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Research capacity building

The *African Journal of Primary Health Care and Family Medicine* (PHCFM) is aware of the need to build research capacity in Africa. We would like to improve the chance of acceptance for manuscripts from novice researchers and to improve the quality and number of peer reviewers.

We are delighted to announce two developmental opportunities for novice researchers and peer reviewers. The Editorial Board members are supporting these opportunities and we are grateful for their willingness to assist with this.

Support to novice researchers

Prior to submission we are offering the opportunity for developmental feedback on your manuscript from a member of the Editorial Board. The purpose of this feedback will be to improve the quality of the manuscript and to help you develop the scholarship needed for successful publication. The Board member does not become an author, although you may want to acknowledge their contribution.

We have defined novice researchers as a first author of a manuscript who has only one or no prior publications in the field of family medicine or primary health care. They should be intending to develop as a researcher in the longer term so that the mentoring has a potential impact beyond just the manuscript itself. Most submissions to the journal come from South Africa and so we prioritise support for researchers from other African countries.

Our ability to offer this pre-submission feedback is limited by the capacity of the Editorial Board. If you are interested, then you should approach the Editor-in-Chief who will check your eligibility and forward your manuscript to a member of the Board. The manuscript should be in a submission ready state as per the guidelines to authors.

On submission, all manuscripts will go through the usual peer review process and there is no guarantee that the manuscript will be accepted for publication. Although this mentoring from the Board is free, the usual Article Processing Charges will apply on submission.

Development of peer reviewers

Peer reviewing is an essential service that researchers offer to each other to improve the scientific validity of original research prior to publication and to decline work that has significant flaws. Peer reviewing is also important for establishing yourself as a researcher and academic. We are always looking for new peer reviewers from the disciplines of family medicine and primary health care.

New peer reviewers need to have published at least one original research article as a first author and preferably more than one, but are not yet an established researcher. New peer reviewers are twinned with a member of the Board to peer review the same manuscript. The editorial board member will share their review with the new peer reviewer and also give feedback to them on how to improve their review. Mentoring can take place over 1-2 such manuscripts over the year.

Our ability to offer this mentoring is limited by the capacity of the Editorial Board. If you are interested, then you should approach the Editor-in-Chief who will check your eligibility and twin you with a member of the Board. New peer reviewers should indicate their research and methodological interests and as far as possible we will try and match these interests.

Retention of new peer reviewers by PHCFM will depend on your development and performance as judged by the Editor and member of the Board after completing reviews of two manuscripts.

Best wishes,



PROF BOB MASH

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: PHCFM JOURNAL

editor@phcfm.org