

AUTHORSHIP



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, you should:

- Understand ICMJE authorship criteria
- Have an understanding of transparency matters: data, payments and disclosures
- Understand contributorship as an alternative/additional concept to ICMJE authorship criteria
- Have an understanding of common authorship issues and how to deal with them
- Understand how developments such as ORCID and CRediT may help link contributors to their work
- Know where to find additional resources on authorship

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WHY AUTHORSHIP MATTERS

“ Authorship confers credit and has important academic, social, and financial implications. Authorship also implies responsibility and accountability for published work. ”

“ Because authorship does not communicate what contributions qualified an individual to be an author, some journals now request and publish information about the contributions of each person ”

The worst definition of authorship...
...except for all the others

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MEDICAL JOURNAL EDITORS (ICMJE) AUTHORSHIP CRITERIA

Updated to include a **4th criterion**

ICMJE recommends that authorship be based on:

1

2

3

4

AUTHOR ACCESS TO DATA



Sponsors must provide authors and other contributors with **full** access to relevant study data and information **before** work on a publication or presentation begins



Statistical report, validated data tables, clinical study report



Study protocol, statistical analysis plan and any reasonable additional analyses requested by the authors

Patient confidentiality must be respected, and identifiable individual-level information should be anonymized or removed where necessary

NEED FOR CLARITY ON APPROPRIATE AUTHOR PAYMENTS AND REIMBURSEMENT



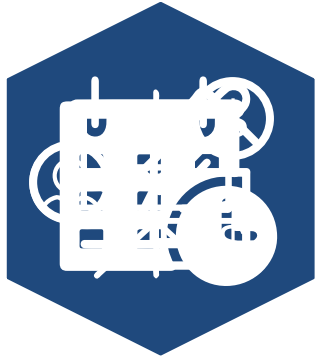
Pharma companies may reimburse reasonable publication- or presentation-related expenses incurred by authors and other contributors (eg travel and accommodation)



Payment should NEVER be made or offered simply to attract someone to be an author or to influence an author's opinion

As it is difficult to prove intent, pharma sponsors may choose to adopt policies that prohibit compensation for time spent authoring a publication or presentation

AUTHOR DISCLOSURES



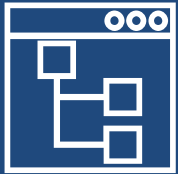
Authors should disclose financial and non-financial relationships that could be perceived to bias their work or influence professional judgment

If no time frame for disclosure is specified, it is recommend following the ICMJE disclosure form and using a 36-month disclosure window

Disclosure statements should be provided (on submission) for each author of a publication or congress abstract (space permitting)

Disclosure statements should also be included in slides for oral presentations and on posters

CONTRIBUTORSHIP



Some journals use a contributorship model to describe each individual's role in a publication (GPP3 guidelines support this model)

