Welcome and thank you for your support of *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* and the Open Access movement.

*PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is devoted to the pathology, epidemiology, treatment, control, and prevention of the neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), as well as public policy relevant to this group of diseases. The NTDs are defined as a group of poverty-promoting chronic infectious diseases, which primarily occur in rural areas and poor urban areas of low-income and middle-income countries. They are poverty-promoting because of their impact on child health and development, pregnancy, and worker productivity, as well as their stigmatizing features. *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* focuses on a group of about twenty to thirty NTDs in order to:

- Provide an Open Access forum for the NTDs community to publish high quality, peer-reviewed research articles as well as timely reviews, opinions, and policy papers.
- Highlight the importance of the NTDs to the global community.
- Promote the activities and careers of young investigators entering the field of NTDs, especially investigators from developing and resource-poor countries.
- Build research and training capacity in developing countries by giving Southern scientists, health care providers, and public health officials free access to the most up-to-date information about the NTDs and by facilitating publication of their work.

*PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is one of a suite of influential journals published by PLOS. Information about the other journals, the PLOS business model, PLOS innovations in scientific publishing, and Open Access copyright and licensure can be found in Appendix IX.

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**PLOS NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

To ensure the fairest and most objective decision-making, the editorial process at *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is run as a partnership between the Editor-in-Chiefs, the board of Deputy Editors, and a team of academic experts who act as Associate Editors. These individuals are leaders in their fields and represent the full breadth of research on NTDs.

In addition, *PLOS NTDs* regularly invites Guest Editors to act as Associate Editors on specific manuscripts. Members of our editorial board have a regular responsibility to edit papers, while guests are asked to manage the review of papers which suit their particular field of expertise, and play an important role in maintaining the structure and vibrancy of our broad journal.

A full organizational chart can be found in Appendix VI.

**Getting Started**

- Return the information requested in your Welcome Letter to plosntds@plos.org.
- Log into the journal’s Editorial Manager manuscript submission system.
- Create a personal profile, including all contact details, classifications of scientific disciplines and keywords.
- Review all information in this Handbook and the *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* Editorial Board Knowledge Base.
- Contact the *PLOS NTDs Team* with any questions.

**Going Away and/or Unavailable**

In advance of an absence, Associate Editors should email the *PLOS NTDs Team* with the following information:

- Unavailability dates;
- Confirmation of ability to continue handling existing assignments.
MANUSCRIPT EVALUATION

Associate Editors rarely provide peer review reports themselves but operate at a higher level by evaluating submitted papers, securing peer reviewers, and then rendering an initial decision about the paper after peer review. This section provides a high-level overview of the steps of this process. Appendix II describes how to complete specific tasks during this process in Editorial Manager, the journal’s manuscript management system.

Invitations

Each manuscript is assigned by the PLOS NTDs Team to a Deputy Editor, who then invites an Associate Editor based on their area of expertise.

Associate Editors may receive invitations to Front Matter Articles, such as Reviews, as well as Research Articles. The article type will be specified within the invitation email. Further information about each of these article types can be found in Appendix IV.

When responding to invitations to handle manuscripts Associate Editors should:

- Aim to respond within **24 hours** of receipt.
- Use the links within the email to accept or decline (see Appendix II).

Independent Evaluation

- Within **three days** of accepting the invitation, the Associate Editor makes an initial decision as to whether the manuscript is suitable for review.
- The Associate Editor is not required to send the paper out for review. If a paper is worthy for review, Associate Editors are expected to invite reviewers upon accepting an assignment, or no later than three days after.

External Peer Review

- Associate Editors are expected to manage the peer review process, soliciting and monitoring reviews.
- All reviews should be received within **two to four weeks**.

Decision

- Associate Editors aim to submit their decision and accompanying decision letter for approval by the Deputy Editor within **three days** from receipt of the last review.

INVITATIONS

When to Accept or Decline

**Accept the invitation if:**
- The submission is in your field.
- You have time.
- You have no competing interests.

**Decline the invitation if:**
- The submission is not in your field.
- You are not available (e.g. holiday, sabbatical, already handling several manuscripts).
- You have a competing interest.
If declining, **provide the reason** from the drop down menu, along with **alternative suggestions** for Associate or Guest Associate Editors with the appropriate expertise to handle the manuscript in the Comments box.

Please note that up to 3 Associate Editors can be invited simultaneously for each manuscript. If a Deputy Editor has found more than 3 editors that can handle a manuscript, invitations will go out to the first 3 editors at once and the remaining invitations will reside in the queue and be sent several hours later on the same day.

After 2 days, if the manuscript has not been accepted by an Associate Editor, a reminder email will be sent to all invited editors that have not yet responded. A similar reminder will be issued again after 4 days. No reminder emails will be sent after 6 days and the invitations do not expire. However, if one Associate Editor agrees to handle the manuscript, the remaining invitations will automatically terminate and the pending invitees will be notified that another Associate Editor has agreed to handle the manuscript.

**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION**

Editorial Board members are responsible for the content of the journal and must fully evaluate each submission throughout the period of their editorial oversight.

After agreeing to handle a new submission, the Associate Editor should conduct an independent assessment to evaluate whether or not the manuscript fits within the journal scope, and is therefore suitable for peer review. Associate Editors should make this initial decision within three days of accepting the invitation.

At this stage, the Associate Editor can:

1. **Reject** the manuscript without review.
2. **Invite reviewers**.
3. **Open a discussion session** with other members of the *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* Editorial Board and/or *PLOS NTDs* staff.
To be considered for publication in *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, any given manuscript should represent a substantial advance in medical science or medical practice in terms of:

- Originality
- Importance and relevance to researchers, practitioners, or policy makers in the field of NTDs
- Interest for researchers or practitioners outside the field
- Rigorous methodology with conclusions justified by the evidence presented
- Adherence to the highest ethical standards

The full journal scope can be found in Appendix I.

Associate Editors should consider whether a manuscript abides by PLOS editorial and publishing policies, and notify the PLOS NTDs Team if they become aware of a breach of these policies. For instance, Associate Editors should keep in mind whether the authors adhere to standards in their field for data availability, and adhere to all aspects of publication and research ethics. Further guidance on these policies can be found in Appendix V.

Associate Editors should carefully evaluate a manuscript before sending it for peer review; about 50% of the submissions *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* receives are rejected.

**EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW**

If an Associate Editor believes a paper to be at or near the level required for *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, they should send it out for external peer review within three working days of accepting the invitation.

**Selecting Suitable Reviewers**

The selection of appropriate and responsive reviewers is paramount for the success of a review process judged on its rigor and timeliness.

Any qualified researcher with strong expertise in the topic of the submission can serve as a reviewer. Good reviewers:

- Are usually at postdoctoral level or above.
- Are actively conducting research and publishing work in the field of the manuscript.
- Do not have any competing interests (COIs) that would bias them either for or against the manuscript.

Associate Editors should consider the sum total of the expertise of all the reviewers invited to ensure that all aspects of the manuscript are fully evaluated.

To identify experts to assess the manuscripts they handle, Associate Editors:

- Apply their knowledge of qualified experts to objectively evaluate the manuscript.
- Search the Internet for related literature; the authors of these papers may be good reviewer candidates.
• Consider the suggested reviewers provided by the author, taking into account potential competing interests between these individuals and the authors. Research shows author-suggested reviewers tend to be less critical in their assessments of the work.

Associate Editors should not act as an additional anonymous peer reviewer.

If an Associate Editor would like to include additional comments, or their own review of the submission, they should include this within the decision letter as comments from the editor.

Inviting Reviewers
All contact with potential and engaged reviewers – invitations, reminders, and editorial correspondence - occurs through Editorial Manager (EM). Detailed instructions for performing these actions within EM can be found in Appendix II.

After logging in and accessing the “Invite Reviewers” link on the manuscript action links, Associate Editors should extend invitations to three reviewers (‘Inv’), and queue up at least three alternate reviewers (‘Alt’), with the aim of securing three submitted reviews.

Many reviewers will already be listed within EM. In these cases, simply check the email address to make sure it is the correct person and proceed to invite them. If the desired reviewer is not registered within EM, Associate Editors should contact the PLOS NTDs Team to have the reviewer added to our system.

Please note reviewers will be automatically uninvited after five days if we’ve received no response. During this time they will receive two reminders in addition to the initial invitation.

Alternate reviewers will be invited automatically if one of the original reviewers declines or fails to respond within the allotted time. Once you have secured three reviewers, close-out any outstanding reviewer invitations. Please contact the PLOS NTDs Team if you would like to request to change the required number of reviewers.

Monitoring the Review Process
The main focus of the Associate Editor during the review process is to:

• Monitor the reviewers agreed and completed.
• Invite additional reviewers if needed, to make sure evaluations are obtained from a collection of reviewers with relevant expertise.
• Evaluate reviews as they are returned to make sure they are appropriate and address the important aspects of the manuscript.

