

PLOS Academic Editor's Guide to Editorial Manager

Applies to: [PLOS Climate](#) | [PLOS Global Public Health](#) | [PLOS Mental Health](#) | [PLOS One](#) | [PLOS Water](#)

All PLOS journals use the submission system, Editorial Manager (EM), provided by Aries Systems. Below you will find step-by-step instructions and screenshots for handling manuscripts as an Academic Editor.

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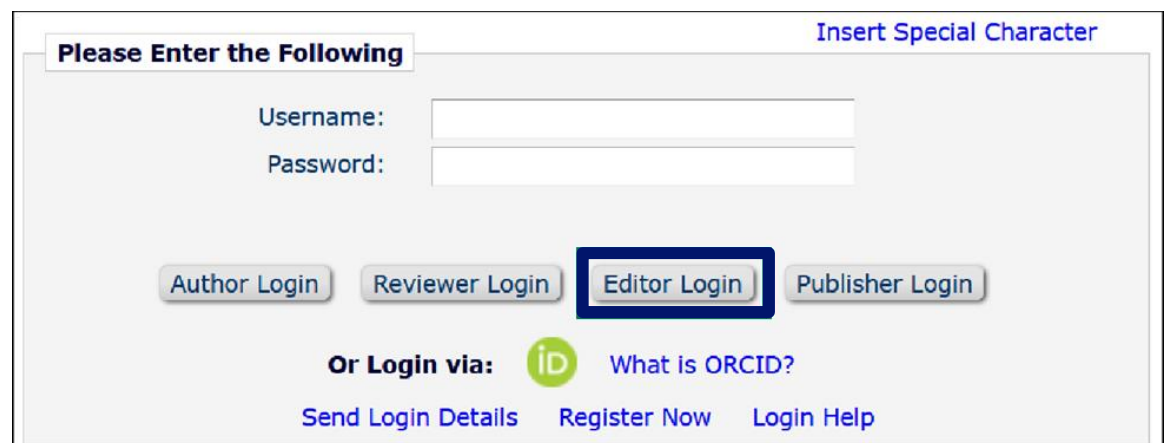
Getting Started

Login

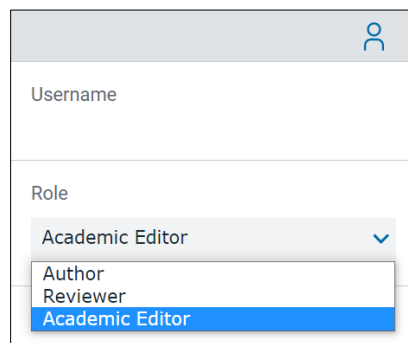
- 1 Log in to your journal's Editorial Manager: [PLOS Climate](#) | [PLOS Global Public Health](#) | [PLOS Mental Health](#) | [PLOS One](#) | [PLOS Water](#)

When you joined the Editorial Board, the Editorial Board Services team set up your profile with Academic Editor permissions.

- 2 Enter your Username and Password and click **Editor Login** to access your editor main menu.



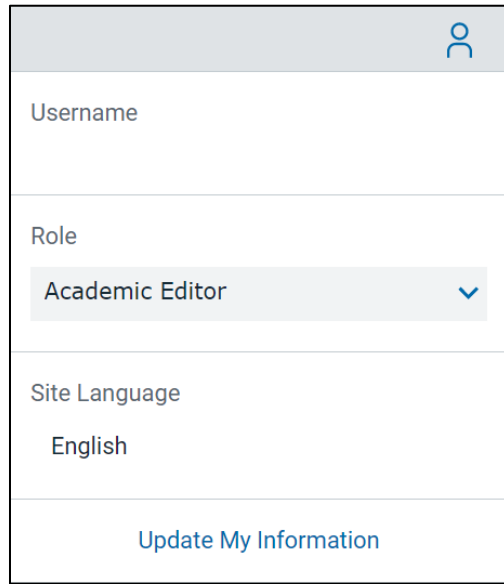
*If you log into EM as a reviewer or author, you can change your role to Academic Editor using the **Role** drop down menu after clicking on your name in the top navigation bar.*



