

IN THIS ISSUE

ARTICLES

- **Something for Everyone** 1
By Meghan McDevitt
- **The Grammatic Fanatic** 2
By Deborah Bowman
- **Fashion Tips for the Work-at-Home Managing Editor** 3
By Alethea B. Gerding, MA
- **Association Provides Resources for Finding, Becoming Freelancers** 6
By Ruth E. Thaler-Carter
- **Research Integrity and Peer Review: We Need Research Not Rhetoric** 8
By Daniel Shanahan
- **Statistical Analyses and Methods in the Published Literature: The SAMPL Guidelines** 10
By Thomas A. Lang and Douglas G. Altman

SOCIETY UPDATE

- **Call for Candidates for the ISMTE Board of Directors and Ethics Committee Election of 2016** 14

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Calendar of Events** 15



Something for Everyone

By Meghan McDevitt
Editor
EON

The ISMTE is gearing up for our fall conferences—I hope to see many of you soon in Philadelphia and later on in Brussels! This year, 13 abstracts were submitted and posters will be displayed at all three conferences. Check out the [August supplement](#) to read all submitted abstracts. Be sure to save the date for the 2nd annual Asian-Pacific conference, which will be held in Beijing next March.

Alethea Gerding made my day when she submitted her piece, “Fashion Tips for the Work-at-Home Managing Editor.” Anyone who works remotely will surely get a chuckle from these entertaining tips.

In this issue we continue our Peers in Review section where you can learn about other editors’ societies and organizations. Ruth Thaler-Carter writes about the Editorial Freelancers Association and the many resources useful to those of us in Editorial Offices.

Daniel Shanahan discusses the launch of a new journal of great interest to the ISMTE membership, *Research Integrity and Peer Review*. Focusing on key aspects of the research and publication process, the journal provides a space for sharing and disseminating research on publication ethics, reporting of research, and peer review.

I recently took a course at the University of Chicago’s Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies titled “Interpreting and Reporting Biostatistics.” It was as intimidating as it sounds, but I did come away with a better understanding of statistics (and confirmed that English was the better path for me). The course instructor, Tom Lang, along with co-author Doug Altman, developed a set of guidelines for reporting statistical methods. The SAMPL guidelines can be added to Author Instructions and serve as a reference for authors and editors alike.

Finally, there are four ISMTE leadership positions open this year. Information is available on the ISMTE website or you can contact the ISMTE Executive Director, [Kelly Schild](#).

As the ISMTE grows and evolves, the sense of community and our shared effort to produce quality scholarly publications continues to link our members across disciplines and across the world. We have made great strides in partnering with peer organizations and collaborating with like-minded

groups to support professionals working in peer review and scholarly publishing. Our international conferences offer great opportunities for training, professional development, and networking.

I invite you to take advantage of everything the ISMTE has to offer and get involved—connect with someone new at a conference reception, write an article for *EON*, apply for a leadership position, submit a poster abstract, or join a local group. There's something for everyone.





Fashion Tips for the Work-at-Home Managing Editor *A humorous view*

By Alethea B. Gerding, MA
Managing Editor
Journal of Prosthodontics

Of all the benefits that working from home conveys, perhaps none is better than this: you never again have to figure out your workplace’s definition of “business casual.” You, the work-from-home employee, now control the very definition of “business casual.” But, before you begin working from home with a joyous shout of “yoga pants and t-shirt every day!,” you should be aware of the variety necessary in the home workplace wardrobe.

This handy guide should get you started on the right track.

The Skype-Call-with-Editor-in-Chief Ensemble

Here Alethea Gerding, Managing Editor of the *Journal of Prosthodontics*, demonstrates a

comfortable way to wear this necessary evil. Her brushed hair and subtle makeup complement the professional blouse-and-sweater combo. However, she does not sacrifice comfort beyond the view of her MacBook’s camera lens, choosing soft, reindeer-patterned flannel pajama bottoms and pink slippers to round out the look.

