Authorship

MSRTP  Adopted Guidelines

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ICMJE

ICMJE = International Committee of Medical Journal Editors

Most journals in the population health sciences require manuscripts to conform to ICMJE’s Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals

In MSRTP we have adopted ICMJE criteria for publication and authorship as described in the following slides.
ICMJE Authorship Criteria

Each coauthor must have met **all three** of the following conditions:

1. Substantial contributions to conception and design *and/or* acquisition of data *and/or* analysis and interpretation of data
2. Drafting the article *and/or* revising it critically for important intellectual content
3. Final approval of the version to be published
ICMJE Authorship Criteria

• “Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group alone does not constitute authorship.”
Authorship Example #1

- A person who conducts interviews for the project but does not contribute further would not be eligible for authorship.
- An interviewer who also writes a paragraph for the discussion section would meet authorship criteria.
Authorship Example #2

- A hospital laboratory technician who analyzes blood samples of patients included in a clinical study but makes no further contributions would not be eligible for authorship.

- A lab tech who analyzes the samples and writes part of the methods section describing laboratory techniques would be a coauthor.
Authorship Example #3

- A data entry assistant who makes no additional contributions to the project would not be considered an author.
- A data manager who runs statistical tests and creates a table for the manuscript would meet authorship criteria.
Authorship Example #4

• A technical editor who cleans up the grammar and spelling in a manuscript does not earn authorship.
• An editor who raises important questions about the interpretation of the results and the meaning of the work may be eligible for authorship.
Authorship Criteria

• “All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship, and all those who qualify should be listed.”

• No gift authorships

• No ghost authorships
Authorship Order

A typical justification for authorship order:

- The first author is the person who was the most involved in writing the manuscript.
- The remaining authors are listed in order of contribution, defined in terms of time dedicated to the project as well as intellectual contribution.
  - List authors with equal contributions in alphabetical order
- The senior (supervising) author is listed last, unless s/he prefers to be listed in order of contribution.
Decisions about Authorship

- Publications are an important metric of success in the sciences and academia, and authorship is often the only reward for the time put into a project. As a result, authorship decisions can be very stressful.
- It is helpful to decide before a contributor does any work on the project whether that person will be a coauthor and what role s/he will play.
- At the end of the project, there should be no surprises about who is being included or excluded as an author.
Decisions about Authorship

- If someone making a minor contribution will not be a coauthor, make sure that s/he is not asked to write any part of the paper or to provide critical feedback.

- If someone will be a coauthor, make sure that s/he has the opportunity to make an important intellectual contribution to the writing of the paper.

- Any disputes over authorship criteria or the order of authors are usually best referred to the senior author on the paper.