Editorial Ethics: Inviting Reviewers
• Avoid inviting reviewers from inside your institution.
• Spread invitations broadly across the research community (among qualified reviewers).
• Avoid inviting opposed reviewers.

If evaluation by an opposed reviewer or a member of your institution is required, Associate Editors should contact the PLOS NTDs Team.
• Notify the PLOS NTDs Team of any ethical concerns that arise during the assessment of the work.

**Review overdue?**

- Send a reminder to the reviewer – these are often more effective than those from the journal office.
- If you receive an extension request directly from the reviewer, please forward onto the PLOS NTDs Team for our records.

The standard review deadline is 14 days. If a reviewer requests an extension:

- The PLOS NTDs Team will grant extensions of 1-2 weeks at a reviewers’ request.
- For longer extensions, the Associate Editor will also be asked to approve the request.

EM automatically notifies reviewers on their pending assignments, including late reviews. If papers experience delays, the PLOS NTDs Team will then contact the Editor with reminders and offers of assistance.

*Reminder emails continue until the Associate Editor responds, so prompt replies are recommended.*

**DECISIONS**

Once the expected number of reviewers has been received, Associate Editors will receive a confirmation email. At this point, the Associate Editor can find the paper in the “Submissions with Required Reviews Complete” on their Editor Main Menu.

If papers experience delays, the PLOS NTDs Team may also email following the receipt of two reviews to see whether the Associate Editor has sufficient comments to proceed with a decision. In this case, the Associate Editor may need to terminate assignments for late reviewers. Please do not terminate open reviewer assignments if the deadline has not yet passed.

*Please be aware that the Associate Editor’s name will appear alongside the Deputy Editor’s on all decision letters to the authors. The authors are unaware of the identity of the Associate Editor until the first decision is made.*

**Making a Decision**

On receipt of the expected reviewer comments, Associate Editors should read them carefully and consider all points raised in order to make an informed decision on the submission.

There are several decision types and associated template letters available:

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<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Render this decision if:</th>
<th>After the decision is made:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editor Accept</td>
<td>• The authors have fully addressed all points you and the reviewers raised. • The paper is ready to publish.</td>
<td>• The manuscript is sent to production for publication.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**About Reviewer Comments**

All “Comments to Authors” are included in the decision letter as submitted. Do not edit or remove them from the letter.

Contact the PLOS NTDs Team if:

- Any comments are defamatory, allege misconduct, or contain inappropriate language.
- It appears a reviewer has entered their comments in the wrong boxes (e.g. the comments to the editor are in the “Comments to Authors” box).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Minor Revision</strong>*</th>
<th>• There is no need for you to check over the manuscript another time.</th>
<th>• The authors do not have a chance to revise.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The clarity of the presentation needs improvement.</td>
<td>• Authors have 30 days to revise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The science is solid and well presented, with the evidence fully supporting all conclusions made.</td>
<td>• Upon resubmission, Associate Editors reevaluate the manuscript and author’s response to reviewers to decide whether further review is needed or if a final decision can be made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Revision</strong></td>
<td>• The stated scientific conclusions require additional experiments.</td>
<td>• Authors have 60 days to revise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fundamental reworking of the presentation is required to ensure the science is sound and fully presented.</td>
<td>• Upon resubmission, Associate Editors reevaluate the manuscript and authors’ response to reviewers, and usually return to the previous reviewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reject Before Review</strong></td>
<td>• The paper has insurmountable scientific deficits.</td>
<td>No action required unless authors request an appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The subject matter is outside the scope of this journal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reject After Review</strong></td>
<td>• Extensive revisions would be required to meet the publication criteria.</td>
<td>No action required unless authors request an appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Authors are unlikely to be able to resubmit in the standard 60-day timeframe.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLOS ONE: Accept As Is (After Review)</strong></td>
<td>• The manuscript has undergone peer review and is scientifically sound.</td>
<td>• The DE will check the decision and may consult further with the Associate Editor and/or the PLOS ONE journal team if they have any concern of the manuscript’s eligibility for PLOS ONE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The subject matter is outside the scope of the journal or does not meet <em>PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases</em>’s standards for novelty and impact.</td>
<td>• Authors have 3 weeks to accept the transfer to PLOS ONE.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• The manuscript meets the <em>PLOS ONE</em> submission requirements.</td>
<td>• The Associate Editor receives an email confirming that the transfer is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The manuscript is ready to publish.</td>
<td>• The Associate Editor is named Editor on the published article in PLOS ONE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLOS ONE: Revise Before Accept</strong></td>
<td>• The manuscript has undergone peer review and is scientifically sound.</td>
<td>• Authors have 3 weeks to revise and accept transfer to PLOS ONE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The subject matter is outside the scope of the journal or does not meet <em>PLOS Computational Biology</em>’s criteria for novelty and impact.</td>
<td>• Upon resubmission, Associate Editors reevaluate the manuscript to see if it satisfies the editorial revision requests and is ready for acceptance into ONE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The manuscript meets the requirements for publication in <em>PLOS ONE</em>.</td>
<td>• The DE will check the decision and may consult further with the Associate Editor and/or the PLOS ONE journal team if they have any concern of the manuscript’s eligibility for PLOS ONE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The clarity of the presentation requires minimal revisions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLOS ONE: Accept Revision</strong></td>
<td>• You have previously issued a <em>PLOS ONE: Revise Before Accept</em> decision.</td>
<td>• The DE will check the decision and may consult further with the Associate Editor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The authors have successfully addressed all points you and the reviewers have made.
• The manuscript meets the PLOS ONE submission requirements
• The paper is ready to publish.

and/or the PLOS ONE journal team if they have any concern of the manuscript’s eligibility for PLOS ONE.
• Authors have 3 weeks to accept the transfer to PLOS ONE.
• The Associate Editor will receive an email confirming that the transfer is complete.
• The Associate Editor is named Editor on the published article in PLOS ONE.

PLOS ONE: Reject Revision
• The editors previously issued a PLOS ONE: Revise Before Accept decision.
• The editors determine that the revisions are not adequate.
• The manuscript is not ready to publish.

• The DE will check the decision before sending it to the authors.

* If the manuscript requires language editing beyond minor grammatical problems, please notify the journal office.

Requirements for Publication in ONE

If you are accepting a manuscript into ONE, make sure that the paper meets the following requirements.

Submissions in the following areas are not eligible for transfer to or acceptance in PLOS ONE:
• Non-primary research; e.g., reviews, opinions, study protocols, rebuttals
• Tobacco-funded research

PLOS ONE has specific editorial policies with regards to submissions in the following areas:
• Research using vertebrate animal models in which death is an endpoint
• Clinical trials

For additional information on the Accept to ONE process, see the Accept to PLOS ONE Manual on the Knowledge Base.

Submitting a Decision

To submit a decision, Associate Editors should log in to EM and select the “Submit Editor’s Decision and Comments” link on the manuscript action links. The Associate Editor can then choose their decision type from the drop-down menu, and then proceed to the editable, draft decision letter.
When drafting their decision letter, Associate Editors should:

- Ensure the letter clearly explains expectations of the author and reason for the decision.
- Synthesize the reviewers’ comments, selecting key phrases from the accompanying reviews to explain the reasoning behind the decision.
- Place minority reviewer comments or excessive requests in context of the decision and explain why the decision may seem to run counter to points made in the review.
- Check that all reviews and reviewer attachments are included.
- Remember to sign individual comments. Associate Editors should not provide anonymous feedback.

If an Associate Editor decides to reject a submission, they may pull a few choice words from confidential comments into the decision letter to prevent an author appeal of a rejected manuscript. Please note that PLOS encourages referrals of Research Articles that are not within the scope for *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* and rejected before review to *PLOS ONE*. If the manuscript is not scientifically sound, the Associate Editor should remove the recommendation to *PLOS ONE*.

When ready to submit their decision, Associate Editors should click “Submit Decision with Draft Letter” as this will send the decision to the Deputy Editor for approval. This letter will always go to the Deputy Editor for approval and not to the author.

Deputy Editors acting as an Associate Editor, should click “Submit Decision without notifying author” so the acting Deputy Editor can approve and send the decision.

Detailed instructions for submitting a decision within EM can be found [here](#).

<table>
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<th>Resources for Writing Decision Letters</th>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Editors can find tips for writing decision letters as well as sample letter templates in the <em>Editorial Board Knowledge Base</em>.</td>
</tr>
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**REVISES**

Manuscripts returned after Minor or Major Revisions are automatically reassigned to the same Associate Editor. At this stage, the Associate Editor should feel empowered to make a decision recommendation, and avoid sending the paper back out to reviewers if possible.

