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## GET READY

Selecting a journal for your next manuscript can be daunting. There are so many journals to choose from, but where to start?

As an author, you have the responsibility to evaluate the integrity, history, practices, and reputation of the journals that you wish to publish in.

Note that you might also have to comply with requirements from your funder on publishing Open Access, which will influence your choice of journal. Finally, publishing can be expensive – know your budget!

1.

## KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Before you begin writing, you need a clear idea about the intended readers of your work, and where you would like to make an impact.

- Which journals do you or your mentors and colleagues read?
- Which journals are the articles published in that you plan to include as reference in your manuscript? Frequently listed journals are likely to be highly used in your field.
- Who is your desired audience, e.g. researchers, politicians, practitioners, or the general public? Your professional body or learned society may have specific journals with a loyal readership.
- What type of paper do you intend to write, e.g. original article, review, method paper, or data paper? This will determine the length, structure and format of your manuscript.

2.

## BROWSE AND SEARCH JOURNALS

Copenhagen University Library offers access to curated databases, in which you can check which journals are used in your research area. See the library's subject guides for suitable databases in your field. Note that no database covers all publications, and the coverage of disciplines varies greatly.

- Search for articles by topic, keywords or authors, and check the journals that they are published in. Some databases have advanced discovery and analysis features, which can help you to identify interesting journals.
- Use citation databases to look up how often a journal you are interested in is cited. Citations can be an indication of the journal's prominence in your field.
- Check if the journal that you want to submit your manuscript to is indexed in the databases that you and your colleagues use to search for literature.



## 3.

## ASSESS JOURNAL QUALITY & INTEGRITY

Once you have identified potential journals, you need to check whether they are trustworthy. Use the tool “Think. Check. Submit.” and our library guide to distinguish legitimate from suspected predatory publishers. Indicators for journals’ quality and integrity include:

- Does the journal maintain appropriate scholarly and ethical standards?
- Are the mission and scope of the journal specific and clear?
- Does the editorial board consist of recognized researchers in your field?
- Is the estimated time for peer review adequate?
- Are other papers published in the journal of high academic quality?

## 4.

## UNDERSTAND JOURNAL POLICIES & GUIDELINES

Before you submit your manuscript, read about what the journal expects from you as an author. This will increase your chances of acceptance. Ask your colleagues about their experiences.

- The “About this Journal” and “For Authors” sections on the journal’s homepage provide information on its aim and scope, the policies and publication ethics, and if the accepted types of articles are a good fit for your manuscript.
- Consider the journal’s guidelines and recommendations for figures, tables, references and supporting material, including availability of underlying data. Check for templates.
- Investigate the journal’s publishing fees (also called APC’s – Article Processing Charges) and potential hidden costs. Find discounts and waivers from Copenhagen University Library on KUnet.
- Check modalities for publishing Open Access and licensing. What will these imply for you and your readers’ rights to access and reuse your article?

## 5.

## NEED HELP?

**Contact Copenhagen University Library Research Support:**

[forskerservice@kb.dk](mailto:forskerservice@kb.dk)

**Find our Services, Tools and Courses:**

<https://kub.ku.dk/english/researchsupport/>

**Other resources:**

- ICMJE Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals, revised April 2025: <https://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>
- Library Subject Guides: <https://kub.ku.dk/english/subjectguides/>
- Think. Check. Submit.: <https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>
- Predatory Journals (KUnet): <https://kunet.ku.dk/employee-guide/Pages/Research/Predatory-Journals.aspx>
- Discounts and Waivers (KUnet): <https://kunet.ku.dk/employee-guide/Pages/Research/Discounts-and-waivers-on-Open-Access-publishing-APC.aspx>