Indicate Your Areas of Expertise

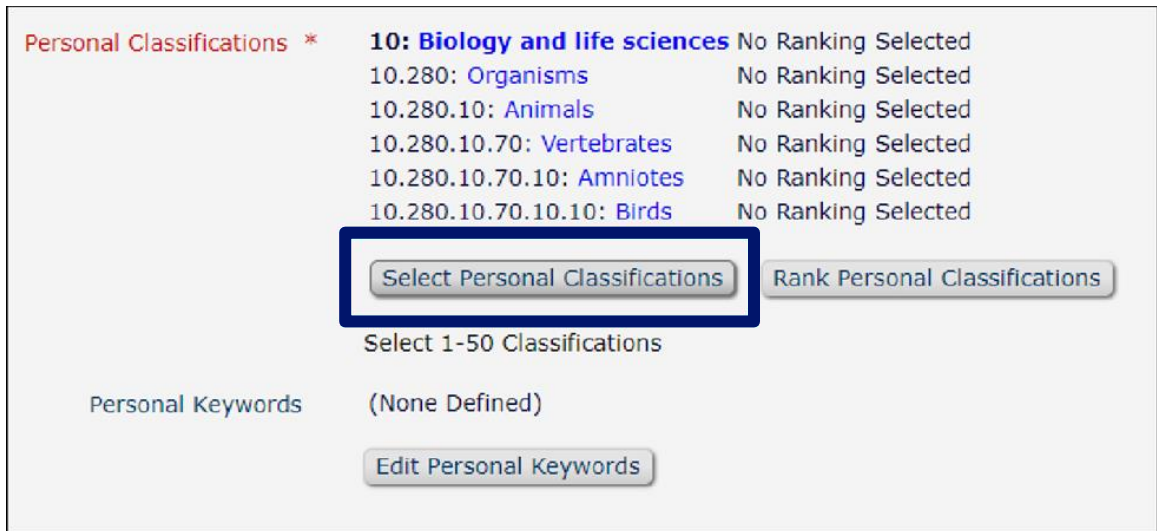
This step is critical to help match submissions to your areas of expertise. **Personal Classifications** aid with automated matching and are from the PLOS taxonomy. Free-text **Personal Keywords** help guide staff-initiated invitations.

1. Click on your name in the top navigation bar then **Update My Information**



2. Navigate to **Areas of Interest or Expertise** and indicate your areas of expertise using **Personal Classifications** and **Personal Keywords**.

3. Click **Select Personal Classifications**.



Personal Classifications *

Classification	Ranking
10: Biology and life sciences	No Ranking Selected
10.280: Organisms	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10: Animals	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10.70: Vertebrates	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10.70.10: Amniotes	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10.70.10.10: Birds	No Ranking Selected

Select Personal Classifications **Rank Personal Classifications**

Select 1-50 Classifications

Personal Keywords (None Defined)

Edit Personal Keywords

- a. This will ask you to select terms from a pre-defined taxonomy. You can browse the taxonomy or use the search bar to find and select available terms.

- b. When you've found your term, select it and click **Add ->** to add it to your

Selected Classifications. This will also select and add the higher-level terms above them.

Search: birds [Matching terms display in red text] Search Clear

Expand All Collapse All

Selected Classifications: *Select 1-50 Classifications*

- 10: **Biology and life sciences**
 - ☒ .280: Organisms
 - ☒ .280.10: Animals
 - ☒ .280.10.70: Vertebrates
 - ☒ .280.10.70.10: Amniotes
 - ☒ .280.10.70.10.10: **Birds**
 - ☐ .280.10.70.10.10.110: Seabirds

Add-> <-Remove

c. You must click **Submit** to save changes.

4. If a term is not available in the Classifications, you can add free-text **Personal Keywords** by clicking the **Edit Personal Keywords** button.

Personal Classifications *

10: Biology and life sciences	No Ranking Selected
10.280: Organisms	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10: Animals	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10.70: Vertebrates	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10.70.10: Amniotes	No Ranking Selected
10.280.10.70.10.10: Birds	No Ranking Selected

Select Personal Classifications Rank Personal Classifications

Select 1-50 Classifications

Personal Keywords (None Defined)

Edit Personal Keywords

a. Type free text into the **New Keyword** box then click **Add**.

- b. These terms save as they are added so you can close the window as normal when you are done.

Also on the Update My Information Page

[ORCID](#)

[Personal and Institution Related Information](#)

[Unavailable Dates](#)

ORCID

In the **Personal Information** section you can link your ORCID to your Editorial Manager account. Clicking **Fetch/Register** will open a new window where you can login to ORCID and authorize.