Revised manuscripts should only be sent back to reviewers that had substantial concerns in the original submission. The Associate Editor should determine whether Minor Revision or Accept recommendations have been met.
To invite reviewers, Associate Editors should follow the same process as for the initial round of reviewers and check to make sure the “Reviewer Invitation on Revision” letter is selected.

Please make all attempts to re-invite only the original reviewers to assess revised manuscripts. Additional reviewers should only be invited in extreme circumstances. We encourage Associate Editors to consult other members of the Editorial Board via a Discussion Forum rather than invite additional reviewers.

APPEALS ON DECISIONS

*PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* encourages input from all community members regarding editorial and publishing policy. Appeals of manuscript decisions should, however, be:

a) Limited to the specific manuscript in question,

b) Made only by the corresponding author,

c) Sent by email to plosntds@plos.org

If an Associate Editor receives an appeal directly, we ask that they forward this to the *PLOS NTDs* Team, who can respond on their behalf.

All appeal requests are first evaluated by the *PLOS NTDs* Team, who decide whether the appeal should proceed based on our appeal criteria. If it is unclear whether the appeal meets our criteria, the *PLOS NTDs* Team will respond to the authors to request further information.

Appeals of decisions made before review will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

<table>
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<th>Appeal Criteria</th>
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<td>Appeals will only be considered when a) a reviewer or editor is thought to have made a <strong>significant factual error</strong> or b) when his/her objectivity is compromised by a <strong>documented competing interest</strong>, and when a reversal based on either of these grounds would change the original decision.</td>
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If an appeal meets the criteria above, the *PLOS NTDs* Team will open a discussion with the Associate Editor and Deputy Editor. This discussion post will highlight the grounds of the appeal and include the author’s letter at the bottom.

Associate Editors, along with a Deputy Editor, should consider the appeal and respond to the discussion to confirm whether they would like to accept or reject the appeal. We ask that all Editors respond to appeal notices within one week of their receipt.

If a Reject decision is made (the original decision is upheld), the Associate Editor should draft a short paragraph to outline the reasons for this decision. The journal office will send the final decision to the authors.

If an Accept decision is made (the original decision is rescinded), the *PLOS NTDs* Team will consult with the editors to determine the appropriate next steps.
Please note that if the authors have cited a competing interest as the grounds of the appeal, the *PLOS NTDs* Team will invite the Editors-in-Chief to comment on the appeal instead of the original editor. This is not a reflection on an editor’s editorial judgment, but we have to take this route due to the concerns of authors. Our full policy on competing interests can be found here: [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/competing-interests](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/competing-interests)

**EDITORIAL SUPPORT**

As Associate Editors handle manuscripts, they may encounter situations where they feel that additional editorial input is needed. We strongly encourage Associate Editors to work with the other members of the *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* Editorial Board and the journal office in such cases.

**Working with the Editorial Board**

Associate Editors are encouraged to consult with each other and take advantage of the breadth of expertise and experience across the *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* community. A searchable list of Editorial Board members can be found at: [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/editorial-board](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/editorial-board)

- For manuscript-specific concerns, communicate with other Editorial Board members via the Editorial Manager “Discussion” function (see Appendix II).
- For general discussions of *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* policies and procedures, participate in the Editorial Board Knowledge Base discussion forums (see Appendix VII).

**Working with Staff**

If Associate Editors experience any problems or complications handling manuscripts, the *PLOS NTDs* Team are on hand to assist with a broad range of issues, including technical problems with Editorial Manager and dealing with substantive scientific and policy issues for specific manuscripts.

The *PLOS NTDs* Team can be reached either via:

- Email: plosntds@plos.org
- Telephone: +1 (415)-590-3548

Please note that the *PLOS NTDs* Team is based in San Francisco and are therefore only available Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm Pacific Time.
WELCOME TO THE PLOS NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES ASSOCIATE EDITOR HANDBOOK APPENDICES

In the preceding Handbook (pages 1 - 10), we reviewed the Associate Editor’s role, providing an overview of the editorial process from the time the Editor agrees to handle a submission to the final decision, including essential steps and the most important factors to bear in mind. The Handbook can be read chronologically and is designed to provide the fundamental information needed to participate in the peer review process as an Associate Editor.

In the Appendices (pages 11 - 52), we’ll go into greater depth on a range of subjects including the journal scope, our editorial and publication policies, and detailed instructions for the use of Editorial Manager. Unlike the Handbook, the Appendices need not be read in order. Consult appropriate sections when specific questions or issues arise.

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APPENDIX VIII. THE PLOS JOURNAL FAMILY

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APPENDIX I. THE PLOS NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES SCOPE

*PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is an Open Access journal devoted to the pathology, epidemiology, prevention, treatment and control of the neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), as well as public policy relevant to this group of diseases. The NTDs are defined as a group of poverty-promoting chronic infectious diseases, which primarily occur in rural areas and poor urban areas of low-income and middle-income countries. They are poverty-promoting because of their impact on child health and development, pregnancy, and worker productivity, as well as their stigmatizing features.

The major NTDs that are within the scope of *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* are listed below:

**Protozoan Infections**
- Amebiasis
- Balantidiasis
- Chagas Disease
- Giardiasis
- Human African Trypanosomiasis
- Leishmaniasis

**Helminth Infections**
- Taeniasis-Cysticercosis
- Dracunculiasis
- Echinococcosis
- Food-borne Trematodiasis
- Loiasis
- Lymphatic Filariasis
- Onchocerciasis
- Schistosomiasis
- Soil-transmitted Helminthiases (Ascariasis, Hookworm Diseases, Trichuriasis, Strongyloidiasis)
- Toxocariasis and other Larva Migrans

**Viral Infections**
- Dengue
- Japanese encephalitis
- Jungle yellow fever
- Other arboviral infections
- Rabies
- Rift Valley fever
- Viral hemorrhagic fevers

**Bacterial Infections**
- Bartonella
Bovine Tuberculosis in Humans
Buruli Ulcer
Cholera
Enteric pathogens (Shigella, Salmonella, E. coli)
Leprosy
Leptospirosis
Relapsing Fever
Trachoma
Treponematoses (Bejel, Pinta, Syphilis, Yaws)

Fungal Infections
- Mycetoma
- Paracoccidiomycosis

Ectoparasitic Infections
- Scabies
- Myiasis

Areas of Emphasis
All aspects of these diseases will be considered, including their pathogenesis, clinical features, pharmacology and treatment, diagnosis, epidemiology, vector biology, and vaccinology and prevention. Demographic, ecological and social determinants, public health, and policy aspects of these diseases (including cost-effectiveness analyses) will also be a priority. *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is pleased to publish relevant in vitro and animal studies as well as human investigations.

The journal is organized to provide additional support for authors from endemic countries and such authors are particularly encouraged to submit their research to *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*.

Nutritional Diseases
Papers that examine the link between nutrition and NTD infection will be considered for *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*.

HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis
The "big three" diseases, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, will not generally be considered for *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. Authors of papers on these three diseases should continue to submit them to one of the six other PLOS journals as appropriate. An important exception is when these three diseases are considered in the context of co-infections with the NTDs. For example, *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is interested in papers that explore integrated control of the NTDs and the "big three" diseases. Additionally, *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* will consider papers on all aspects of bovine tuberculosis affecting humans, and, on a case-by-case basis, papers on vivax malaria and related topics.
Fundamental Microbial Pathogenesis
It is recommended that papers on fundamental microbial pathogenesis and the molecular and cellular biology of the NTDs pathogens should be considered for *PLOS Pathogens*. Examples of papers that might be more appropriate for *PLOS Pathogens* would be papers on fundamental mechanisms of immune evasion by *Plasmodium*, blocking of apoptosis by *Salmonella*, population biology of *Candida*, or latency in herpes viruses. In contrast, papers examining molecular pathways as potential drug or vaccine targets would be more suitable for *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. As described above, other papers more suitable to *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* are papers on health product (i.e., drug, diagnostic, and vaccine) development, human immunology, clinical manifestations, surveillance and epidemiologic research, public health control, and health policy aspects of the NTDs.

Other Infections
Other infectious diseases will also be considered on a case-by-case basis through a presubmission inquiry to the editors. Authors should indicate in their pre-submission inquiry why they consider the infection to be a neglected tropical disease.

Public Policy
In addition to scientific and medical investigative articles, *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is committed to all aspects of the NTDs that are relevant to global public health, including important public policy statements.