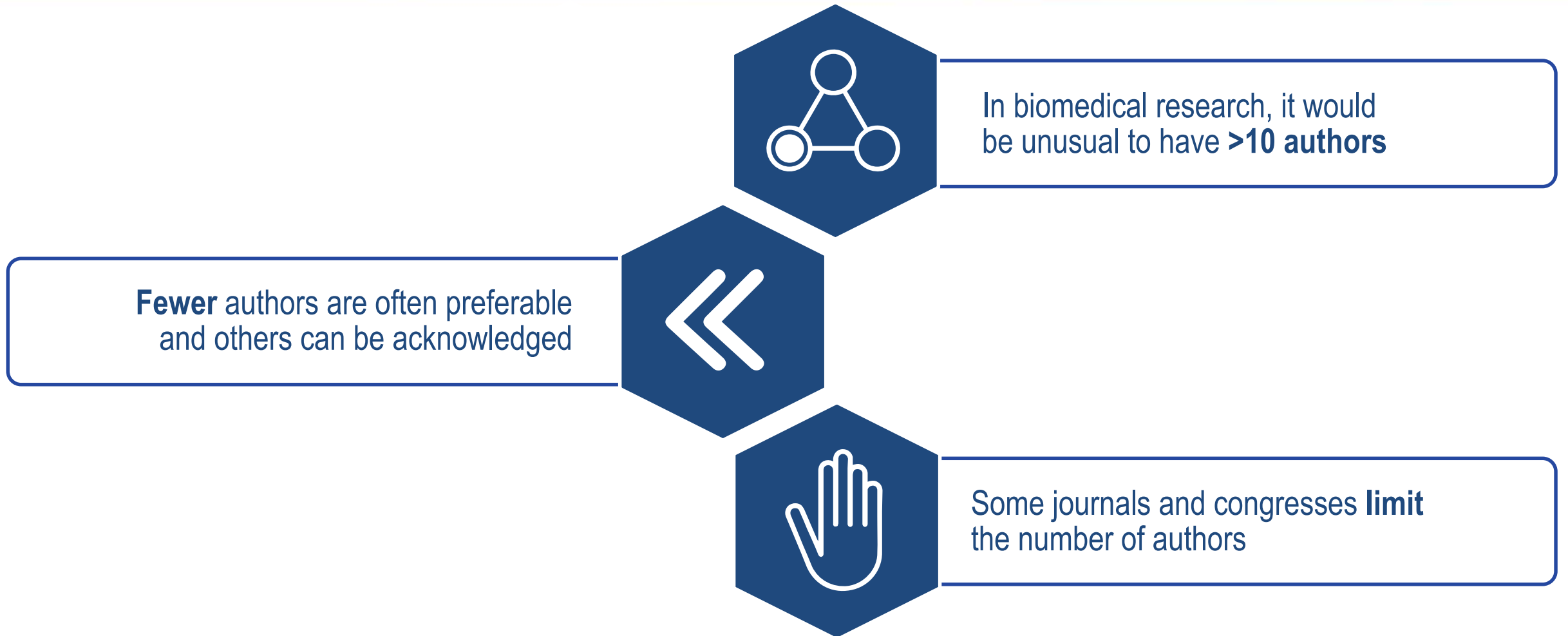


This should reduce ambiguity about contributions to the work



Clear, concise descriptions of each author's role and any non-author's contributions (eg, statistics, medical writers, research personnel) should be included within the presentation or publication

OPTIMAL NUMBER OF AUTHORS?



HOW TO DECIDE ON AUTHOR SEQUENCE?



Should be based on authors actual roles and contributions and may need to be decided at the end of publication development process



Those who made the greatest contribution usually listed first but alphabetical order may be used



It may be useful to describe in the contributorship section of the publication how author sequence was determined

WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TO ADD OR REMOVE AN AUTHOR?

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to add or remove an author:



For example, an author may be removed if he/she fails to make a substantial contribution or if there is a failure to approve the final version

For example, an author may be added if an additional set of data or analysis needs to be added



In such situations, ALL authors should approve the change

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF THE DEATH OR INCAPACITY OF AN AUTHOR?



Should an author die after completing a major part of the work, posthumous authorship can be considered if agreed by all other authors

As a first step, advice should be sought from journal instructions or editorial office

If a journal agrees but requires submission forms to be completed, this may be done by a proxy e.g. a supervisor, family member, person with power of attorney

In all cases, efforts should be made to contact the family of the deceased author to inform them of the intentions and request their consent

WHAT TO DO WHEN AN AUTHOR CHANGES AFFILIATION?



Affiliation should reflect where the major part of the work was conducted



The current affiliation and contact details should be listed in a footnote or acknowledgements section

Change in affiliation is not a valid reason to remove an author from a publication if authorship criteria are met

IS IT APPROPRIATE TO HAVE COMPANY OR SPONSOR-EMPLOYED AUTHORS?



Sponsor-employed scientists and clinicians often qualify as authors of company sponsored research publications and should have that opportunity



Such authors should not be denied because of concerns regarding perceptions of bias

Whatever authorship criteria are used should equally apply to company employees, contractors and others

CAN PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL WRITERS BE AUTHORS?



Writers helping develop a primary publication from a clinical trial report generally do not meet ICMJE authorship criteria

If writers do not meet authorship criteria their contribution **MUST** be disclosed in the acknowledgements section



Writers working on other types of publication (e.g. literature reviews) **MAY** qualify for authorship

Professional medical writers who meet applicable authorship criteria should be listed as authors

In such a case, the financial relationship between the writer and sponsor **MUST** be disclosed

HONORARY/GUEST AUTHORS AND GHOST AUTHORS



Individuals who are named as authors but who have not met authorship criteria and have not contributed substantially to be able to take public responsibility for the work are known as 'honorary' or 'guest authors'



'Ghost authors' are individuals who have made substantial contributions to the work reported in an article but who are not named as authors

These forms of 'authorship' lack accountability/transparency and are considered inappropriate

PROLIFIC AUTHORS



Researchers' productivity may be measured in terms of the number of publications they author



Whilst authoring a large number of publications may be considered a measure of success....

Authoring an unfeasibly large number of publications over a give time period may suggests authorship criteria are being disregarded (eg honorary/guest authorship) or may even indicate fraud

ENSURING YOUR WORK GETS RECOGNISED: ORCID AND CRedit



ORCID “provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from every other researcher”



Provides linkage between you and your publications (and other outputs), ensuring that your work as an author is recognised



Some publishers now require ORCID IDs for their authors

CRedit provides “transparency to the contributions of researchers to scholarly published work, to enable discoverability and to improve attribution, credit, and accountability”

USEFUL RESOURCES

- ICMJE authorship criteria: Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors:
<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>
- GPP3 Guidelines: Battisti WP, et al. Good publication practice for communicating company-sponsored medical research: GPP3. *Ann Intern Med*. 2015;163:461-4. doi:10.7326/M15-0288.
- Wager E, et al 2015. Too much of a good thing? An observational study of prolific authors. *PeerJ*. 3:e1154; doi:10.7717/peerj.1154. <https://peerj.com/articles/1154/>
- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/>
- CRediT: <http://docs.casrai.org/CRediT>