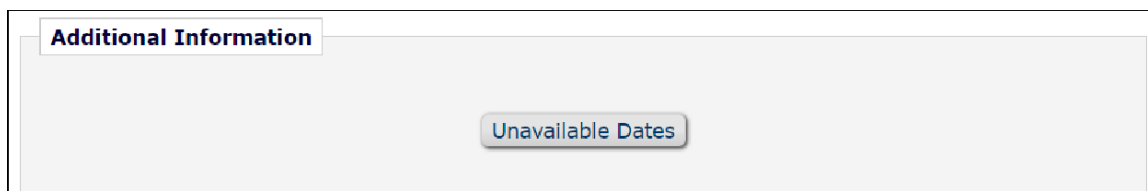
Personal and Institution Related Information

You can update your personal information at any time. Required fields are in red text and have an asterisk next to the label. You must click **Submit** at the bottom of the page to save changes.

Unavailable Dates

In the **Additional Information** section at the bottom of the page you have the option to select **Unavailable Dates**. Use these when you will be away, very busy, or otherwise unavailable to accept new invitations. Please indicate if you are available to handle the revised submissions you have already been working on.

1. Click **Unavailable Dates**.



The screenshot shows a light gray rectangular box with a tab labeled "Additional Information" at the top left. Inside the box, centered, is a button labeled "Unavailable Dates".

2. Click **Add New Unavailable Date**.
3. Add in a **Start Date**, **End Date**, and **Reason**, specifying whether you can handle revisions of your current assignments. You must click **Submit** to save changes. You do not have to enter any substitutes.



The screenshot shows a form titled "Please Enter the Following" with a "Cancel" button and a "Submit" button at the top. The form contains three fields: "Start Date" with a date picker showing "05/12/2021", "End Date" with a date picker showing "05/31/2021", and "Reason" with a text area containing "Field work. Can handle revisions." A link "Insert Special Character" is visible on the right. The "Submit" button is highlighted with a blue border.

Academic Editor Main Menu

Your **Main Menu** consists of:

[Editor 'To-Do' List](#)

[Submissions with Decisions](#)

[Submissions with \[0/1/2/3/4\] Reviews Completed](#)

[Administrative Functions](#)

Editor 'To-Do' List

This section provides an overview of manuscripts needing action

My Pending Assignments

[New Invitations](#)

[New Assignments](#)

[Submissions with \[Required Reviews Complete / Requiring Additional Reviewers / One or More Late Reviews\]](#)

[Submissions with Active Discussions](#)

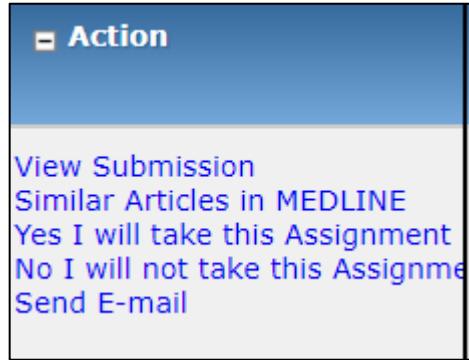
[Reviews in Progress](#)

Editor 'To-Do' List 	
My Pending Assignments (7)	
New Invitations (1)	
New Assignments (0)	
Submissions with Required Reviews Complete (0)	
Submissions Requiring Additional Reviewers (1)	
Submissions with One or More Late Reviews (1)	
Submissions with Active Discussions (4)	3
Reviews in Progress (1)	
Reviewers Invited - No Response (1)	
Submissions Under Review (0)	

New Invitations

Typically, you will respond to manuscript invitations directly from your email. You can also accept or decline invitations, as well as read the full submission, from the **New Invitations** page under your **Editor 'To-Do' List**.

1. From your **Main Menu** navigate to the **Editor 'To-Do' List** section and click on **New Invitations**
2. Here you will see a list of your pending manuscript invitations.



From here you can:

- a. Click **View Submission** to download the full submission PDF
- b. Accept an invitation by clicking **Yes I will take this Assignment**
- c. Decline an invitation by clicking **No I will not take this Assignment**
 - i. If you decline the invitation you will be prompted to enter a **Reason for Decline**. Your selection informs journal staff about the suitability of invitations, your availability, and next actions on the manuscript.

Decline Invitation

Select your decline reason below.

