Manual for topical editors – interactive journals

The following text should serve members of the editorial board as a handbook for their editorial duties. It gives some general information on working with the online editorial support system – the Copernicus Office Editor – and explains the process of appointing a topical editor for a manuscript as well as the different states of the review process.

In case any questions arise, please contact the Copernicus Publications Editorial Support by email (editorial@copernicus.org) or phone (+49-551-900339-40).

The Copernicus Office Editor

Copernicus Publications has established an innovative online editorial support system, the Copernicus Office Editor (CO Editor). It helps to minimize the time a paper spends in review. Authors, editors and referees are informed by email about every step and any action that must be undertaken during the review process. In addition to the online tools, the Copernicus Publications Editorial Support is available to help and assist you during the different steps and to answer your questions.

Access to the CO Editor as well as specific information about the review process of a journal can be found on the individual journal web pages under the menu item "Review". In addition, you can log in via the Copernicus Publications web page: http://publications.copernicus.org/

Personalized manuscript overview

In the CO Editor, every topical editor has a personalized manuscript overview where s/he can follow the review process of the manuscripts for which s/he is responsible. In addition, an archive with finalized papers is available.

At the top of the personalized manuscript overview, each topical editor has a list with to-dos. In addition, all relevant action links can be found directly below each manuscript as well as in the emails sent by the system. The MS Records show all manuscript details as well as the history of the review process, including all emails that were sent out by the CO Editor. A link to the MS Records is always available, independent of the status of the manuscript.

Topical editor assignment

The CO Editor helps to automate the selection of topical editors and reviewers. Topical editors are selected based on their expertise and on a set of manuscript keywords supplied by the authors at manuscript registration. The authors need to choose at least one keyword that most closely describes the paper. If possible, an additional second choice should be made.

After submission of a manuscript, the CO Editor contacts the topical editors whose subject areas match the first choice index terms. As soon as one of them agrees, s/he is assigned as the topical editor for this submission and receives the complete manuscript. The authors are informed accordingly.

If none of the initially addressed topical editors accepts the task within a few days, the CO Editor contacts topical editors whose subject areas match the second choice index terms. If this also remains unsuccessful, the request is extended to all members of the editorial board.

If no editorial board member is available, the chief editors are asked to assign the manuscript to one of the topical editors.

States of the review process

This section should give you an overview of the different states of a typical review process. These states can also be found on your personalized manuscript overview and in the MS Records of each paper.

File Upload and File Validation
The authors are asked to upload their files, which then undergo a technical check and a check for potential plagiarism by the Copernicus Publications Editorial Support.

Topical Editor Assignment
The assignment of a topical editor is organized on a "first-come, first-served" basis. For further information on the assignment process, please read the section "Topical Editor Assignment" above.

Initial Topical Editor Decision
The topical editor evaluates whether the manuscript is within the scope of the journal and whether it meets a basic scientific quality. S/he can suggest technical corrections (typing errors, clarification of figures, etc.) before publication of the manuscript in the discussion forum of the journal. Further requests for revision of the scientific content shall be expressed during the interactive discussion. In addition, the topical editor is asked to nominate referees for the discussion phase.

Accepted Waiting for File Upload

After the acceptance of the manuscript for publication as a discussion paper, the authors are asked to upload all files required for the publication process.

Production File Validation, Image Processing, Typesetting, Copy-Editing, and Proofreading

The Copernicus Publications Production Team checks the files uploaded by the authors, typesets the paper, and our Copy-Editing Team takes care of English language corrections. Afterwards, the manuscript is sent to the authors for proofreading.

Discussion

The nominated referees are asked to review the discussion paper and to post their reviews in the interactive discussion, either anonymously or attributed. The authors, the topical editor and members of the community can also post comments.

Final Response

The discussion is closed to the public and only the authors and the topical editor are still allowed to post comments. The authors are asked to respond to the comments of the referees (final author comment) before they are allowed to submit a revised version for peer-review completion.

File Upload and File Validation

The authors are asked to upload their files for the completion of the peer-review process, which again undergo a technical check by the Copernicus Publications Editorial Support.

Topical Editor Decision

At this stage the topical editor can either directly accept or reject the paper, or s/he can ask the former or new referees for advice. S/he can also request further revisions, if necessary.

Referee Acceptance and Reports

The former or new referees are asked to participate in the peer-review completion and to evaluate the revised manuscript.

Topical Editor Final Decision

The topical editor is requested to decide if the revised manuscript is acceptable for final journal publication. S/he can also request further revisions, if necessary.

Accepted Waiting for File Upload

After the acceptance of the manuscript for final journal publication, the authors are asked to upload all files required for the publication process.

Production File Validation, Image Processing, Typesetting, Copy-Editing, and Proofreading

The Copernicus Publications Production Team checks the files uploaded by the authors, typesets the paper, and our Copy-Editing Team takes care of English language corrections. Afterwards, the manuscript is sent to the authors for proofreading. Afterwards, the manuscript is sent to the authors for proofreading.

Final Journal Publication

The paper is published in the journal, and all people who participated in the review process are informed.

Additional Review States

In addition to the typical states that a manuscript undergoes during its peer-review process, the following additional states can be reached under certain circumstances.

MS Rejected

If the topical editor decides that a submission must be rejected, all participants of the review process are informed.

MS Cancelled

A paper is cancelled if the required files (for review or production) are not uploaded by the authors.

MS Withdrawn

The authors of a submission can withdraw their paper any time before publication. In this case, all participants of the review process are informed.

Topical Editor Assignment by Chief Editor

If no topical editor is found or the former topical editor is not available anymore, the chief editors are asked to assign the paper to another member of the editorial board. They can also reassign the former topical editor.

Topical Editor Assignment Interrupted

If no topical editor is found during the regular topical editor assignment procedure and if also the chief editors fail, the topical editor assignment is interrupted and the authors are informed accordingly.

Chief Editor Decision

In this case the topical editor makes a final recommendation regarding acceptance, rejection or corrections. This recommendation is passed on to the chief editor who can accept, reject or ask for corrections.

Access Review with Quick Reports (journal-specific)
During the state *Initial Topical Editor Decision*, the topical editor may ask referees for support. They are requested to submit quick access reviews of the manuscript and will be asked for a full review when the discussion paper is published.

Peer-Review Interrupted
In the authors of a discussion paper do not reply to the comments of the referees (missing final author comment), or they do not send their revised manuscript for peer-review completion, the review process will be interrupted.