Accordingly, *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* will have an engaging magazine section with dedicated editors. The magazine section will contain opinion pieces, debates, policy papers, expert commentaries on research articles, reviews, problem-based educational articles (from the laboratory, clinic, and field), interviews, and historical profiles and perspectives.
APPENDIX II. WORKING WITH EDITORIAL MANAGER

The *PLOS NTDs* submission system is called Editorial Manager (EM). In this appendix, we provide detailed instructions for performing tasks as an Associate Editor within this system, including:

- **Getting Started**
- **Registering and Signing In with ORCID**
- **Setting Unavailable Dates**
- **The Associate Editor Main Menu**
- **Viewing Submissions and Related Information**
- **Initiating a Discussion**
- **Inviting Reviewers**
- **Monitoring the Review Process**
- **Submitting a Decision**

The *PLOS NTDs* Team are also on hand to help and provide additional guidance.

### Getting Started

a) **Go to:** [https://www.editorialmanager.com/pntd/default.aspx](https://www.editorialmanager.com/pntd/default.aspx)

b) **Use the Editor Login button** to access the tasks for your editor role.

If an Associate Editor is logged into EM as a reviewer or author, they can **change their role to Associate Editor** using the drop down menu in the top-right hand corner of the screen.

c) **Click UPDATE MY INFORMATION** from the navigation links in the top-left corner of the page to verify the information in your profile is correct.

d) We require a full institutional name, country, phone number and your preferred email address(es).
Associate Editors are highly encouraged to select subject areas of expertise by completing the **Select Personal Classifications** section.

The more specific information we have regarding an Associate Editor’s expertise, the more likely it will be that they are invited to the appropriate submission.

1. **Click Select Personal Classifications**
ii. In the new window, use the Search function to identify classification within the PLOS taxonomy to represent your areas of expertise.

iii. Select the tick box next to the relevant classifications and click Add to list these as your personal classifications.

![Select Personal Classifications](image)

iv. To rank your keywords, click Submit and Continue to Rankings

v. On the following page, you can select your experience ranking as Low, Medium or High.

![Rank Personal Classifications](image)

vi. When you’re ready to proceed, click Submit

Associate Editors can also add keywords by completing the Editor Personal Keywords section. Keywords are useful for covering subject areas not included in the classification taxonomy.

**Keywords should not be used as a substitute to classifications, and all relevant classifications must also be added.**

f) Once you have entered all the relevant information, click Submit at the bottom of the page to save the additions to the account.
Registering and Signing In with ORCID

In an effort to simplify our publications process and create a more thorough, networked picture of our community, PLOS is encouraging all Associate Editors to update their profiles in Editorial Manager (EM) to include an ORCID. PLOS requires corresponding authors to provide their ORCID when submitting a manuscript.

ORCID is a unique digital identifier that differentiates your work from that of other researchers with similar names across a variety of platforms including grants, publications, online notebooks, data sets, citations, and more. It can save you time in identifying yourself, and help you avoid entering the same information over and over on different websites.

To submit an ORCID, Associate Editors can sign in to EM at https://www.editorialmanager.com/pntd and navigate to their personal profile by selecting the “Update my Information” link in the upper left of the screen. The space for the ORCID appears about halfway down the page, just below the email field.

Ensure the changes are saved before leaving the profile page. If Associate Editors do not have an ORCID yet, they can obtain one using the link on the EM profile page, or by visiting the website directly at orcid.org.

Once an ORCID is entered in EM, it can be used to sign in to the system any time.

Setting Unavailable Dates

In advance of an absence, Associate Editors should enter their unavailability in EM. To do this:

a) Click UPDATE MY INFORMATION from the navigation links in the top-left corner of the page.
b) Scroll down to the **Additional Information** section and click **Unavailable Dates**

![Unavailable Dates](image)

 c) Click **Add New Unavailable Date**
 d) Enter the **Start Date** and **End Date**
 e) Within the **Reason** field Associate Editors should specify whether they are available to handle revised submissions.

![Reason](image)

 f) Click **Submit** and then **Submit** again from the **Update My Information** page.

*See [here](#) for an instructional video.*
The Associate Editor Main Menu

When an Associate Editor logs in they will see their **Associate Editor Main Menu**. From this menu, the Associate Editor can view all their assignments.

**Submissions with:**
These folders display all submissions assigned to the Associate Editor by the number of reviews received.

**Search**

**Search Submissions**: From here, the Associate Editors can search submissions using a variety of different criteria including the manuscript number, DOI, title and author name.

**Editor ‘To-Do’ List**

**My Pending Assignments**: Displays the total number of submissions currently requiring attention from the Associate Editor.

**New Invitations**: This folder contains submissions with open invitations. The Associate Editor can either agree or decline to handle the submission from this folder.

**New Assignments**: This folder contains any submission or revised submissions that are waiting for the Associate Editor’s initial decision. From here, the Associate Editor can either submit a decision or invite reviewers.
**Submissions with Required Reviews Complete**: This folder contains all submission for which the required number of reviews has been submitted. The Associate Editor can access the submission here to submit their decision, or invite additional Reviewers.

**Submissions Requiring Additional Reviewers**: This folder contains submissions under review that have fewer than the required number of reviewers invited and/or assigned. The standard required number of reviewers is set to three within EM.

**Submissions with One or More Late Reviews**: This folder contains any submission that has one or more late Reviewers.

**Reviews in Progress**: Displays the total number of submissions currently under review.

**Reviewers Invited – No Response**: This folder contains submissions with one or more outstanding Reviewer invitation.

**Submissions Under Review**: This folder contains any submission that has one or more Reviewers who have agreed to review, but have not yet submitted their review.

**Submissions with Decisions**

**My Assignments with Decision**: This folder contains the submissions handled by the Associate Editor on which a decision has been made.

**My Assignments with Final Disposition**: This folder contains the submissions handled by the Associate Editor, which have had a final disposition set (either accept or reject).

**Responding to Invitations**

From the **Associate Editor Main Menu** an Associate Editor may:

a) Click on **New Invitations** to find a list of all the manuscripts for which they have received an invitation.

![Editor 'To-Do' List](image)

b) From the manuscript action links click **Yes I will take this Assignment** or **No I will not take this Assignment** to accept or decline the invitation.
i. If an Associate Editor declines an invitation, they should provide the reasons for this on the following screen and click Submit.

See here for an instructional video.

Viewing Submissions and Related Information

Once an Associate Editor agrees to handle a submission, it will appear in the New Assignments folder on their Associate Editor Main Menu.

To learn about the work:

a) Click New Assignments to access the submission.

b) Click View Submission from the manuscript action links.

i. High-resolution versions of each figure can be accessed by selecting the blue link at the top of the page each figure appears on.

ii. The Supporting Information files and Related Manuscripts (if included) can be access via blue links at the end of the submission file.
c) It is also possible to view the author-submitted files independently through the File Inventory action link, which will provide direct links to each component of the submission.

d) Check the Details page by clicking Details from the manuscript action links.

i. Within the Reviewers section, Associate Editors can view the Author Suggested Reviewers and Opposed Reviewers.

ii. By scrolling further down, Associate Editors also have access to the Additional Information provided by the authors on submission, including the Financial Disclosure, Competing Interests, Ethics Statement and Data Availability Statement.

**Initiating a Discussion**

Throughout the editorial process, Associate Editors are able to call on their fellow Editorial Board members and the PLOS NTDs Team via Editorial Manager’s discussion feature.

To open a new discussion

a) Click Initiate Discussion from the manuscript action links.

b) Enter a Topic at the top of the page.

c) Enter your discussion message in the field Initial Comments.
d) **Search** for your chosen participants by name or email using the available **Criterion**.
   i. Include a member of the PLOS NTDs Team on the discussion, so the team can be of assistance.

![Criterion Table]

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Is/Is not</th>
<th>Selector</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

![Search Button]

![Highlighted Member of PLOS NTDs Team]

e) Tick all the boxes to allow participant access to the manuscript, reviews and draft decision letter.
   i. Check that the participant is **Available during next 7 days** by checking the far right column. This will state **Unavailable** if the participant has entered unavailability dates within EM.

![Participant Table]

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Select</th>
<th>Editor Role</th>
<th>Editor Name</th>
<th>Current Assignments</th>
<th>View Reviews and Comments</th>
<th>Download Files (source and companion)</th>
<th>View Draft Decision Letter</th>
<th># Classification Matches</th>
<th>Available during next 7 days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editor-in-Chief</td>
<td>Aliens to Earth</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

f) Once all participants are selected, click **Proceed to Customize Letters**.

![Discussion Buttons]

![Proceed To Customize Letters]

Associate Editors should **not** open a discussion by selecting **Start Discussion Without Sending Letters** as this will mean that their participants are not notified of the discussion.

![Discussion Warning]

g) On this page, Associate Editors have the option to **Customize** the discussion invite if they wish.

h) Finally, click **Confirm Selections and Send Letters** to open the discussion.