If selecting "Not suitable for peer review" or "Other," please provide details in the box. If you are able, please suggest other Academic Editors who may be qualified to serve as Editor for this manuscript, as well.

If selecting "Currently too busy, but in my area of expertise," we may contact you at a later date if we require further input on the submission at a later stage.

If you will be unavailable for an extended period, please visit [Update My Information](#) and click "Unavailable Dates" and then "Add New Unavailable Date" to let us know.

Reason for Decline: Please Choose

Please Choose

Too busy

Too many assignments

Currently too busy, but in my area of expertise

Outside my area of expertise

Competing interest

Not suitable for peer review

Other

Cancel

Submit

[Return to Main Menu](#)

New Assignments

These are your manuscripts that require an initial action.

Submissions with [Required Reviews Complete / Requiring Additional Reviewers / One or More Late Reviews]

These are your manuscripts organized by the specific status or action needed.

Submissions with Active Discussions

If a staff editor has a submission they would like your input on, they will contact you via a Discussion for the manuscript. You will receive an email notification, which provides a link to the Discussion. You can also access all your open Discussions via the **Submissions with Active Discussions** link. A blue oval will indicate the number of unread Discussions.

[Submissions with Active Discussions \(4\)](#) **3**

Reviews in Progress

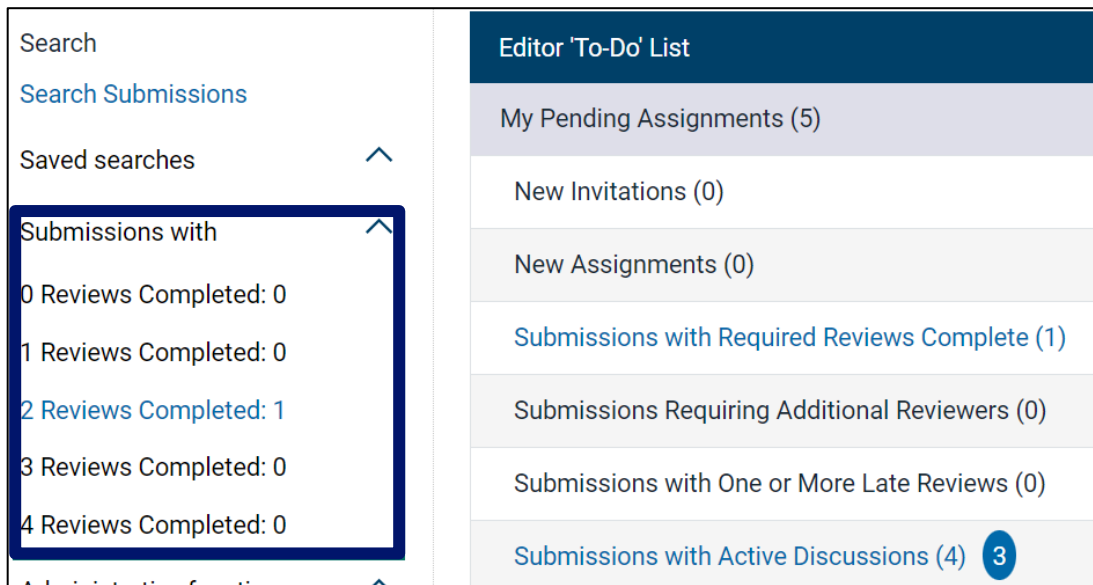
These are manuscripts where you have invited (Reviewers Invited – No Response) or secured reviewers (Submissions Under Review) and are awaiting their response or review.

Submissions with Decisions

Navigate to manuscripts for which you have issued a decision.

Submissions with Decisions 
Accept (0) / Reject (0) / Withdrawn (0) / Transfer (0)
My Assignments with Decision (1)
My Assignments with Final Disposition (260)

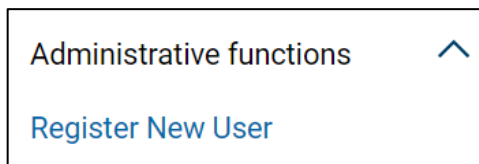
Submissions with [0/1/2/3/4] Reviews Completed



The screenshot shows the PLOS interface. On the left, a sidebar menu is open, highlighting the 'Submissions with' option. Below it, a list of options is shown: '0 Reviews Completed: 0', '1 Reviews Completed: 0', '2 Reviews Completed: 1', '3 Reviews Completed: 0', and '4 Reviews Completed: 0'. On the right, the 'Editor To-Do List' is displayed, showing various tasks: 'My Pending Assignments (5)', 'New Invitations (0)', 'New Assignments (0)', 'Submissions with Required Reviews Complete (1)', 'Submissions Requiring Additional Reviewers (0)', 'Submissions with One or More Late Reviews (0)', and 'Submissions with Active Discussions (4) 3'.

