

Coalition for Open Access Publishing of Public Health in Africa (COPPHA) Peer Reviewing Course Orientation

Strengthening Africa's Research Integrity Through Quality Peer Review

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Welcome to the COPPHA Peer Reviewing Course Orientation!

- ▶ Start Date: October 7, 2024
- ▶ End Date: November 10, 2024
- ▶ Training Platform: Peoples-Praxis



Why COPPHA Peer Reviewing Course Matters

- ▶ In the global research ecosystem, there is a significant shortage of trained peer reviewers, particularly in underrepresented regions like Africa. The shortage prolongs the peer review process and delays the timely dissemination of crucial research findings, that has the potential to provide valuable scientific evidence to address infectious disease outbreaks and other public health emergencies on the African continent.
- ▶ To address this need, WACREN, in collaboration with PublicHealth.Africa (PHA), Peoples-Praxis, AFREhealth, West African Institute of Public Health (WAIPH), and the Somali Health Action Journal, is delivering this course as part of the COPPHA capacity-building initiative. This **five-week Peer Reviewing course** is the first of a two-part series (Peer Reviewing and Open Publishing), aimed at empowering African researchers with the skills needed to conduct high-quality peer reviews.
- ▶ By empowering African researchers with these skills, the COPPHA initiative aims to entrench a culture of rigorous peer review across the African research ecosystem, and address the shortage of trained peer reviewers to enhance Open Access Publishing in Africa.



Why Peer Review is Important in Scholarly Publishing

- ▶ **Evaluates Relevance:** It assesses whether the research is important and contributes meaningfully to the field.
- ▶ **Validates Research Methodology:** Peer review helps confirm if research methods and reported findings are reliable, and scientifically sound.
- ▶ **Upholds Research Integrity:** It helps prevent flawed or misleading studies from being published, thereby protecting the credibility and trustworthiness of the publication record.
- ▶ **Improves Publication Quality:** Peer reviewers offer constructive feedback that helps researchers refine arguments, strengthen methodologies, and enhance clarity, directly improving publication quality.
- ▶ **Ensures Ethical Standards:** Peer Review helps ensure that research data is managed appropriately and that any conflicts of interest are properly disclosed and addressed.
- ▶ **Promotes Innovation and Reproducibility:** Peer review pushes authors to create cutting-edge, impactful research that can be verified and built upon by others.

Course Benefits

By participating in this course, you will:

- ▶ Learn how to critically evaluate a preprint and provide constructive and actionable feedback.
- ▶ Address common challenges in the peer review process.
- ▶ Navigate ethical considerations, including the role of AI in peer review.
- ▶ Gain valuable skills that will enhance your professional development and build credibility within the African research ecosystem.

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Course Facilitators

- ▶ **Femi Qudus Arogundade** - Open Science Community Manager, WACREN
- ▶ **Prof. Richard F. Heller** - Emeritus Professor, Universities of Manchester, UK, and Newcastle, Australia
- ▶ **Dr. Dominic Agyei Dankwah** - Electronic Resources & Training Librarian, University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho, Ghana
- ▶ **Dr. Ian Machingura Ruredzo** - Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Department of Laboratory Diagnostic and Investigative Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe
- ▶ **Dr. Izuchukwu Okafor** - Senior Lecturer & Postgraduate Coordinator (Anatomy Department), Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria
- ▶ **Dr. Modibo Sangare** - Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine and Odontostomatology, University of Bamako, Mali

Training Platform: Peoples Praxis

▶ Peoples Praxis Platform

- A dedicated platform for knowledge sharing and peer learning.
- User-friendly platform for accessing course resources and engaging in forum discussions.
- Access the platform here: <https://peoples-praxis.org/>



▶ COPPHA Peer Reviewing Course

- Access the course here: <https://courses.peoples-praxis.org/>

▶ How to Engage

- Visit this link (<https://courses.peoples-praxis.org/>), click on “Coalition for Open Publishing of Public Health in Africa (COPPHA)” then click on “COPPHA Peer Reviewing Course.”
- Register or Log in to get started.



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Course Structure and Schedule

- ▶ The course is divided into 4 sections, each with its own content, resources, and timeline.