If there is an existing discussion, Associate Editors can open a new discussion by:

a) Selecting **Discussions** from the manuscript action links.
b) Clicking **Start New Topic**.

c) Following the same procedure as before.

To continue an existing discussion:

a) From the Profile page in EM, navigate to **Submissions with Active Discussions**. A blue icon with a number will appear here to indicate new responses to open discussions.

b) Select **Discussions** from the manuscript action links.

c)

d) Click **View**.
e) To respond to a discussion comment:
   i. Enter comments within the field **Comments** and click **Post**.

f) To add new participants:
   i. Click **Add Participants**.
   
      ii. Select the other editors or staff with whom to discuss these comments, ticking all the boxes to allow participant access to the manuscript, reviews and draft decision letter.
   iii. Once all participants are selected, click **Proceed to Customize Letters**.
   iv. Click **Confirm Selections and Send Letters**.

   g) To conclude the discussion:
   i. Click **Conclude Discussion**.

To reopen a discussion:
   a) Select **Discussions** from the manuscript action links.
   b) Click **View**.
   c) Click Re-open Discussion.
   d) Enter the discussion message in the field **Comments**.
e) Select the other editors or staff with whom to discuss these comments.
   i. Tick all the boxes to allow participant access to the manuscript, reviews and draft decision letter.
   ii. Note that the original participants will not be included and will therefore need to be selected again at this stage.
   iii. Once all participants are selected, click **Proceed to Customize Letters**.
   iv. Click **Confirm Selections and Send Letters**.

Inviting Reviewers
If an Associate Editor decides to send a manuscript out for review, they should do so within EM. To invite reviewers, Associate Editors should:

a) **Click Invite Reviewers** from the manuscript action links.

b) **Click Go under Reviewer Search**.

c) **Search** for reviewers by current email address (this is the most reliable way of getting an up-to-date profile).
i. List the **Criterion** as **E-mail Address**, the selector as **Contains** and the **Value** as the email address.

ii. To search for multiple reviewers in parallel, put **OR** at the end of the line and fill in the next line for the email address of the next reviewer.

iii. To search by name, list the **Criterion** as **Last Name**, the selector as **Equal to** and the **Value** as the last name, and then on the next line list the **Criterion** as **First Name**, the selector as **Equal to** and the **Value** as the first name.

iv. Searching by **Classification** is not recommended.

d) Select the box in the **Inv.** column to invite a reviewer immediately, or select the box in the **Alt.** column to line up the reviewer as an alternative. Alternate reviewers are automatically invited when someone decline.

e) Having made the selection, Associate Editors can continue to find reviewers using the search fields and EM will remember their previous selections.

f) Having made reviewer selections, click **Proceed**.

g) From the following page, Associate Editors can change the **Letter** selection and **Customize** each letter if they would like to add anything to the default text.

h) Once ready, click **Confirm Selections and Proceed**

*See here for an instructional video.*
Revised Manuscripts

Associate Editors should check to make sure the Letter selection for revisions is set to Reviewer Invitation on Revision to ensure reviewers are aware that they have previously reviewed the article for the journal.

See here for an instructional video.

Monitoring the Review Process

During the review process, Associate Editors can find further information about the status of the reviews from the Reviewer Selection Summary and Details pages.

Details

Further information about the status of the reviews can be found from the Details page:

   a) Select Details from the manuscripts action links.
   b) Scroll down to the Reviewers section to find a list of reviewers.
   c) From here Associate Editors can view information such as:

      i. The Review Status
      ii. The Date Review Due
      iii. The Elapsed Days

If the PLOS NTDs Team has granted a reviewer extension, they will update the Date Review Due in this section.

Reviewer Selection Summary

The Reviewer Selection Summary provides further information about the reviewer invitation status and the number of expected reviews.

   a) Select Invite Reviewers from the manuscript action links.
   b) From the top of this page, Associate Editors can alter the number of required reviews from the standard three:
c) Further down, Associate Editors can find the **Selected Reviewers**. From here they can:

i. View the status of the reviewer invitations.

ii. **Un-assign** agreed reviewers or **Un-invite** reviewers with open invitations.

iii. View the reasons for a reviewer declining, by clicking **Decline Reason**.

iv. Check whether there are any outstanding **Alternate Reviewers**.

**Submitting a Decision**

Once the expected reviews have been received, the Associate Editor will be notified via email. Within EM, they can now find the submission within the folder **Submissions with Required Reviews Complete** on their **Associate Editor Main Menu**.

---

**Associate Editors should not alter the other fields within the above box.**

We request you refrain as much as possible from altering the automatic time reviewers have to respond to an invitation (5 days) or submit their review (14 days), as we have chosen these timeframes carefully based on data analysis to reduce delayed reviews. If a reviewer requires additional time to submit their review, please contact the PLOS NTDs Team so we can assist, as unfortunately altering the dates within the system does not alter the automatic reminder procedure.
To view the reviews, Associate Editors should:

a) Select **View Reviews and Comments** from the manuscript action links.

b) On this page, the Associate Editor can view the reviewers, their suggested decision and whether any reviews have been uploaded as attachments.

Note that reviewer recommendations are for the use of the editor and senior editors only; the authors will see the comments within the review, but not the recommendation itself.

c) To view the reviewer comments, click the suggested decision type for each reviewer individually.

d) The following page shows the reviewers **Comments to Editor** and **Comments to Author**.
   i. If the reviewer has uploaded an attachment as part of their review, this can be downloaded from this page.

Note that the system scrubs Microsoft files of meta data automatically, so that it is safe to send these reviews on to the authors without breaking confidentiality.
Once an Associate Editor is ready to make their decision, they can submit this by:

a) Select **Submit Editor’s Decision and Comments** from the manuscript action links.

b) Select the Decision from the drop-down menu at the top of this page.

c) **DO NOT** enter your comments into the **Confidential Comments to Editor** or **Comments to Author** fields. These fields display the reviewers’ comments only.

d) **Click Proceed** and then **Proceed** again

e) This takes you to the editable decision letter. Associate Editors are encouraged to enter the reasons for their decision within this letter. Associate Editors **should not** enter their comments as an additional anonymous review.

f) If there are reviewer attachments, check that the **Allow Author Access** box is ticked for the attachment towards the bottom of the page.

g) When ready to submit the decision, **click Submit Decision with Draft Letter**.
h) The draft decision will be sent to the Senior Editor’s desktop to review, and the Senior Editor will send it onto the authors.
APPENDIX III. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PUBLICATION PROCESS
Presubmission Inquiry

Authors are strongly encouraged to send a presubmission inquiry before making a full submission to PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases.

Submitting a presubmission inquiry enables authors to receive a fast response from an Editor-in-Chief as to the suitability of the article for the journal. All the author needs to provide is a cover letter and abstract.

The Deputy Editor will review the information provided and can then either encourage or discourage the full submission. In some cases the Editors-in-Chief may consult with an Associate Editor via a discussion before making a decision.

Please note an encouraged presubmission inquiry does not indicate an obligation to proceed further with the full article.

Submission

All submissions to PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases first undergo an initial technical check, during which journal staff consider whether the authors have included all the necessary materials for submission. Manuscripts that pass this step are then assigned to a Deputy Editor by the PLOS NTDs Team, ready for editorial consideration.

Preprints

PLOS encourages authors to post preprints as a way to accelerate the dissemination of research. Authors of manuscripts in biology and the life sciences have the option to concurrently post their manuscript to the bioRxiv preprint server as part of PLOS NTDs initial submission.

Editors will be notified via email if handling a manuscript with an associated bioRxiv preprint.

PLOS NTDs encourages editors to consider comments and feedback available on the preprint record to inform their editorial decision, and where relevant, editors may incorporate those comments in their editorial feedback to authors.

Editorial Process

Our aim is to provide all authors with an efficient, courteous, and constructive editorial process. To ensure the fairest and most objective decision-making, the editorial process is run as a partnership between the PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases Editors-in-Chief, the board of Deputy Editors, and a team of academic experts who act as Associate Editors (AEs). These individuals, all of whom are members of the PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases Editorial Board, are leaders in their fields and represent the full breadth of research on NTDs.

Initial Evaluation

Submitted manuscripts are assigned to a Deputy Editor, who then assigns it to an appropriate Associate Editor. The Associate Editor promptly evaluates the paper and decides whether it is likely to meet the requirements of providing enough of an advance in a particular field and describing a sufficient body of work to support that claim. If so, the paper is sent out for peer review.
Peer Review Process
If the manuscript is sent for external review, the Associate Editor must then identify and invite suitable
reviewers, monitor the review process, and evaluate the reviews when they are submitted to determine when it
is time to make a decision. Associate Editors work to secure three reviewers, however, if they have sufficient
comments having received two reviews they may proceed with a decision.