The School-Nurse-Called-Again Outfit

Alethea does not need to sacrifice time to pull off this versatile combo. Her hair is still in her “hard-at-work” ponytail, and she has not changed out of her comfortable (and literary!) t-shirt. But, she has exchanged her pajama pants



for appropriate-in-public jeans and her bedroom slippers for tennis shoes that are more suitable for outside wear. She accessorizes with a large tote that holds books and a laptop. If the pediatrician calls with a time slot for a strep test, she and her sick child can sit comfortably in the waiting room reading *Captain Underpants* and/or chasing down late reviewers through ScholarOne Manuscripts.

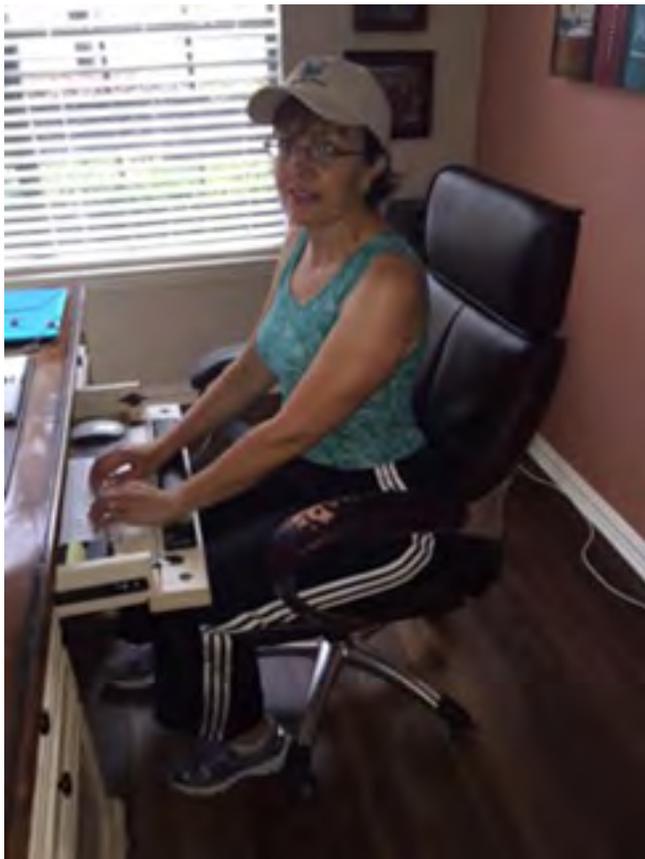
Daily-Walk-with-the-Neighbor Apparel

ISMTE Past-President Kristie Overstreet models this look, which reinforces two of the best things working from home provides: a mid-morning walk with a neighbor, and the ability to get back to work without showering immediately (or ever). Kristie wears comfortable walking shoes and sweat-wicking attire (can be layered depending on the season). Note that after her walk, Kristie is already hard at work, answering an email from

an author who is not sure how to format references (even though it is spelled out in the author guidelines).

The-UPS-Man-is-Coming-to-the-Door Getup

When you work from home, you can work in your pajamas all day if you want to. No one is stopping you. Except the delivery guy. Yes, admit it. You don't want him to get the idea that you are sitting on the couch all day in your jammies, watching *Law & Order* reruns when what you have actually been doing is trying to get solicited authors to turn in their manuscripts. That said, your tea-stained ratty t-shirt does not communicate that message. Kristie shows the utility of a fashionable and voluminous sweater. Kept near the desk, this can be thrown over any fraying t-shirt, tea-stained top, or circa-1994 sorority sweatshirt for an instant look of professional diligence.



Get-the-Family-Out-the-Door Attire

When you really just need to sit down and check your emails, but first you must get your children fed, clothed, and out the door... this is the look for you. As soon as they are gone, you can get to work. Go ahead and mock your spouse who must first shower, dress professionally, and commute before hunkering down for the day. Meanwhile, you are already busy typing away. Here Shari Leventhal, Managing Editor of the *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* (CJASN), is already posting articles to social media in a comfortable and warm robe, given to her by her in-laws, who well know her penchant for fuzzy bathrobes (better and more practical to

Shari than a new business suit). Home repair and delivery people can indeed attest to the fact, yes, Shari even answers the door in it!