On the leftside menu is an alternate way to view your active assignments based on the status of reviews completed.

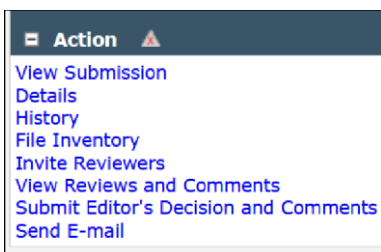
Administrative Functions



The screenshot shows the 'Administrative functions' menu in the PLOS interface. The menu is open, showing the 'Register New User' option.

Also on the leftside menu is the ability to register new reviewers that are not already in the database. However, you will typically register new users from the **Invite Reviewers** page (see [Registering a New Reviewer.](#))

Manuscript Actions



The screenshot shows the 'Action' menu in the PLOS interface. The menu is open, showing various options: 'View Submission', 'Details', 'History', 'File Inventory', 'Invite Reviewers', 'View Reviews and Comments', 'Submit Editor's Decision and Comments', and 'Send E-mail'.

The **Action** menu is where you conduct most of your Academic Editor activities. Further detail about each of these pages can be found below.

[View Submission](#)

[Details](#)

[Invite Reviewers](#)

[Reviewer Search – Direct Search](#) | [Web of Science Reviewer Locator](#)

[Registering a New Reviewer](#)

[Sending Reviewer Invitations](#)

[Monitoring Reviewer Invitations](#)

[Re-Inviting Previous Reviewers to a Revised Manuscript](#)

[View Reviews and Comments](#)

[Submit Editor's Decision and Comments](#)

[Send E-mail](#)

View Submission

Download the full submission PDF. Some particular components to note:

- **Opposed Reviewers** are listed on the first page
- **Additional Information** provided by the authors at submission
 - **Financial Disclosure**
 - **Competing Interests**
 - **Ethics Statement**
 - **Data Availability**
- You can access high-resolution versions of each figure by selecting the blue link at the top of the page each figure appears on.

[Click here to access/download;Figure;Fig 1.tif](#) 

- You can find Supporting Information files and Related Manuscripts (if included) via blue links at the end of the submission PDF.

[Click here to access/download
Supporting Information](#)

Details

This page contains information about the manuscript including journal office notes, authors, keywords, abstract, reviewer statuses, and more.

The journal office may leave specific questions or guidance in the **Information for Editor** section at the top of the **Details** page

Information for Editor	Please note that the authors amended the Financial Disclosure statement:
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In the **Reviewers** section you can monitor the status of reviews.

Reviewers	
Name:	[Redacted] (Reviewer)
Review Status:	Review Complete
Date Reviewer Invited:	Feb 10 2021 08:49PM
Date Reviewer Agreed:	Feb 11 2021 12:26AM
Date Review Due:	Mar 13 2021 11:59PM
Date Review Completed:	Feb 12 2021 12:38AM
Elapsed Days:	1
Recommendation:	Major Revision
Name:	[Redacted] (Reviewer)
Review Status:	Agreed to Review
Date Reviewer Invited:	May 07 2021 08:51PM
Date Reviewer Agreed:	May 10 2021 05:27AM
Date Review Due:	06/09/2021  (mm/dd/yyyy)
Elapsed Days:	6

At the bottom of the **Details** page you will find **Additional Information** provided by the authors ranging from mandatory inputs such as **Competing Interests** to optional **Social Media** suggestions.

History

This page contains a chronological listing of the manuscript's status and correspondence history. It is especially useful if you agree to handle a manuscript that was previously assigned to another Academic Editor or one that was transferred from another PLOS journal.

File Inventory

This page contains all the files included in the submission including the cover letter, manuscript, and figures.

Invite Reviewers

On this page you can search for reviewers, check reviewer invitation statuses, and manage secured reviewers.

