

# The Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation

## Review Papers like an Expert

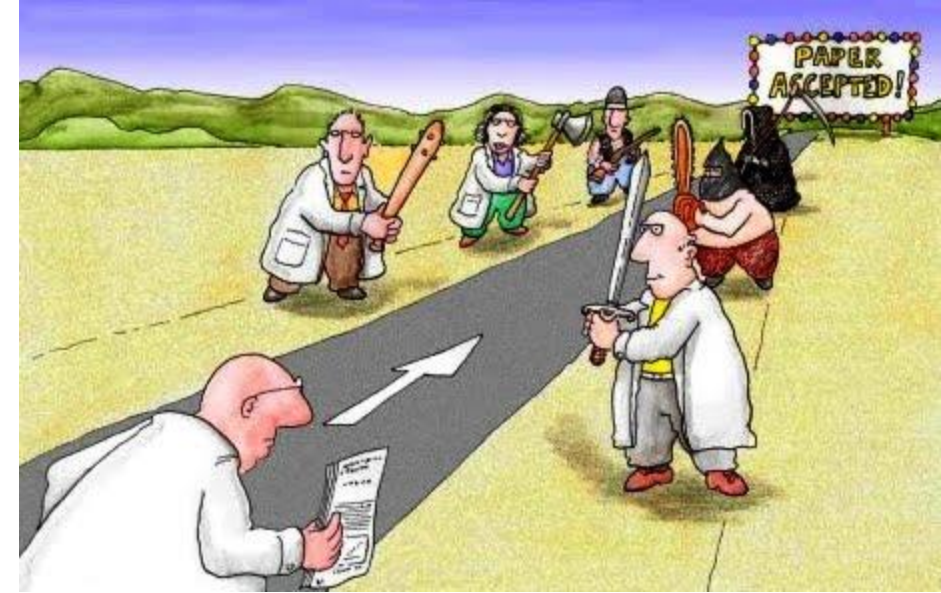


An ECTC Webinar  
September 24, 2024



# Your Role as a Journal Reviewer

- You are an expert in the discipline
  - If not, reject the invitation to review
- You are invited to provide an unbiased review of the scientific merit of the manuscript
- Your review will be shared with the authors of the paper
- Your perspective is advisory to the Editorial Board
- Only commit to a review if you can complete in a timely manner