The-Internet-Is-Out Gear

Your workday can be crippled by a Time Warner Cable outage. No need to spend time piecing together a fashionable response. A simple black t-shirt is as appropriate for the hipster coffee shop down the street as it is for the local library. In fact, a black t-shirt, travel coffee mug, and flip-flops are appropriate in any establishment offering free wifi. Back to work!

Author's Note: modeling assistance from Kristie Overstreet and Shari Leventhal.





Association Provides Resources for Finding, Becoming Freelancers

By Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

Editorial groups are very diverse and represent the wide range of tasks and duties and areas of competence that define us. Yet, we have much in common and, to be sure, our goals intersect in many places. Thus, as part of ISMTE's mission to enhance the editorial profession, promote professionalism among editors, and interconnect the community, we thought it would be of interest to our members and readers to become acquainted with other editors' organizations all over the world.

ISMTE collaborates with several editorial societies already and this has proven to be mutually productive. In the "Peers in Review" column, our peer organizations are invited to introduce their society in a short article. With these articles we hope to lend additional support to our ongoing collaborations, forge new streams of cooperation, and continue to strengthen our roles as editors in scholarly and academic publishing.

For more information on ISMTE's peer organizations, please contact Board of Directors member, Sherryl Sundell.

For Managing Editors either seeking freelancers or interested in being freelancers themselves, the Editorial Freelancers Association (EFA; www.the-efa.org) may be just what the doctor ordered.

The EFA offers Managing Editors two ways to find the freelancers they might need. You can search the member directory for a given topic or skillset and contact freelancers who correspond to your search guidelines directly to discuss potential projects. You also can post a project (including full-time positions) to the EFA Job List at no cost. Postings go out to the entire membership (currently at about 2,100). Those interested in your project contact you and you winnow through the responses (which, it should be said, can number from the dozens to the hundreds) to get in touch with those who match

what you're looking for. Negotiations on payment, deadlines, rights, etc., are between you and the freelancer. The EFA does not vet member backgrounds or recommend individual members for projects.

For ISTME members who are new to using freelancers, the EFA also offers a Chart of Common Rates (based on a survey of members, and not all members respond, so it is only a limited sample) that can help you establish rates for freelance writing, editing, proofreading, and related work. The EFA also has a sample contract, code of fair practice, and set of testing guidelines that ISMTE members might find useful in working with freelancers, and an invoice template as well.

Since the main focus of the EFA is to help freelancers, the association offers a wide range of resources and services aimed at making it easier and more profitable to freelance in the editorial or publishing world. Whether considering freelancing in addition to a regular job or as a full-time venture, there should be something for any- and everyone.

Chapters

The EFA has local chapters around the United States, and members in several other countries where chapters could be established, as a way for colleagues to meet and learn from each other in person.

Discussion List

The EFA's members-only e-mail discussion list is a lively ongoing conversation about a variety of topics, from business matters to usage and style questions.

Education

The EFA has a wide-ranging program of online and in-person courses on all aspects of writing, editing, proofreading, indexing, and freelancing in general, including sessions on using Word and

Acrobat, grammar, websites, and much more. Many of the courses are of value to both freelancers and in-house staff.

Publications

Publications from the EFA cover a variety of topics of value to both in-house editors and freelancers, including indexing, using Word, book production, copyright and permissions, social media, and several takes on “Freelancing 101.”

The EFA also publishes a bimonthly newsletter that is available to nonmembers at \$20/year.

Conference

For the first time since 2005, the EFA is holding an annual conference this year, August 29–30 in New York City.

