

Notice to Research Allowance Applicants

The Ministry of Health reminds all applicants for research allowances that **post-publication research allowances will not be granted for manuscripts published in predatory journals**. Publishing in such journals diminishes the value of the research and its contribution to healthcare knowledge.

What is a Predatory Journal?

Predatory Journals are deceptive publications that lack genuine peer review or editorial processes, often charging substantial fees without providing legitimate academic services. These journals typically exhibit several concerning characteristics, including a lack of a rigorous peer-review process where manuscripts are accepted without proper or transparent evaluation. They may also make misleading claims about their impact factors or falsely assert that they are indexed in reputable databases. Additionally, they often demonstrate a lack of editorial transparency, with unqualified or fabricated editorial board members who are not clearly listed. Another feature of predatory journals is aggressive solicitation of manuscripts, which includes unsolicited invitations, frequent and persistent contact, exaggerated claims about the journal's reputation, promises of quick publication, lack of transparency regarding publication fees, flattering language to entice researchers, and pressure tactics such as "limited time offers."

Synonyms for predatory journals: Deceptive journal/Questionable journal/Bogus journal/Fake journal/Vanity journal/Low-quality journal/Pseudo-academic journal/Exploitative journal/Substandard journal/Scam journal

How to Identify Reputable Journals (Genuine journals)

To avoid predatory journals, researchers are advised to use the following methods:

1. Consult Established Directories:

- *Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)*: Journals listed here adhere to strict quality criteria.

Visit: www.doaj.org

- COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics): COPE member journals follow high ethical standards in publication practices.
Visit: www.publicationethics.org/members
- Journal Citation Reports (JCR): Journals listed in JCR have legitimate impact factors.
Visit: <https://mjl.clarivate.com/search-results>
- Regional Journals Online Directories: These directories provide access to peer-reviewed research published within specific regions, making them valuable resources for researchers looking to publish studies with a local or regional focus that includes following but not limited to:
 1. Sri Lanka Journals Online (SLJOL): A directory specifically for Sri Lankan journals, providing access to peer-reviewed research published in Sri Lanka.www.sljol.info
 2. African Journals Online (AJOL): A directory offering access to a wide variety of peer-reviewed journals based in Africa, covering diverse fields.www.ajol.info
 3. Asian Journals Online: A directory similar to AJOL, focusing on peer-reviewed journals across Asia, suitable for researchers targeting an Asian audience or addressing regional issues.

2. Utilize Assessment Tools:

- Think. Check. Submit.: Provides a checklist for verifying the legitimacy of a journal before submission.
Visit: www.thinkchecksubmit.org
- Cabells Predatory Reports: Offers a detailed list of predatory journals and publishers with specific evidence.
Visit: www.cabells.com/about-predatory (subscription may be required)
- Ulrichsweb: A global directory with comprehensive information on journals, including peer review status.
Visit: www.ulrichsweb.serialssolutions.com (institutional access may be required)

3. Check Indexing in Reputable Databases:

- Verify whether the journal is indexed in **PubMed**, **Scopus**, **Web of Science**, **MEDLINE**, or **Embase**, which are known for their high standards in quality and peer review.

4. Verify the Publisher's Reputation:

- Review the publisher's website for transparency regarding fees, peer review, and editorial processes.
- Ensure clear and verifiable information about the editorial board members.

5. Seek Advice from Experts:

- Consult with experienced colleagues, mentors, or institutional librarians who can provide guidance on reputable journals.

6. Check Beall's List for Potential Predatory Journals:

- Beall's List provides a compilation of potentially predatory journals and publishers. Presence of journal or its publisher in this list indicates it's a potential predatory journal and those should be avoided.

Visit: www.beallslit.net

Important Reminder:

Publishing in reputable, peer-reviewed journals is crucial to maintaining the integrity and impact of research. We strongly encourage all researchers to carefully select their publication venues to uphold high standards of scientific rigor.

This notice is issued following the directions of the Research Management Committee (RMC), chaired by the Secretary of Health, on 1st August 2024 and 10th of September 2024.