



Vanderbilt Institute for Integrative Biosystems Research and Education

AUTHORSHIP GUIDELINES

Research in a highly distributed, collaborative environment will benefit from a careful definition of the responsibilities expected of authors of manuscripts that span multiple research groups and funding sources. Towards this end, VIIBRE has established guidelines for authorship on papers that involve VIIBRE investigators, funding, or facilities. We based our guidelines upon those recommended by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, but have adapted them to be specifically applicable to our local environment.

These guidelines assume responsible practice of research publication such as reporting results accurately and objectively, conducting literature searches, and appropriately citing the work of others. The VIIBRE policy addresses additional ethical considerations and the basis for authorship credit.

Ethical Obligations of Authors

Conflict of Interest

When submitting a manuscript, authors are responsible for disclosing potential conflicts of interest, both financial and personal. Authors should state the role of sponsors, if any, in study design, in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, and in the writing and publication of the report.

Overlapping Publications

In submitting a manuscript, authors should inform the journal editor of related manuscripts that are under consideration or in press and describe the relationship of such manuscripts to the one being submitted.

It is improper to submit a manuscript describing essentially the same research to more than one journal, unless it is a resubmission of a rejected or withdrawn paper. A complete report following a previously published preliminary report (*e.g.*, a communication, abstract, or poster displayed at a professional meeting) is generally permissible, but the journal editor should be informed of the earlier publication and it should be cited in the manuscript.

Preliminary reporting to public media, governmental agencies, or commercial entities of scientific information in a manuscript that has been accepted but not yet published violates the policies of many journals. Although such reporting may be justified, it should be discussed with the journal editor in advance.

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Authorship Credit

Criteria for Authorship:

Authorship credit should be based on

1) substantial intellectual contributions to a) conception and design, or b) acquisition of data, or c) analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.

The following activities do not qualify for authorship:

Acquisition of funding, routine collection of data using a standard protocol and without interpretation, providing device-fabrication or measurement facilities, providing guidance in the application of published fabrication or measurement protocols, general supervision of the research group.

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

Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.

Increasingly, authorship of multi-center trials is attributed to a group. All members of the group who are named as authors should fully meet the above criteria for authorship.

The primary author should assure that all authors meet basic standards for authorship and should prepare a concise, written description of their contributions to the work, which should be approved by all authors. This record should remain with the sponsoring department.

Some journals now also request that one or more authors, referred to as “guarantors,” be identified as the persons who take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, from inception to published article, and publish that information. If such a guarantor is required, the identification of this person should be made in consultation with all authors.

Order of Authorship:

The order of authorship on the byline should be a joint decision of the co-authors.

If there are authors who have made equal contributions, they will be acknowledged accordingly in the byline, if allowed by the journal.

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All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgments section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support. Financial and material support should also be acknowledged.

The use of the VIIBRE facilities alone does not constitute grounds for authorship by VIIBRE participants, but the use of VIIBRE facilities must be acknowledged in the manuscript.

Groups of persons who have contributed materially to the paper but whose contributions do not justify authorship may be listed under a heading such as “clinical investigators” or “participating investigators,” and their function or contribution should be described—for example, “served as scientific advisors,” “critically reviewed the study proposal,” “collected data,” or “provided and cared for study patients.”



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SELF-REPORTING AUTHORSHIP INVENTORY

Date:

Manuscript Title:

Candidate Journal:

Candidate Author:

Inventory for Criteria for Authorship:

Based upon the VIIBRE Authorship Policy, an author should meet ALL of the following three criteria:

1. Substantial intellectual contributions to
 - 1a. Conception and design, or
 - 1b. Acquisition of data, or
 - 1c. Analysis and interpretation of data;
2. Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and
3. Final approval of the version to be published.

Please list below the categories under which you contributed to the research that is being described in this manuscript. Feel free to explain the nature of your contribution.

Inventory of Criteria for Authorship Order:

First or primary author(s): Did the vast majority of the work under 1a, 1b, 1c above.

Corresponding author: Submits the manuscript and communicates with the editors and the reviewers. (Selection of the corresponding author is a strategic decision based upon journal, prior publication record, reputation, role in effort, perceived ability to deal with editors and reviewers and other matters pertaining to publication.)

Senior (usually last) author: Provided the foundation of research and expertise upon which the reported science was built; contributed to the concept of the experiment or the scientific content of the research; provided guidance throughout the experiment; had primary oversight over the entire research program.

“Guarantors: (if requested by journal): Take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, from inception to published article.

Acknowledgments: All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgments section. Financial and material support should also be acknowledged. The use of VIIBRE facilities must be acknowledged in the manuscript.