Whether you need help with dealing with freelancing issues, advice on improving a freelance

business, or resources for finding and working with freelancers for your projects, the EFA is an invaluable resource.

*Ruth E. “I can write about anything!”TM Thaler-Carter (www.writerruth.com) is a long-time, award-winning freelance writer, editor, proofreader, desktop publisher, and presenter. She has been the editor of the EFA newsletter for the past 10 years; is a frequent webinar and in-person workshop presenter; chaired the EFA’s 2005 national conference; is coordinator of the EFA’s Rochester, NY, chapter; and is the author of an EFA booklet, “Freelancing 101: Launching Your Editorial Business.” Thaler-Carter is also the owner of **Communication Central** (www.communication-central.com), which has hosted an annual conference for colleagues every fall since 2006; ISMTE members are eligible for the colleagues’ discount on registration.*

Discovering Our Roots: Book Smarts

By Stephanie Kinnan

Editorial Assistant

GIE: Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

As members of the technical editing field, we all contribute to the world’s pool of scientific information. Every article that passes through our hands acts as a reference for future knowledge-seekers. It was with this idea in mind that encyclopedias were first created. Before search engines allowed us to look up everything from the scientific definition of pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanokoniosis (yes; that is an actual word) to “why is the sky blue?” people had to rely on their trusty stack of encyclopedias for their educational development. In fact, back in the day, people could even earn a decent living peddling these Google precursors as door-to-door salesmen. And while the books themselves are becoming increasingly obsolete, encyclopedias have been an important part of society’s educational advancement for centuries.

The specific origin of the encyclopedia is difficult to nail down, as we are hard-pressed to define what exactly constitutes an encyclopedia. It can be argued that the first one actually dates all the way back to 300-something BC when Aristotle, overachiever that he was, took it upon himself to compile all of the world’s knowledge on everything. *I don’t know about you, but that sounds like a completely realistic career goal to me.* Shortly after, around 100 BC, a writer named Marcus Terentius Varro attempted a similar feat with his compilation, *Disciplinae*, a.k.a., *Nine Books of Disciplines*. Although the existence of these works is well-documented, none of the text has survived. As a result, many suggest that the first example of an encyclopedia-like text was not actually created until 50 AD when Pliny the Elder put together the world’s first set of reference books, *Historia Naturalis*. This compilation of 10 volumes and 37 books covered everything from astronomy to mineralogy and is still used as a reference on Roman culture today. Sadly, encyclopedia sightings are few and far between these days as more and more of them hit the recycle bin to clear up shelf space. So, the next time you are curious about the eating habits of an aardvark, dust off that copy of *Britannica* Volume 1 and give Google a much-deserved rest.

Adapted in part from:

1. Who wrote the first encyclopedia. You Ask Andy. <http://www.youaskandy.com/questions-answers/34-ask-andy-1980/3815-who-wrote-the-first-encyclopedia.html>. Accessed June 25, 2016.



Research Integrity and Peer Review: We Need Research Not Rhetoric

By Daniel Shanahan
Associate Publisher
BioMed Central

Sometimes it seems like not a day goes by without the announcement of a new journal launch, with the titles getting increasingly idiosyncratic and specialised. In an online era of innovative developments in dissemination and multiplying avenues of communication, publication in a peer-reviewed journal remains the medium of choice for the vast majority of jobbing academics, so perhaps this isn't surprising. But with our launch of *Research Integrity and Peer Review* in May this year, we are trying to do something a little different.

The journal focusses on three key aspects of the research and publication process—research and publication ethics, the reporting of research, and peer review. In itself it's a fascinating subject (at least to my mind), but the journal is about more than simply a platform to publish articles on. It's about creating a foundation that all journals can learn from and build upon.

In order to benefit society, research needs to be reliably performed and reliably reported. Journal peer review is used to ensure both of these aspects, with the “ideal” peer review checking methodology, providing polite feedback, highlighting omissions, suggesting changes to improve readability, and determining the importance of findings.