The selection of appropriate and responsive reviewers is paramount for the success of the review process. We
decline on reviewers for a particular manuscript based on many factors, including expertise, reputation, specific
recommendations of authors and other Editorial Board members, and the Associate Editor’s own knowledge of
a reviewer’s past performance.

The reviewers will be asked to assess the technical and scientific merits of the work. Where relevant, work
presented in a manuscript will be subject to a rigorous review of the statistical methods used. As a default,
reviewer’s names are not included along with their comments to authors, but PLOS Neglected Tropical
Diseases does encourage open (non-anonymous) peer-review.

Decisions
Once the reviews have been received and considered by the Associate Editor, they will submit their decision,
along with a draft decision letter, to the Deputy Editor for approval. The Deputy Editor will then send this
decision letter to the corresponding author. The decision will be within one of the following categories:

- Reject
- Major revision
- Minor revision
- Accept without revision

Revisions
If a minor or major revision decision is selected, the authors will have 60 days to revise their manuscript.

Once an author has resubmitted their manuscript, this will then be assigned directly back to the Associate Editor
ready for further editorial consideration. Sometimes, re-review or additional statistical review will be required,
but in general we aim to make decisions without involving multiple rounds of review. The cycle of manuscript
review and revision will then continue until the manuscript is accepted or rejected.

Production and Publication
Before formal acceptance of the article for publication, the manuscript and all related files will be checked by
PLOS staff for a final quality control check, to ensure they comply with all essential formatting and manuscript
preparation requirements. Staff members may send requests to authors to reformat their manuscripts to
address issues including data availability, figure quality, table formatting, and equation and algorithm
formatting.
Once formally accepted, the authors’ files are transferred into our production system and will be carefully tagged to general XML and PDF files, but will not be subject to detailed copyediting. Manuscripts will not be subject to detailed copyediting, however, authors will have the opportunity to proof the PDF files.

*PLOS NTDs* will publish an early version of the manuscript in advance of the final article at the same time that the author receives the proof. The date the early version is posted will be the article’s publication date and the final version will be published with the same URL and DOI.

All articles are published in PDF and HTML, with an XML download article. Our articles are also archived in PubMed Central, usually within about 48-72 hours.

**Post-Publication Activity**

**Post-Publication Discussion**

We encourage post-publication discussion at *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. Editors and readers should feel free to post a comment and share their thoughts about the strengths and weaknesses of the paper.

Associate Editors can initiate a discussion on a paper by logging into the *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* publication website (which is independent of the journal submission system), and adding a comment via the Comments tab on the article page. Comments from the paper’s Associate Editors help to promote reader participation and can add critical insight and interpretation to the published paper.

We also appreciate tweets (follow us @PLOSNTDs) and blog posts.

**Corrections**

In some cases, errors or concerns about misconduct arises after publication. Such issues may come to the attention of the *PLOS NTDs* Team via the authors, a member of the Editorial Board, or readers through various mediums, including email and the online commenting system.

*PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* staff individually evaluate each case to determine the type of correction based on the nature of the error and consider how it would best be corrected on the PLOS journal website as well as in the external archives and databases with which PLOS shares records (e.g., PubMed Central and PubMed/MEDLINE). If a requested correction might affect (or appear to affect) the results of a manuscript, the *PLOS NTDs* Team will consult the editors who handled the paper for their advice on the severity of the error and how to proceed.

Corrections take the following forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error</th>
<th>On PLOS site</th>
<th>PubMed, PubMed Central, &amp; MEDLINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note</td>
<td>Does not significantly affect scientific understanding of article or publication record</td>
<td>Author submits online comment attached to article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher’s Note</td>
<td>Does not significantly affect scientific understanding of article or publication (introduced by PLOS)</td>
<td>PLOS submits online comment to article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Correction</td>
<td>Significantly affects scientific understanding of article and/or publication record</td>
<td>PLOS publishes correction linked to original article</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix III
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression of Concern</th>
<th>Cannot clearly determine whether concerns affect scientific understanding of article or indicate potential misconduct</th>
<th>PLOS publishes expression of concern linked to original article</th>
<th>Expression of concern indexed and lined to original article</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retraction</td>
<td>Overall findings of the article are not reliable, either for genuine error or misconduct</td>
<td>PLOS publishes retraction linked to original article</td>
<td>Retraction indexed and linked to original article</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLOS participates in the CrossMark service, a multi-publisher initiative to provide a standard way for readers to locate the most up-to-date version of an article. The CrossMark logo is displayed both on the HTML and the PDF version of the article. Clicking on the CrossMark logo will tell you if there have been any updates (e.g. corrections, retractions or expressions of concern) to the version of the work you are viewing. In addition, formal corrections, expressions of concern, and retractions are published in the PubMed Central archive (PMC) and reflected in the PubMed/MEDLINE databases.
APPENDIX IV. FRONT MATTER AND OTHER CONTENT

In addition to publishing original research papers, *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* has an engaging magazine section with dedicated editors. The majority of the magazine section is not solicited by the journal, and we welcome ideas for articles.

### Front Matter at PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases

- **Editorial**: These 600- to 800-word articles are written in-house by the Editor-in-Chief or a member of the Editorial Board.

- **Viewpoints**: Viewpoints are opinion pieces grounded in evidence. The word limit is 1,500 words.

- **Debate**: The Debate highlights topical, emerging, or controversial issues in the NTDs field, such as controversies about the best treatment or prevention approach. Debates will be commissioned from two or more authors with differing points of view. Each author has up to 800 words and 10 references to outline their initial viewpoint, and then 400 words and 5 references to respond to the opposing viewpoint.

- **Policy Platform**: These articles provide a platform to discuss specific policies that could improve the lives of those at risk of, or affected by, the NTDs. New and specific policy proposals that arise from high-level national or international meetings will be considered for this section, but we will not publish traditional "meeting reports." These articles are usually 2,000 words, with up to 25 references.

- **Review**: In these articles, the author reviews the best available evidence on a topic relevant to the NTDs community. The word limit is 3,000 words, with 50-80 references.

- **Expert Commentary**: In this article, we commission an expert to comment on a Research Article published in *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. The word limit is 1,000 words, with up to 15 references.

- **From Innovation to Application**: These short articles (1,000 words, 10 references) discuss new technologies, such as drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics, relevant to NTDs.

- **Photo Quiz**: These articles provide question-and-answer challenges that illustrate a key clinical issue in the diagnosis, management, or prevention of a neglected tropical disease.

- **Symposium**: This section has four sub-types:
  - Laboratory Symposium
  - Clinical Symposium
  - Control Symposium
  - Social, Cultural, Economic Symposium
  In each case, the article begins by presenting a short "real-world" problem or challenge, and then uses this problem as the basis for an educational piece of up to 2,000 words, with 25 references.

- **Historical Profiles and Perspectives**: These articles look back in history to discuss a notable figure or a control program that worked or failed. These are problem-based learning articles, up to 2,000 words long.

- **Interviews**: These articles are up to 1,000 words long, and the author interviews a person who has made an important contribution to the fight against NTDs.

Further information about these article types can be found here: [http://www.plosntds.org/static/guidelines#other](http://www.plosntds.org/static/guidelines#other)
The editorial process for Front Matter Articles is similar to that of a Research Article. Associate Editors invited to handle a Front Matter Article should therefore follow the same procedure as outlined in this handbook.

There are no publication charges associated with these articles.

Collections
In order to highlight specific topics, from time to time *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* gathers together collections of articles. These can contain both research and front matter articles, although the criteria for inclusion differ between collections.

There are also several cross-journal collections, containing articles from across the suite of PLOS journals, which are managed by the [PLOS Collections Team](http://www.ploscollections.org/static/pntdCollections).

For a current list of *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* collections visit our collections page: [http://www.ploscollections.org/static/pntdCollections](http://www.ploscollections.org/static/pntdCollections)
APPENDIX V. EDITORIAL AND PUBLISHING POLICIES

This appendix is designed to give an introduction to the PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases editorial and publishing policies. We highlight specific issues and policies that Associate Editors may regularly encounter.

This is not designed to be a complete guide and Associate Editors are encouraged to review the full list of editorial and publishing policies here: http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/editorial-and-publishing-policies.

Associate Editors should notify the PLOS NTDs Team immediately if they become aware of a breach of an editorial or publishing policy.

Competing Interests

PLOS defines a competing interest (also known as a conflict of interest or COI) as any relationship that interferes with, or could reasonably be perceived as interfering with, the complete and objective presentation, peer review, editorial decision-making, or publication of a manuscript. Competing interests can arise in relationship to an organization or another person. Such relationships may be:

- Professional
- Personal
- Financial

The following are examples of possible competing interest-related breaches of publication ethics:

- An author does not fully declare a competing interest
- A reviewer submits a review for which he or she has a competing interest
- An Associate Editor handles a manuscript for which he or she has a competing interest

Declaring all potential competing interests is a requirement at PLOS and is integral to the transparent reporting of research. Editors and reviewers must declare their own competing interests and if necessary disqualify themselves from involvement in the assessment of a manuscript.