[Reviewer Search](#) – [Direct Search](#) | [Web of Science Reviewer Locator](#)

[Registering a New Reviewer](#)

[Sending Reviewer Invitations](#)

[Monitoring Reviewer Invitations](#)

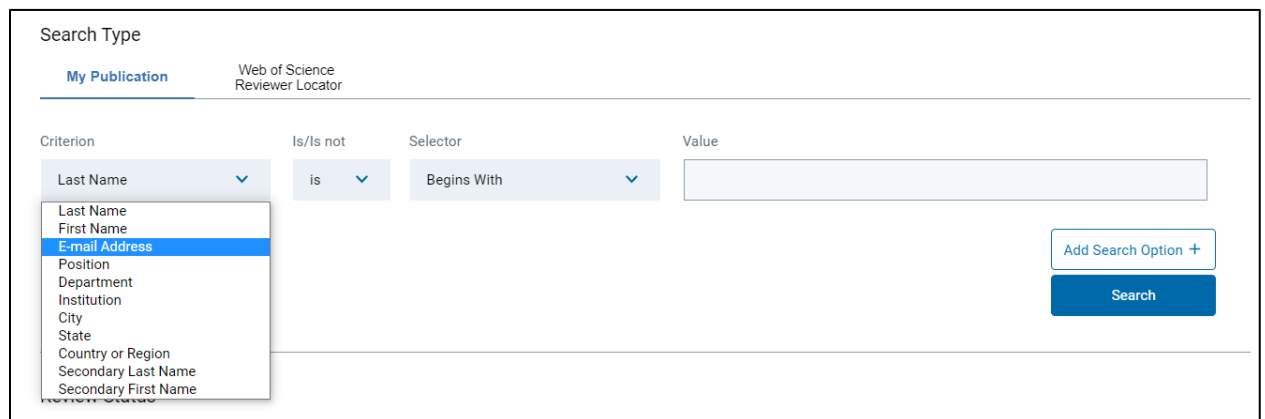
[Re-Inviting Previous Reviewers to a Revised Manuscript](#)

Reviewer Search

Direct Search

Use this method if you have a reviewer in mind, are using an author-suggested reviewer, or found a potential reviewer on an external database.

On the **My Publication** tab you can search by a variety of criteria - the most reliable is email



The screenshot shows the 'Search Type' section with two tabs: 'My Publication' (selected) and 'Web of Science Reviewer Locator'. Below the tabs is a search form with the following fields:

Criterion	Is/Is not	Selector	Value
Last Name First Name Email Address Position Department Institution City State Country or Region Secondary Last Name Secondary First Name	is	Begins With	

On the right side of the form, there are two buttons: 'Add Search Option +' and 'Search'.

1. If your desired reviewer is in the database, their profile will appear in your search results along with some basic statistics on their past invitations and reviews. If they are not in the database you can [register them](#)

- a. To invite the reviewer, click the **Inv.** box

Inv.	Alt.	Reviewer Name	Board Member	Reviewer Statistics (Agreed Invitations)	Invitation Statistics
☒	☐		No	Reviews In Progress: 0 Completed Reviews: 4 Un-assigned After Agreeing: 0 Terminated After Agreeing: 0 Last Review Agreed: Feb 14 2015 02:54PM Last Review Completed: Mar 15 2015 09:48PM Last Review Declined: May 19 2015 08:33PM Avg Days Outstanding: 21 Manuscript Ratings: 0 Avg Review Rating: 87.5	Date Last Invited: Mar 18 2021 03:17AM Outstanding Invitations: 0 Agreed: 4 Declined: 5 Un-Invited Before Agreeing: 2 Terminated: 0 Total Invitations: 11

Page: 1 of 1 (1 total Reviewers) Display: 10 results per page.

- b. To select the reviewer as an alternate, click the **Alt.** box. Alternate reviewers are automatically invited when invited reviewers decline.
- c. You can continue to find reviewers using the search fields after you make initial selections. EM will remember which reviewers you selected.

Web of Science Reviewer Locator

The Web of Science Reviewer Locator is a tool to help you find, vet, and invite reviewers.