However, there is mounting evidence that this perception of peer review is somewhat idealistic and that the process itself isn't as effective as we would like, with recent publications highlighting that it is ineffective at detecting incomplete or falsified findings.

While scholarly publishing has been around for over 350 years, peer review as the standard pillar for assessing research for publication is not quite as old as that.

While *Philosophical Transactions* did have a model of curation, perhaps the first journal to implement a process that many of us would

recognise today as peer review was *Académie royale des sciences*. In the late 18th century, papers submitted to this journal (by non-academics) could be referred to a committee of *rapporteurs* (academics), who would then test the claims (e.g. by replication of experiments) and provide a report. You might be surprised to learn, however, that the journal abandoned this process in the 1830s as unsustainable.

Nearly 200 years later, we don't seem to have come up with anything better. So the question must be asked—why not?

Today, if you asked a room of editors their opinions regarding peer review, you will get as many answers as there are people, with everyone extolling the virtues of a different system. Much of the literature regarding it is just this—rhetoric and conjecture. It's a curious contradiction that a process so fundamental to research is approached with the attitude “well that's just how we do things.”

But how can we begin to address the shortcomings of this process?

Responsibility for ensuring research integrity—that being the reliability of the research based on the soundness of its methods and the honesty and accuracy of its presentation—is borne by many different people and organizations, starting with the individual researcher but also diversifying to the research supervisors, the funders, institutional leaders, peer reviewers, and journal editors. Everyone involved in the process, not just the peer reviewers, from the inception of a research idea to its publication, should be accountable for upholding high research integrity.

If this integrity is maintained throughout the research process, the peer reviewer role of assessing that research is reliably performed and reliably reported will be much more steadfast.

In is in this context that the analogy of a research “environment” is an apt one—this is a complex ecosystem, and therefore attention must be given not only to individual behaviour, such as research misconduct, but also to the systems that affect it, such as academic rewards, incentives, and pressures.

This complex ecosystem of research has, [until recently](#), been remarkably little studied. We know surprisingly little about [how to ensure research funds are not wasted](#), how to prevent and detect fraud, or how to [ensure research reports are usable](#).

There’s an increasing movement towards transparency in research, with an aim of providing enough information at all points in the process for those external to the research to reliably evaluate its integrity. This includes calls for the pre-registration of research, the [endorsement of reporting guidelines](#), the publication of data notes alongside datasets, among many others, all of which are intended to improve the completeness of the account, to ensure that all the necessary information is available.

It can sometimes feel like a schoolteacher lambasting students to “show their work,” with the

actual implementation of these tools and processes [a largely evidence-free zone](#). As an industry we’re often guilty of a lack of transparency ourselves—treating the publication process like a black box.

Returning to the example of peer review, some people claim that double-blind peer review is the most fair—that it overcomes the inherent biases in what is a very human system. Others say the same about open peer review. Still others claim that peer review is inherently broken and we should just ditch the entire system. Yet there seems to be very limited evidence regarding any of these. Or if there is, no one has shared it.

We need more than opinion and discussion. That is why we have launched the journal—to provide a forum for sharing and disseminating research on these important topics, and making the findings available to those who might benefit from them. We’re not saying that there is a better system out there—the current publishing environment could well be to science what democracy was to Churchill, “the worst form of government, except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time”—however, we at least need to know.

KEEPING UP TO DATE???

We are.
It's the best way we know to serve you.

It's our privilege to play an active role in the journal publishing community, working directly with publishers on solutions to industry initiatives and workflow challenges, always looking to improve our own processes to better serve you.

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Statistical Analyses and Methods in the Published Literature: The SAMPL Guidelines

By Thomas A. Lang (Tom Lang Communications and Training International; ORCID 0000-0002-7482-7727) and Douglas G. Altman (Director, Centre for Statistics in Medicine, Oxford University; ORCID 0000-0002-7183-4083)

Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from "Statistical Analyses and Methods in the Published Literature: The SAMPL Guidelines" the *Science Editors' Handbook*, European Association of Science Editors, 2013. The complete guidelines can be found on the [EQUATOR](#) website. The authors have given permission to republish this excerpt.

