SELECTING A JOURNAL CHECKLIST

Before you start your selection process, check that

☐ All co-authors are in agreement on target readers
☐ You avoid using Impact Factor as a primary guide
☐ You’ve sought guidance for colleagues and collaborators
☐ You’ve considered sending in a pre-submission inquiry to journals that accept them

Once you’ve identified a set of candidate journals, check that each one

☐ Has a reputable publisher
☐ Is not listed as a predatory open access journal
☐ Is transparent about its editorial board structure (staff or academic editors)
☐ Is transparent about its review process (single blind, double blind, open)
☐ Will be accessible to your target readers (open access, subscription, or pay-per-view)
☐ Lists typical or specific times that manuscripts move from submission to first decision and from submission to publication
☐ Publishes the type of manuscript you are preparing
  • full research report, short report, review, methods papers, research communication, commentary, technical comments, other
☐ Has costs you can afford (open access fee, page charges, color charges)

Then check that your manuscript

☐ Clearly matches the journal aims and scope
☐ Can be adjusted to fit the specific requirements for
  • word count limits
  • numbers of figures and tables
  • numbers of and style of citations
  • language style preferences
  • sharing data and/or materials
  • depositing data or materials
  • supplementary materials limits and formatting
  • Identifier tags/numbers for authors, funders, institutions, and/or data

Once you’ve targeted a specific target journal, check that

☐ All co-authors in agreement on final journal
☐ You alter your cover letter to match the journal before submission