Common reasons for editors and reviewers to recuse themselves from the peer review process may include but are not limited to:

- They work at the same institution or organization as an author, currently or recently
- They collaborate with an author, currently or recently
- They have published with an author during the past 5 years
- They have held grants with an author, currently or recently
- They have a personal relationship with an author that does not allow them to evaluate the manuscript objectively
Associate Editors should consider whether they have a competing interest and if so decline to edit a submission, including the reason for this in their response. If an Associate Editor discovers they have a competing interest whilst evaluating a submission, they should notify the PLOS NTDs Team and recuse themselves.

Associate Editors are also responsible for considering author and reviewer competing interests when making editorial decisions.

The full competing interest policy can be found here: http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/competing-interests

Reviewer Exclusions
Upon submission of a manuscript, authors are asked whether they wish to exclude any specific academic editors or reviewers from the peer review of their article. We ask that Associate Editors respect these requests so long as this does not interfere with the objective and thorough assessment of the article.

Associate Editors can find a list of any author opposed reviewers by selecting the manuscript action link Invite Reviewers and the clicking Author’s Reviewer Preferences. This information can also be found on the Details page of the manuscript.

If evaluation by an opposed reviewer is required, Associate Editors should contact the PLOS NTDs Team prior to inviting this reviewer.

Confidentiality
Editors are required to treat all submitted manuscripts in strict confidence. We expect that editors will not make use of any material or take advantage of any information they gain through the peer review process.

Further information can be found here: http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/ethical-publishing-practice#loc-confidentiality

Sharing of Data, Materials and Software
Publication at PLOS is conditional upon the agreement of the authors to make freely available any materials and information described in their publication that may be reasonably requested by others.

On submission, authors are asked to complete a Data Availability Statement, which will be included on the published articles, if accepted. Whilst performing their technical checks, the PLOS NTDs Team will check whether a submission meets the journal’s requirements and may request the advice of the Associate Editor as a subject matter expert.

Associate Editors are encouraged to ready the full policy in full, along with its FAQs which cover questions such as “To what data does this policy apply?” and “What are the exceptions to making the data publicly available?”

When evaluating a manuscript, we ask that Associate Editors keep in mind whether the authors adhere to standards in their field for data availability, and whether all materials and information that could be reasonably requested by others has been made freely available. Associate Editors should contact the PLOS NTDs Team if they identify any problems.
Publication and Research Ethics
Maintaining high ethical standards is a collaboration between the PLOS NTDs Team and Editorial Board, and in many cases the Associate Editor’s expertise and subject area knowledge makes them better suited to identify potential misconduct.

Associate Editors should consider all aspects of publication and research ethics when considering a manuscript for publication.

If an Associate Editor becomes aware of potential problems, they should contact the PLOS NTDs Team.

Publication Ethics
All PLOS Journals are members of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), abide by its Code of Conduct, and aim to adhere to its Best Practice Guidelines. In cases of suspected or alleged misconduct, the PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases Team will contact the handling editors and Editor-in-Chief, and work with them to resolve the issue following the relevant COPE flowchart.

Further information about our Publication Ethics Policies can be found here:
http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/ethical-publishing-practice

Suspected Plagiarism:
PLOS has incorporated Similarity Check, powered by iThenticate, into its journal-wide submission system in order to screen submitted content for originality before publication. PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases screens a subset of articles at the first revision stage. Not all articles are, however, are screened and Associate Editors should therefore contact the PLOS NTDs Team if they have any concerns.

Assessing Cases of Suspected Plagiarism
If the PLOS NTDs Team identifies an issue with a manuscript following the screening process, they will bring this to the attention of the handling editors to ask whether they think the overlap is at a sufficient level to require further action.

The PLOS NTDs Team will provide their notes as well as a report produced by Similarity Check, to enable the editors to make this decision. The following points should be helpful when interpreting this report:

- In the first section of the PDF, entitled 'Paper text', the abstract and article text are provided, with each instance of overlap with other sources highlighted in a different color.
- In the second section of the PDF, entitled 'Sources', details the paper’s degree of overlap compared with the various sources. Each source is numbered and color coded to match the instances of overlap highlighted in the 'paper text' section.
- We don’t generally find the 'similarity index' provided in the top right hand corner of the file to be all that useful; examining the individual instances is a more realistic indicator of the degree of overlap.

Editors may find the COPE Guidelines on text recycling and plagiarism helpful when considering a potential case of plagiarism.

Research Ethics
On submission, authors are asked to submit an ethics statement if their study involved human participants, specimens or tissue samples, or vertebrate animals, embryos or tissues. The PLOS NTDs Team will check that the statement provided meets the journal requirements during their technical checks. Associate Editors should,
however, consider research ethics during their evaluation of a submission and notify the PLOS NTDs Team if they identify a problem.

The PLOS policy on human and animal research can be found here: http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/animal-research

Biosecurity and Dual Use Research of Concern
PLOS recognizes that certain research may fall into the category of "dual use research of concern". This is defined by the NSABB as any "biological research with legitimate scientific purpose that may be misused to pose a biologic threat to public health and/or national security." As an Open Access publisher, PLOS remains committed to the widespread dissemination of research while being sensitive to the issues of responsible publication standards. We expect that the potential risks of publishing a scientific paper will outweigh the benefits in only the rarest circumstances. On occasion, PLOS reserves the right to consider manuscript submissions within this context. In addition to the usual scientific scrutiny, such submissions may also be referred to an internal PLOS Dual Use Committee for further deliberation.

When handling a manuscript describing such dual use research of concern, the Associate Editor should contact the PLOS NTDs Team to discuss how to proceed.
APPENDIX VI. THE PLOS NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES EDITORIAL BOARD

Organizational Chart

Editors-in-Chief

Deputy
Editor-in-Chief

Deputy Editors

Associate Editors

Editorial Advisory Board

Editorial Advisory Board
The Editorial Advisors play a unique part in the leadership of PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases and help shape the journal to meet the needs of the scientific community. They are rarely invited to handle papers directly, but rather provide advice on high-level decision required by the journal.

Editors-in-Chief
The Editors-in-Chief (EICs) provide overall leadership of the journal and the editorial board, and are the main point of contact between the editorial board and PLOS. The EICs have the ultimate responsibility for setting the goals, direction, and contents of the journal.

With the support from the PLOS NTDs Team, the EICs are responsible for setting editorial policies at the journal that will ensure timely, constructive, and fair review of papers. In addition, they are responsible for continually identify improvements and innovations that can be made to the journal processes and the editorial scope of the journal.

The EICs also look at all of the journal’s presubmission inquiries and decide whether to encourage or discourage particular submissions.
Deputy Editor-in-Chief
The Deputy Editor-in-Chief (DEiC) will provide support for the Editors-in-Chief where needed, and will assist the journal staff in solving any issues that arise. The DEiC will be a resource upon which all Editorial Board members can draw.

Deputy Editors
Deputy Editors serve as leaders of the journal and help guide both the content and development of the journal in their areas of expertise. Deputy Editors are expected to:

- Advise editors and staff members in consultation sessions.
- Make an early assessment of the quality and scope of papers.
- Assign Associate Editors.
- For appeal requests or cases of mixed reviews, help guide the Associate Editor in reaching a decision.
- Process final decisions on manuscripts and send decision letters.
- Help shape journal policy.
- Advocate and spread awareness of the journal to the NTDs community

Deputy Editors operate at a higher level by evaluating submitted papers, assigning Associate Editors, and then evaluating the decision letters drafted by Associate Editors before they are sent out. Deputy Editors are also available for consultation at any stage of the peer review process.

Associate Editors
*PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* regularly uses a combination of formal board members and guests to edit papers. Associate Editors oversee the peer review process for the journal, including evaluation submissions, selecting reviewers and assessing their comments, and making editorial decisions.

A complete list of members of the *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* Editorial Board can be found on the journal site.
APPENDIX VIII. PLOS PROFILE

Getting Started
A PLOS profile will be set up for you when you join the Editorial Board, unless you already have one under the same email address we have on file. Your login information will be the same for the Editorial Board Knowledge Base, and will be included in your Welcome email along with information on how to select a password.

Once you have a profile and have selected a password, sign in and out of your account by clicking the “sign in/out” link at the top right of any of the journal pages. To update your profile and adjust your preferences, click the Profile at the top right of any journal page or the following link:

https://community.plos.org/account/edit-profile

A PLOS profile allows users to access the different PLOS websites using the same login information. Currently, editors can use their profiles to login to the password protected portions of the journal websites (http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/ for example) and the editor Knowledge Base websites. In the future, we will be expanding the PLOS profile system to include more of the tools we use every day.