Introduction

Have they reflected that the sciences founded on observation can only be promoted by statistics?... If medicine had not neglected this instrument, this means of progress, it would possess a greater number of positive truths, and stand less liable to the accusation of being a science of unfixed principles, vague and conjectural.

Jean-Etienne Dominique Esquirol, an early French psychiatrist, quoted in *The Lancet*, 1838¹

The first major study of the quality of statistical reporting in the biomedical literature was published in 1966.² Since then, scores of similar studies have been published, every one of which has found that large proportions of articles contain errors in the application, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of statistics or in the design or conduct of research. (See, for example, references 3 through 19.) Further, large proportions of these errors are serious enough to call the authors' conclusions into question.^{5,18,19} The problem is made worse by the fact that most of these studies are of the world's leading peer-reviewed general medical and specialty journals.

Although errors have been reported for more complex statistical procedures,^{19,22} paradoxically, many errors are in basic, not advanced, statistical

methods.²³ Perhaps advanced methods are suggested by consulting statisticians, who perform the analyses competently, but it is also true that authors are far more likely to use only elementary statistical methods, if they use any at all.²³⁻²⁶ Still, articles with even major errors continue to pass editorial and peer review and to be published in leading journals.

The truth is that the problem of poor statistical reporting is long-standing, widespread, potentially serious, concerns mostly basic statistics, and yet is largely unsuspected by most readers of the biomedical literature.²⁷

More than 30 years ago, O'Fallon and colleagues recommended that "Standards governing the content and format of statistical aspects should be developed to guide authors in the preparation of manuscripts."²⁸ Despite the fact that this call has since been echoed by several others²⁹⁻³² most journals have still not included in their Instructions for Authors more than a paragraph or two about reporting statistical methods and results.³³ However, given that many statistical errors concern basic statistics, a comprehensive—and comprehensible—set of reporting guidelines might improve how statistical analyses are documented.

The SAMPL guidelines are designed to be included in a journal's Instructions for Authors. These guidelines tell authors, journal editors, and reviewers how to report basic statistical methods and results. Although these guidelines are limited to the most common statistical analyses, they are nevertheless sufficient to prevent most of the reporting deficiencies routinely found in scientific articles.

Unlike most of the other reporting guidelines used in evidence-based medicine, such as

the CONSORT and STROBE statements, the SAMPL guidelines were not developed by a formal consensus-building process, but they are drawn from published guidelines.^{27, 34-37} In addition, a comprehensive review of the literature on statistical reporting errors reveals near universal agreement on how to report the most common methods.²⁷

Statistical analyses are closely related to the design and activities of the research itself. However, we do not address these issues here. Instead, we refer readers to the [EQUATOR Network website](#) where guidelines for reporting specific research designs can be found. (For example, see the CONSORT,³⁸ TREND,³⁹ and STROBE.⁴⁰) These guidelines for reporting methodologies all include items on reporting statistics, but the guidelines presented here are more specific and complete, not duplicate, those in the methodology guidelines.

Author's Note: First published as Lang T, Altman D. Basic statistical reporting for articles published in clinical medical journals: the SAMPL Guidelines. In: Smart P, Maisonneuve H, Polderman A (eds). *Science Editors' Handbook*, European Association of Science Editors, 2013. References documenting the incidence of statistical errors have been updated in this revision.

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Save the Date—Peer Review Week 2016



The 2nd annual Peer Review Week will be held from 19th to 25th September 2016!

Peer Review Week is a global event celebrating the essential role that peer review plays in maintaining scientific quality. The event brings together individuals, institutions and organizations committed to sharing the central message that good peer review, whatever shape or form it might take, is critical to scholarly communications.

This year’s theme is **Recognition for Review**, exploring all aspects of how those participating in review activity - in publishing, grant review, conference submissions, promotion and tenure, and more - should be recognized for their contribution.

