

Intercepting Misconduct: 7 Practical Tips for Editors

Scholarly publishers face increasing threats from fake research. Together, we have a duty to protect the scholarly record. IOP Publishing (IOPP) is recognised for its innovative approach to peer review and research integrity. Victoria Merriman, Editor Engagement Manager at IOPP, shares key strategies for supporting editorial board members in safeguarding the scholarly record.

- 1 Join the Collaborative Effort**
 Leverage the **STM Research Integrity Hub** to stay informed about the latest threats, such as citation cartels, papermills, identity fraud, peer review manipulation, and tortured phrases.
 Participate in **cross-journal integrity checks** and stay updated on evolving policies, including the use of AI in scientific publishing.
- 2 Keep on top of new developments**
 Follow ongoing updates on emerging threads and policy shifts such as the evolving role of AI in scientific research. Good news outlets to follow include: The Scholarly Kitchen, Journalology newsletter, newsletters of ALPSP, STM and SSP.
- 3 Understand the Editor's Critical Role**
 Editors play a **vital role** in preserving research integrity. An estimated **5-10% of manuscripts** are rejected before peer review due to ethical concerns.
54% of integrity cases flagged involve issues identified before publication.
- 4 Strengthen Editorial Safeguards**
 Develop a **vetting checklist** for Guest Editors and Editorial Board Members to mitigate risks from unethical actors.
- 5 Stay Ahead in the AI Arms Race**
 Use AI-driven tools such as **Peer Review AI Assistant, CrossRef Similarity Checker, and Signals** to detect duplication and research integrity issues.
- 6 Normalise Corrections and Retractions**
 A rise in retractions reflects rigorous integrity efforts—correcting the literature strengthens the scientific record and demonstrates the hard work that is delivered in support of research integrity.
- 7 Maintain Close Oversight of Peer Review**
 IOPP manages research integrity and peer review internally, with a dedicated Research Integrity Team following COPE guidelines in investigations. This proximity helps to keep a close eye on the quality of submitted papers.

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Editors play a vital role in safeguarding the integrity of the scholarly record at key stages of the publishing process.

