the genome and the species significance clearly described?
- Are the protocols appropriate and is the work technically sound?
- Are sufficient details of the sequencing and extraction, software used, and materials provided to allow replication by others?
- Are the datasets clearly presented in a usable and accessible format, and the assembly and annotation available in an appropriate subject-specific repository?

### Policy Brief

- Does the paper provide a comprehensive overview of the policy and the context of its implementation in a way which is accessible to a general reader?
- Is the discussion on the implications clearly and accurately presented and does it cite the current literature?
- Are the recommendations made clear, balanced, and justified on the basis of the presented arguments?

## Case Studies

- Is the background of the case's history and progression described in sufficient detail?
- Is the work clearly and accurately presented and does it cite the current literature?
- If applicable, is the statistical analysis and its interpretation appropriate?
- Are all the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?
- Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the results?
- Is the case presented with sufficient detail to be useful for teaching or other practitioners?

## Systematic Review

- Are the rationale for, and objectives of, the Systematic Review clearly stated?
- Are sufficient details of the methods and analysis provided to allow replication by others?
- Is the statistical analysis and its interpretation appropriate?
- Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the results presented in the review?

## Software Tool Article

- Is the rationale for developing the new software tool clearly explained?
- Is the description of the software tool technically sound?
- Are sufficient details of the code, methods and analysis (if applicable) provided to allow replication of the software development and its use by others?
- Is sufficient information provided to allow interpretation of the expected output datasets and any results generated using the tool?

## Method Article

- Is the rationale for developing the new method (or application) clearly explained?
- Is the description of the method technically sound?
- Are sufficient details provided to allow replication of the method development and its use by others?
- If any results are presented, are all the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?
- Are the conclusions about the method and its performance adequately supported by the findings presented in the article?

## Data Note

- Is the rationale for creating the dataset(s) clearly described?
- Are the protocols appropriate and is the work technically sound?
- Are sufficient details of methods and materials provided to allow replication by others?
- Are the datasets clearly presented in a useable and accessible format?

## Study Protocol

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- Is the rationale for, and objectives of, the study clearly described?
- Is the study design appropriate for the research question?
- Are sufficient details of the methods provided to allow replication by others?
- Are the datasets clearly presented in a useable and accessible format?

#### Case Report

- Is the background of the case's history and progression described in sufficient detail?
- Are enough details provided of any physical examination and diagnostic tests, treatment given and outcomes?
- Is sufficient discussion included of the importance of the findings and their relevance to future understanding of disease processes, diagnosis or treatment?
- Is the case presented with sufficient detail to be useful for other practitioners?

#### Clinical Practice Article

- Is the background of the cases' history and progression described in sufficient detail?
- Are enough details provided of any physical examination and diagnostic tests, treatment given and outcomes?
- Is sufficient discussion included of the importance of the findings and their relevance to future understanding of disease processes, diagnosis or treatment?
- Is the conclusion balanced and justified on the basis of the findings?

#### Correspondence

- Is the rationale for commenting on the previous publication clearly described?
- Are any opinions stated well-argued, clear and cogent?
- Are arguments sufficiently supported by evidence from the published literature or by new data and results?
- Is the conclusion balanced and justified on the basis of the presented arguments?

#### Review

- Is the topic of the review discussed comprehensively in the context of the current literature?
- Are all factual statements correct and adequately supported by citations?
- Is the review written in accessible language?
- Are the conclusions drawn appropriate in the context of the current research literature?

#### Opinion Article

- Is the topic of the opinion article discussed accurately in the context of the current literature?
- Are all factual statements correct and adequately supported by citations?

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- Are arguments sufficiently supported by evidence from the published literature?
- Are the conclusions drawn balanced and justified on the basis of the presented arguments?

## Registered Report

### Stage 1

- Is the rationale for, and objectives of, the study clearly described?
- Is the study design appropriate for the research question (including statistical power analysis, where appropriate)?
- Are sufficient details of the methods provided to allow replication by others?
- Have the authors pre-specified sufficient outcome-neutral tests for ensuring that the results obtained can test the stated hypotheses, including positive controls and quality checks?
- Are the datasets clearly presented in a useable and accessible format?

### Stage 2

- Are the data able to test the authors' proposed hypotheses by satisfying the approved outcome-neutral conditions (such as quality checks, positive controls)?
- Are the introduction, rationale and stated hypotheses the same as the approved Stage 1 submission? (required)
- Did the authors adhere precisely to the registered experimental procedures? If not, has an explanation been provided regarding any change?
- Are any unregistered post hoc analyses added by the authors justified, methodologically sound and informative?
- Is the work clearly and accurately presented and does it cite the current literature?
- Is the study design appropriate and does the work have academic merit?
- Are sufficient details of the methods and analysis provided to allow replication by others?
- If applicable, is the statistical analysis and its interpretation appropriate?
- Are all the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?
- Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the results?

## Book Chapter

- Is the work clearly and accurately presented?
- Are all factual statements correct and adequately supported by citations to the current literature?
- Are any opinions stated well-argued, clear, and cogent?
- If applicable, are any methods and analyses appropriate and sufficiently detailed, to allow replication by others?
- If applicable, are the source data underlying the results available to ensure full reproducibility?
- Are the conclusions drawn appropriate and justified on the basis of the presented work?
- Is the work an appropriate addition to this book project, and does it align with the scope and/or objectives?

## How to submit your peer review report

Once you have agreed to review you must [create an account](#) with Biofarma if you have not done so already. Next, use the link in your acceptance email to visit your Peer Reviewing page which has a record of any article you have been invited to review. To submit a peer review report, simply go to the 'Invited Reports' tab and click "Yes, I agree to be a reviewer for this article" confirm this action and then click "Write your report". You can then write your report (and save a draft copy if desired), and then preview and submit it. Please note once you've submitted a report through the online form it can only be edited by the editorial team.

Any further questions, you have free access to the journal editor: [editor@biofarma1.net](mailto:editor@biofarma1.net)