<p>Fundamentals and Challenges of the Peer Review Process</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The fundamentals of the process 2. Challenges of the peer review process 3. Reflection: The peer review process and its challenges 	<p>October 7-13, 2024 (1 week)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Femi Arogundade 2. Richard F. Heller
<p>AI and the Review Process</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will Artificial Intelligence (AI) replace peer reviewing? 2. The future of AI in peer review 3. Reflection: AI and the review process 	<p>October 14 -20, 2024 (1 week)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dominic Agyei Dankwah 2. Ian Machingura Ruredzo
<p>How to Review a Journal Article</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Key Considerations When Accepting a Peer Review Invitation 2. Peer Review Guides 3. Reflection: How to review a journal article 4. Forum Activity: 6 steps in the PREreview reviewer guide 	<p>October 21 - 27, 2024 (1 week)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Izuchukwu Okafor 2. Modibo Sangare
<p>Performing a Peer Review: Assignment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forum Activity: Performing a peer review 2. Performing a Peer Review Assignment 	<p>October 28 - November 10, 2024 (2 weeks)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Richard F. Heller 2. Femi Arogundade 3. Dominic Agyei Dankwah 4. Ian Machingura Ruredzo 5. Izuchukwu Okafor 6. Modibo Sangare



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How to Navigate the Course

▶ Access Course Resources

- Each section includes collections of valuable resources.
- Click on the links to view the resources.

▶ Participate in Forum Discussions

- Each section has a forum for reflection.
- Share your thoughts, experiences, or ask questions.
- Use the **'Reflection'** link to start or join discussions.

▶ Earn a Certificate

- Access all resources.
- Post a reflection in each section.
- Complete and pass the final assignment.

▶ Tip for Success

- Take notes as you go to help internalize the information and key lessons.



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Course Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course participants should be able to:

- ▶ Understand the ways in which peer review underpins the academic publication process
- ▶ Reflect on the challenges of the peer review process
- ▶ Appreciate the characteristics of a good peer review and be able to access guidelines
- ▶ Post a good peer review using a standard format
- ▶ Reflect on the issues of AI in the review process

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Course Activities

- ▶ **Forum Discussions:** Share insights, reflections, and engage with course facilitators and peers.
- ▶ **Weekly Zoom Sessions:** Engage in live discussions with instructors.
- ▶ **Final Peer Review Assignment:** Review a preprint on “*Quality of Counselling, Exposure to Vaccination Messages and Caregivers’ Knowledge on the Uptake of Penta Vaccine in Six Northern Nigerian States*”
- ▶ **Certification:** Active forum participation, peer review assignment, and course completion are key requirements to earn a certificate of completion.

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Weekly Zoom Sessions Schedule

Week	Session Topic	Description	Date	Duration	Facilitators
Week 1	The Peer Review Process and Identifying Predatory Publishers	In this session, we will discuss the key aspects of the peer review process, the responsibilities and incentives for reviewers, and the critical issue of predatory publishers. We will share experiences related to peer review, predatory publishers, and discuss how to identify predatory publishers.	October 9, 2024	11.00 - 12.00 (WAT)	Femi Arogundade and Richard F. Heller
Week 2	The Role of AI in Peer Review: Opportunities, Challenges, and Ethics	This session will focus on how Artificial Intelligence is changing the peer review process. We will examine how AI can enhance the review process, the reliability of AI-generated reviews, and the ethical considerations involved in using AI.	October 14, 2024	11.00 - 12.00 (WAT)	Dominic Agyei Dankwah and Ian Machingura Ruredzo
Week 3	How to Conduct an Effective Peer Review: Key Steps and Best Practices	This session will offer guidance on conducting effective peer reviews. We will cover the basics of the peer review process, what to consider when accepting invitations, how to structure your review, and key areas to check in a manuscript. We will also discuss common mistakes to avoid as a reviewer.	October 21, 2024	11.00 - 12.00 (WAT)	Izuchukwu Okafor and Modibo Sangare

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Code of Conduct for Forum Discussions

To ensure a productive and respectful forum environment, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- ▶ **Stay On Topic:** Keep discussions relevant to the course material and weekly activities.
- ▶ **Be Respectful:** Treat all participants with respect. Acknowledge diverse opinions and experiences.
- ▶ **Stay Constructive:** Focus on providing constructive feedback and engage in positive discussions. Avoid negative or inflammatory remarks.
- ▶ **Use Clear Language:** Communicate clearly and concisely. Avoid overly complex language to ensure everyone can engage.
- ▶ **Maintain Privacy:** Take your privacy into full consideration. Do not share personal information on the forum.
- ▶ **Provide Feedback Responsively:** Respond to others' posts thoughtfully. Engage with questions and comments to foster continuous dialogue and learning.

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Follow-up Opportunities

- ▶ After completing this course, based on performance, a select group of participants will be invited to join WACREN's advanced program on Open Science Infrastructure.
 - **BAOBAB** - Preprint Repository
 - **PublishNow** - Open Review Platform
- ▶ Opportunity to participate in a follow up course on Open Publishing (Preprints and Open Peer Review)



Join the COPPHA Community

- ▶ **WhatsApp Group:** Stay connected for course updates and reminders.
- ▶ **Support:** If you have any questions, email us at coppha@wacren.net.

We're Here to Help: Our goal is to support you throughout your learning experience!