Commenting
Associate Editors are encouraged to participate in post-publication discussion by commenting on articles they handled, as well as other articles published in their field.

To submit a comment, click the Post a new comment link on the Comments tab. If you are not signed in to your PLOS Profile, you will be asked to sign in before proceeding.

Email Alerts
To set up alerts for newly published content, click the Profile link at the top right of any of the journal pages and then select Alerts & Notifications. Updates about new content published in all of the PLOS journals may be received weekly or monthly.

It is also possible to conduct an advanced search within any of the journals and save the query to receive alerts for this specific search. Perform an advanced search by clicking the advanced search link below the search bar on any of the journal pages or at the following link:

http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/search

When the search is completed, click the Search Alert button on the right side of the screen to set up either a weekly or monthly email alert for new articles that meet the search criteria. These search results are also available as an RSS feed by clicking the RSS button next to the Search Alert button. You can manage all existing search alerts by clicking Alerts & Notifications on the Profile page.
APPENDIX VIII. THE PLOS JOURNAL FAMILY

The PLOS Journals

PLOS publishes a suite of influential journals from all areas of science and medicine. Each journal has unique publication criteria and editorial models. In addition to *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, we publish two flagship journals, *PLOS Medicine* and *PLOS Biology*, which aim to publish high impact research in their respective fields; three further “community journals”: *PLOS Computational Biology, PLOS Genetics* and *PLOS Pathogens*; and *PLOS ONE*. The table below highlights the differences between these journals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ONE</th>
<th>Community journals</th>
<th>Medicine, Biology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Areas covered</td>
<td>All science and medicine</td>
<td>Specific research areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial selection considers impact?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish articles other than primary research?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional staff editors</td>
<td>Provide assistance to Associate Editors when needed</td>
<td>None; Publication staff support volunteer Editors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transferring Submissions between Journals

Authors may submit work to any PLOS journal, and yet there may be another PLOS journal for which it is more appropriate. For instance, work that is out of the scope of *PLOS Medicine* may be appropriate for *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. Another example might be work that is not considered a significant advance by *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* but could be well-suited for *PLOS ONE*. In such instances, editors can recommend that the authors transfer the work to one of the other PLOS journals. Note, however, that some article types differ between journals and therefore cannot be transferred. In particular, no type of article other than primary research can be considered at *PLOS ONE*.

If the authors agree to transfer their submission between PLOS journals, they may move forward with a direct transfer, in which the manuscript, along with any reviewer or editor comments, is transferred to the receiving journal for consideration. Note that direct transfers should only be encouraged if the manuscript is technically sound and is being rejected by the original journal because it is out of the journal’s scope or does not have high enough perceived impact.

Accepting into *PLOS ONE* vs. Suggesting a Transfer

The aim of the Accept into ONE decisions process is to expedite the publication of rigorous research without the need for additional cycles of review. As such, only manuscripts that have already undergone peer review and describe a study reported to the highest standards are eligible for acceptance into ONE.

Associate Editors may still recommend manuscripts for transfer to *PLOS ONE* if they are rejected before peer review, but the manuscript’s acceptance into ONE will take place at the discretion of the journal.

For more information on how to use this new process, see the [Accept to PLOS ONE Manual](#) on the Knowledge Base.

Appendix VIII
Alternatively, the authors may be advised to first revise their submission based on reviewer and editor feedback before resubmitting to another PLOS journal. They may then submit the revised version to the other journal, along with a response to reviewers, as they would for a typical revision. This revised manuscript will then be reconsidered at the new journal.

The PLOS Business Model
PLOS is a not-for-profit Open Access publisher. Among other things, this descriptor means that all of our content is free to readers. We never charge subscription fees to read our papers. When a manuscript is accepted for publication, authors must pay a publication fee. There is no submission fee. Further information regarding the publication fees for all journals can be found here: https://www.plos.org/publication-fees.

Global Pricing Initiative
PLOS is committed to the widest possible global participation in Open Access publishing. To this end, authors’ research that is funded primarily (50% or more of the work contained within the article) by an institution or organization from eligible low- and middle-income countries will receive partial (group 2 countries) or full (group 1 countries) fee funding paid by the PLOS Global Participation Initiative (GPI).

PLOS Publication Fee Assistance
PLOS believes that lack of funds should not be a barrier to Open Access publication. The Publication Fee Assistance (PFA) program is intended for authors who are unable to pay all or part of their publication fees and can demonstrate financial need. Authors must apply for Publication Fee Assistance at time of submission through the manuscript submission system. Further information about the PLOS Publication Fee Assistance Program can be found here: https://www.plos.org/fee-assistance.

Editorial Independence
All editorial decisions are made completely independently of any financial considerations. None of the authors’ financial information is shared with any editor before, during, or after the peer review process.

Open Access
PLOS applies the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license to works we publish. This license was developed to facilitate Open Access – namely, free immediate access to, and unrestricted reuse of, original works of all types. Under this license, the authors retain ownership of the copyright for their content but agree to make articles legally available for reuse, without permission or fees, for virtually any purpose. Anyone may copy, distribute or reuse these articles, as long as the author and original source are properly cited. As such, we cannot publish any previously copyrighted materials, with few exceptions.

Open Access encompasses a number of issues, including author rights, reader rights, and machine readability. Learn more about the spectrum of Open Access with the “How Open Is It?” pamphlet.

Innovations in Publishing
PLOS aims to develop innovations in scholarly publishing that will improve scientific communication. These efforts are ongoing; a subset of our projects is discussed below.
Post-Publication Interactions
Publishing the article is the beginning of an ongoing conversation about the work. We aim to capture some of that activity through article-level metrics – data about the number of times the article was viewed, downloaded, bookmarked, and shared in various ways – and public comments.

Article-level metrics, or ALMs, offer a mechanism to determine the real significance of an individual article instead of relying on coarser measures like in which journal it was published. Our “Search” feature allows users to filter their results based on certain ALMs. We are constantly working to improve our ALMs by adding new types of usage to track and providing benchmarking measurements that allow users to compare ALMs across different articles more accurately.

Users may post comments on any of our published articles. With this feature, we aim to give readers from around the world a way to communicate about work in their fields and so foster a productive, collaborative space for critical discussion of the literature. Users may post questions for the authors, to which the authors frequently respond, or general comments or feedback about the work. We hope that this public discussion forum about published work will help make scientific communication more effective and efficient.

Rich Citations
Just as the static PDF is no longer sufficient to best represent scientific research outcomes that extend beyond the article, the static reference list at the end of a scholarly article is no longer sufficient to discover the depth of information contained within the network of those references. Rich citations, an advanced form of scholarly reference, carry detailed information about the citing paper, the cited object and the relationship between the two. This improved data format for bibliographic references and the ability to connect references among articles as structured metadata enables enhanced content, machine readability and relational discovery. The PLOS overlay for its articles using rich citation data in turn makes the list of references a research tool in itself. The rich citations open source API is available for interested developers.

PLOS Currents
PLOS Currents is our rapid micropublication platform that aims to minimize the delay between the generation and publication of new research. Authors submit small pieces of work that may be valuable for rapid sharing with the research community, including research in progress, single figures or experiments, protocols, datasets, and negative results. Submissions are peer-reviewed within days of submission and published immediately upon acceptance.

PLOS Currents currently covers six areas:

- **Disasters** (any content relevant to disasters, natural or manmade, local, regional or global)
- **Outbreaks** (all aspects of infectious disease outbreaks with impact or potential impact on human health, including respiratory pathogens and foodborne and travel-related outbreaks)
- Huntington Disease
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Tree of Life (phylogenetic research that informs our understanding of organismal evolution)
- Evidence on Genomic Tests
APPENDIX IX: FURTHER READING

**PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases:** [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/)

**Journal Information:** [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/journal-information](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/journal-information)

**Open Access License:** [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/content-license](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/content-license)

**HowOpenIsIt?** [https://www.plos.org/how-open-is-it](https://www.plos.org/how-open-is-it)


**Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE):** [http://publicationethics.org/](http://publicationethics.org/)

**PLOS NTDs Editorial Board:** [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/editorial-board](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/editorial-board)

**Author Guidelines:** [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/submission-guidelines](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/submission-guidelines)

**Commitment to Capacity:** [http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/commitment-to-capacity](http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/s/commitment-to-capacity)

**Article-Level Metrics Information:** [https://plos.org/article-level-metrics](https://plos.org/article-level-metrics)

**Speaking of Medicine:** [http://blogs.plos.org/speakingofmedicine/](http://blogs.plos.org/speakingofmedicine/)