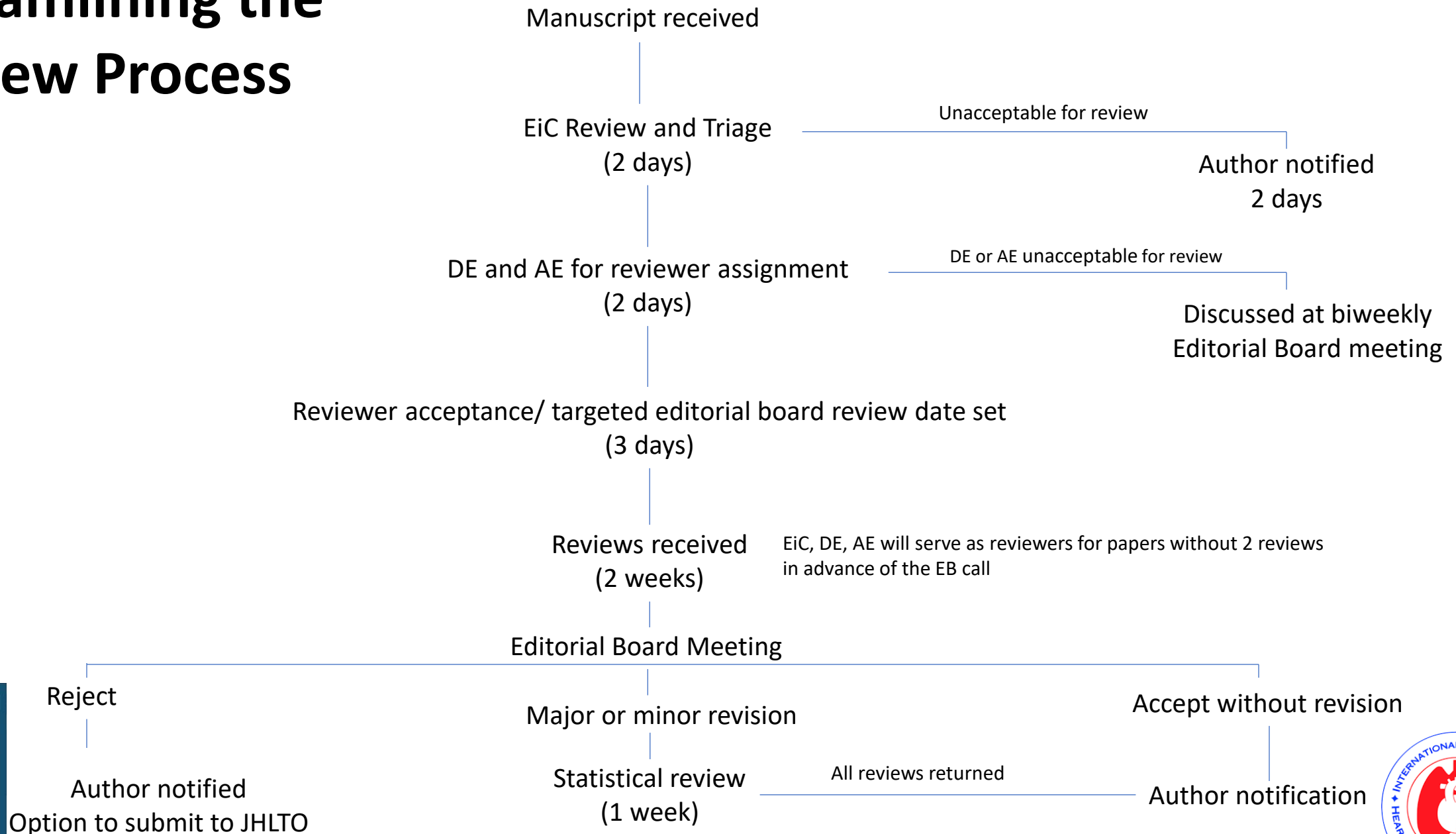


# Issues to Consider in a Review

1. Is the question important?
2. Do the authors propose and test a hypothesis?
3. Was the study designed correctly?
4. Have the statistical tests been appropriately applied?
5. Do the results support the authors' conclusions?
6. Do the tables and figures provide incremental value to the paper?
7. What is the importance of adding comments to the editorial team that may not be included to the authors? Will the paper likely be highly cited?



# Streamlining the Review Process



# How to Review

- Carefully read the letter to the editor
- Read the entire paper
- Review tables and figures
- Review supplementary materials
- Pay attention to author conflict of interest
- Look up references suggesting the author group or others have already published the data

A ROUGH GUIDE TO SPOTTING

## • BAD SCIENCE •

- 1. SENSATIONALISED HEADLINES**  
Headlines of articles are commonly designed to entice viewers into clicking on and reading the article. At best, they oversimplify the findings of research. At worst, they sensationalise and misrepresent them.
- 2. MISINTERPRETED RESULTS**  
News articles sometimes distort or misinterpret the findings of research for the sake of a good story, intentionally or otherwise. If possible, try to read the original research, rather than relying on the article based on it for information.
- 3. CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**  
Many companies employ scientists to carry out and publish research - whilst this does not necessarily invalidate research, it should be analysed with this in mind. Research can also be misrepresented for personal or financial gain.
- 4. CORRELATION & CAUSATION**  
Be wary of confusion of correlation and causation. Correlation between two variables doesn't automatically mean one causes the other. Global warming has increased since the 1800s, and pirate numbers decreased, but lack of pirates doesn't cause global warming.
- 5. SPECULATIVE LANGUAGE**  
Speculations from research are just that - speculation. Be on the look out for words such as 'may', 'could', 'might' and others, as it is unlikely the research provides hard evidence for any conclusions they precede.
- 6. SAMPLE SIZE TOO SMALL**  
In trials, the smaller a sample size, the lower the confidence in the results from that sample. Conclusions drawn should be considered with this in mind, though in some cases small samples are unavoidable. It may be cause for suspicion if a large sample was possible but avoided.
- 7. UNREPRESENTATIVE SAMPLES**  
In human trials, researchers will try to select individuals that are representative of a larger population. If the sample is different from the population as a whole, then the conclusions may well also be different.
- 8. NO CONTROL GROUP USED**  
In clinical trials, results from test subjects should be compared to a control group not given the substance being tested. Groups should also be allocated randomly. In general experiments, a control test should be used where all variables are controlled.
- 9. NO BLIND TESTING USED**  
To prevent any bias, subjects should not know if they are in the test or the control group. In double-blind testing, even researchers don't know which group subjects are in until after testing. Note, blind testing isn't always feasible, or ethical.
- 10. 'CHERRY-PICKED' RESULTS**  
This involves selecting data from experiments which supports the conclusion of the research, whilst ignoring those that do not. If a research paper draws conclusions from a selection of its results, not all, it may be cherry-picking.
- 11. UNREPLICABLE RESULTS**  
Results should be replicable by independent research, and tested over a wide range of conditions (where possible) to ensure they are generalisable. Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence - that is, much more than one independent study!
- 12. JOURNALS & CITATIONS**  
Research published to major journals will have undergone a review process, but can still be flawed, so should still be evaluated with these points in mind. Similarly, large numbers of citations do not always indicate that research is highly regarded.

