

Authorship: Applications and Guidance

STANDARDS

The [Authorship policy](#) acknowledges that the significance of a particular method of ordering authorship may be understood in a given setting but that order of authorship has no generally agreed-upon meaning across all academic disciplines. Additionally, standards for "substantive" and "scholarly content" differ among the various disciplines and publishing venues. The Authorship policy requires that criteria for attributing and ordering authorship by practitioners of specific disciplines at Iowa State University will be widely recognized and consistent across that discipline as a whole, and generally consistent with the standards of the publication in which the work appears, including the following.

Authorship roles

As a practical issue for multi-author publications in disciplines where "lead" (also known in some fields as "corresponding" or "senior") authors are the norm, collaborators on a publication are to agree as early in the planning process as practical on one author as lead. The remaining authors are then designated as participating authors. Lead designation is often intended as an administrative role and doesn't necessarily imply greater individual contribution to the publication. In disciplines where authorship practices are typically more consensus based, collaborators are encouraged to proactively discuss responsibility for administrative matters relating to publication submittal.

Lead author

At the outset of the study *all authors* should discuss the outline of work and a tentative order of authorship should be established with the logic governing this order made explicit. As projects proceed, agreements regarding authorship may need to be changed.

The lead author is responsible for the integrity of the work as a whole, and ensuring that reasonable care and effort has been taken to determine that all the data are complete, accurate, reasonably interpreted, and accessible to others within the norms of the discipline and requirements of the publishing venue. It is the responsibility of the lead author to assure that the contributions of all participating authors are properly recognized. This individual assumes overall responsibility for the publication and typically serves as the managerial and corresponding author.

In collaborative projects spanning multiple disciplines and institutions, it may be possible to assign more than one lead author with appropriate explanatory footnotes as prescribed in journal policies. It should be noted that depending on the discipline and the nature of the collaborative work, the lead author need not be the first, last, or most senior author, nor necessarily the principal investigator or project leader.

In consensus situations, all authors jointly share responsibility. The lead author (or consensus authors) is (are) responsible for confirming that all participating authors meet the Authorship policy's authorship criteria, for providing the manuscript's final draft to each participating author for review and approval, and for following any journal-specific requirements governing author review and consent (such as signature forms).

Participating author

Each author of a publication, regardless of relative seniority or level of contribution, is responsible for providing confirmation of authorship in accordance with the Authorship policy and the requirements of the selected publication venue. Confirmation of authorship includes verifying review and approval of the

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final manuscript to be published. Each author is responsible for the content of those portions of the manuscript ascribed to them, including the integrity of any applicable research.

An individual offered authorship of a publication for which they do not satisfy the criteria for authorship as set forth in the Authorship policy should decline authorship.

All reasonable attempts will be made to seek confirmation in accordance with the Authorship policy from individuals who meet authorship criteria but have left the institution (e.g., students who have graduated) or are no longer in contact with the lead or other participating authors.

In the event of a death of a contributing author, although there is no general prescription, it would be ethical to list the deceased person as a co-author with an explanation of significant contribution.

Appropriate use of acknowledgements and disclosures

The nature and character of acknowledgements appearing in manuscripts varies considerably depending on a given discipline. The following principles are meant to provide guidance but not contradict the requirements prescribed by specific journals or publications.

- "Acknowledgements" should communicate to granting agencies, promotion committees, scholarly readers, and others the specific contributions that are insufficient under this policy to justify authorship. Such contributions include general supervision of a research group, assistance in obtaining funding, technical support, providing standard research materials (i.e. plasmids, antibodies etc.), critically reviewing a manuscript and assistance in writing and editing the manuscript.

Individuals who may have participated in the development of a publication but who do not meet the criteria for authorship, such as editorial assistants, illustrators, medical writers, personnel collecting or analyzing data in a routine format using routine protocols or other individuals, provide a valuable contribution to the writing and editing of publications. Since those contributions do not meet the criteria for authorship under the Authorship policy, these individuals should be listed in an acknowledgements section of the published work.

- All authors, in their manuscripts submitted for review and publication, must disclose the source(s) of support (financial and/or tangible resources) for the work unless otherwise instructed by the journal or publication. Examples of support include but are not limited to i) research and educational grants, ii) contracts, iii) corporate sponsorships, iv) gifts, and v) institutional sources (departmental, collegiate, or central administration).
- Authors shall fully disclose all relevant financial interests that could be viewed as a potential conflict of interest in accordance with University policies, including Iowa State University's [Conflicts of Interest and Commitment](#) policy and guidelines.
- Since it is possible that readers may infer endorsement of the data and conclusions from an acknowledgement, those acknowledged should give written permission and a disclaimer shall be included specifically indicating that inclusion in the acknowledgements does not imply endorsement by those named.

A new publication should meet the criteria for a new intellectual contribution to the discipline and if previously published information is used, it should be cited.