Join the conversation on Twitter #PeerRevWk16 and #RecognizeReview

For more information about Peer Review Week, please visit www.peerreviewweek.org.

Call for Candidates for the ISMTE Board of Directors and Ethics Committee Election of 2016

The International Society for Managing and Technical Editors (ISMTE) Board of Directors supervises and controls the business, property, and affairs of the Society. It is composed of 12 members: five officers, the immediate past president (ex-officio), and six directors at large. Each officer holds office for a term of two years and each director for a term of three years, except the *EON* editor (director) who holds office for a term of two years. Each officer (except the president) and director may be reelected to the same position one additional time but otherwise have no limit on seeking other officer (or director if currently an officer) terms.

The ISMTE Board of Directors will have four open positions as of 01-Jan-2017. A candidate must have been a member of ISMTE for at least two consecutive years and be a current member. Those interested in the Treasurer position must have served two consecutive years on the Board. Specific information can be found [here](#).

Treasurer. The Treasurer shall: monitor staff handling of finances and review reports to the Board on all funds and securities of the Corporation; ensure bank accounts are appropriately maintained by staff; and perform those duties incident to the office of Treasurer and others that may be assigned by the Board of Directors.

***EON* Editor.** The *EON* editor manages the collation, editing, and production of the monthly Society publication.

Director (two positions). Directors are responsible for representing a focus area of the Society (*e.g.*, conference planning, professional development, membership, peer organizations, etc.). This may include serving as a member of or chairing a committee, and liaising with the Board.

The ISMTE Ethics Committee consists of three members. Committee members may not be members of the Board and must be members of the Society in good standing. One member only may be from the publishing industry or a financial supporter of the Society. The term of office shall be two years and members may have two consecutive terms of office. The ethics committee oversees the Board's conflicts of interest and advises the board on governance. Ethics committee nominees should therefore have an interest, and preferably experience, in governance.

The ISMTE Ethics Committee will have two open positions as of 01-Jan-2017.

Anyone interested in these positions should fill out the [online application](#). Please direct any questions to [Kelly Schild](#). **Applications for the position must be received by 01-Oct-2016.**

The Nominating Committee will present a slate of nominees to the Board of Directors for approval at the mid-October Board call. The slate will then be presented to the membership for approval mid-November. More details on the process can be found [here](#).

Upcoming Conferences



2016 European Conference
31 October–1 November 2016
Sheraton Brussels Hotel
Brussels, Belgium



2017 Asian-Pacific Conference
27–28 March 2017
Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center
Chaoyang District
China

Calendar of Events

ALPSP Conference 2016
September 14-16, 2016
London, England
www.alpsp.org

Peer Review Week
September 19-23, 2016

8th Conference on Open Access Scholarly Publishing (COASP)
September 21-22, 2016
Arlington, Virginia
<http://oaspa.org>

Effective Social Media for Scholarly Publishers
September 28, 2016
London, England
www.alpsp.org

ORCID Outreach Meeting
October 5, 2016
Washington, D.C.
<https://orcid.org>

ISMTE European Conference
October 31-November 1, 2016
Brussels, Belgium
www.ismte.org
EASE and COPE members receive ISMTE member registration rate

Be a Better Freelancer™ – Profiting in Publishing
October 28-29, 2016
Rochester, New York
www.communication-central.com
ISMTE members receive colleague's registration discount

Editing medical journals – short course
November 2-4, 2016
Oxford, United Kingdom
www.pspconsulting.org

Predators, "Pirates" and Privacy: Educating Researchers on New Challenges in Publishing
November 2, 2016
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www.sspnet.org

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November 4, 2016
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www.alpsp.org

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A note on English: ISMTE aims to be a truly international society. English will represent our lingua franca, but we would like to stress that, in materials published in EON or online, variations in idiomatic usage and spelling should reflect the origins of the author. No one version of English is preferred over the other.

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