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# Manuscript Review

- Abstract: Does it stand alone?
- Introduction: Does it provide the rationale for the study and articulate the goals?
- Methods: Is there sufficient detail to understand the experiment and could it be repeated?
- Results: Are the data reliable, were control groups appropriately used? Are the conclusions supported by the data?
- Discussion: Should put the findings in perspective
- Tables and Figures: Used to support and illustrate the results section?
- Mind the Limitations section





# Submitting a Review

**Reviewer Recommendation and Comments for Manuscript Number JHLT-D-24-00400R1**

The effect of rewarming ischemia on tissue transcriptome and metabolome signatures: a clinical observational study in lung transplantation

Revision Number 1  
Ciara M. Shaver (Reviewer 1)

Recommendation: No Recommendation

Cancel Save & Submit Later Upload Reviewer Attachments Proof & Print Proceed

Reviewer Instructions

**Review Questions**

I attest that I have no conflicts of interest to disclose that will prevent a fair and unbiased peer review regarding this manuscript and that I have read and will adhere to the JHLT COI Policy in the decision-making process regarding the manuscript. [Instructions] [Insert Special Character](#)

**Reviewer Comments to Author**

[Insert Special Character](#) [Open in New Window](#)



# Submitting a Review

## Full Text of Comments to Editor Box

Conclusions: (Mark appropriate category with an "X")

	Top 10%	Good	Fair	Low Priority
Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Originality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you agree with the category submitted or suggest a change?

- Original Clinical or Pre-clinical Science
- Perspective or State of art
- Clinical Dilemma
- Research Correspondence

Need for statistical review

Grammar/Syntax not acceptable

Concerns about humane animal care or institutional review board approval

Please enter any confidential comments to the editor here:

**Transfer Authorization**

[\[Instructions\]](#)

\* If this submission is transferred to another publication, do we have your consent to include your identifying information?

Please Select Response  Yes  No

\* If this submission is transferred to another publication, do we have your consent to include your review?

Please Select Response  Yes  No

<sup>2</sup> ?





# Some final thoughts...

## Content of a good review

- A brief synopsis of the paper including the results
- Include in your commentary
  - Paper originality. Does it provide new information or has the data been previously published/presented?
  - The strengths and weaknesses of the paper
  - Important omissions such as regulatory approvals, ISHLT ethics statement
  - Concerns regarding presentation or interpretation of the data
  - Additional analyses required to support the hypothesis, provide clarification, or improve the impact
  - Acceptable to comment on the need for grammatical editing
  - Note to editorial team about issues that you may not wish to share with the authors and citability of paper



# A few final thoughts...

## Things to avoid

- Identifying yourself or commentary on your work (unless it is published and contradicts the results/conclusions)
- Derogatory language about the authors or their work
- Use of AI to generate your review
- Unclear recommendations to authors. Remember, they will be expected to address each of your concerns
- Excessive focus on grammatical changes
- A preliminary review that states nothing. It is acceptable to note the authors have adequately addressed your concerns if you are asked to re-review a paper