1. Select the Web of Science Reviewer Locator tab to use the tool.

Search Type

My Publication **Web of Science Reviewer Locator**

2. The tool will return a list of suggested reviewers from Web of Science databases. Keep in mind that before inviting anyone, you still need to vet them for expertise match, appropriate seniority, and avoid any potential conflicts of interest.
3. If available, click on **View Researcher Profile and Publications** to open a potential reviewer's Web of Science profile in a new window

Reviewer Statistics (Agreed Invitations)	
Reviews in Progress:	0
Completed Reviews:	0
Un-assigned After Agreeing:	0
Terminated After Agreeing:	0
Last Review Agreed:	-
Last Review Completed:	-
Last Review Declined:	-
Avg Days Outstanding:	0
Manuscript Rating:	0
Avg Review Rating:	0.0
View Researcher Profile and Publications	

4. To invite a reviewer, check the **Inv.** box. To queue a reviewer as an alternate, check the **Alt.** box.
5. If a reviewer is not in the Editorial Manager database a popup box about proxy registration will appear. You do not need to follow the [Registering a New Reviewer](#) steps below; this is done automatically.

Inv.	Alt.
☒	☐
This Reviewer candidate will be proxy-registered when you click Proceed or perform another search.	

Registering a New Reviewer

Many reviewers will already be in the EM database. However, if they aren't already, you'll need to register the desired reviewer prior to inviting them to review.

1. Click **Register and Select New Reviewer**

Sorry, no Reviewers were found that match the search criteria.

[Register and Select New Reviewer](#)

2. Enter the desired reviewer's email address

Register and Select New Reviewer

Please enter key information about the person you are registering as a Reviewer.

[Insert Special Character](#)

E-mail Address *

If entering more than one e-mail address, use a semi-colon between each address (e.g., joe@thejournal.com;joe@yahoo.com)
 Entering a second e-mail address from a different e-mail provider decreases the chance that SPAM filters will trap e-mails sent to you from online systems. [Read More.](#)

[Cancel](#) [Proceed](#)

3. Enter the reviewer's **Personal Information**. All text in red and with an asterisk is required.

User Information

Reviewer Role *

Default Login Role: Reviewer ☒

Personal Information

Given/First Name *

Family/Last Name *

Title ‡ (Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc.)

Middle Name

Degree (Ph.D., M.D., etc.)

Country or Region *

[Cancel](#) [Register User and Send Letter](#)

4. Once complete, select **Register User and Send Letter** and then **Send Letter** to send the proxy registration letter.

Customize Proxy Registration Letter

Editors and publication staff are legally obligated to inform a user when an account has been created on the user's behalf. Click the Send Letter button to send the notification letter.

Send Letter

From: "PLOS ONE"<plosone@plos.org>

To: (proxy registration pending)

Letter Purpose: Proxy Registration Notice to Registrant

Letter Subject: PLOS ONE Registration

Additional recipients can be copied or blind copied by typing their e-mail addresses into the blank boxes next to cc: or bcc: below. Multiple e-mail addresses can be included, separated by semicolons (;).

cc:

bcc:

Letter Body:

[Insert Special Character](#) | [Insert Merge Field: Additional Manuscript Details](#)
[Open in New Window](#)

Dear ,

You have been registered for the Editorial Manager online submission and peer review tracking system for PLOS ONE because an Academic Editor would like you to review a submission (you will receive a separate review invitation).

Here is your username and confidential password, which you need to access the Editorial Manager at <https://www.editorialmanager.com/pone/>.

Username: %USERNAME%
Password: %PASSWORD%

This temporary password will expire after five days. You can change your password and other personal information by logging into the PLOS ONE website at <https://www.editorialmanager.com/pone/> and clicking on the Update My Information link on the menu.

Best regards,

PLOS ONE

- You can now select the desired reviewer and proceed to sending invitations

Sending Reviewer Invitations

- Once you have finished making your selections, click **Proceed**.
- Here you will see a list of all selected reviewers and alternates. The default **Days to Review** is 10. You may adjust this, if necessary, but we have found that reviewers take an average of 10 days to complete reviews. Reviewers are always able to request extensions if needed.

Reviewers to Invite			
Name	Letter	Days to Review	Do Not Invite
(Reviewer)	Invitation: New Reviewer Customize	10	☐

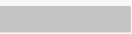
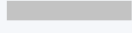
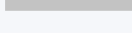
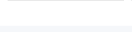
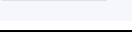
- You have the option to **Customize** the default text if you would like to add a personal note to the reviewer.

Reviewers to Invite			
Name	Letter	Days to Review	Do Not Invite
(Reviewer)	Invitation: New Reviewer Customize	10	☐

4. Click **Confirm Selections and Proceed**

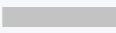
Monitoring Reviewer Invitations

In the **Review Status** section of the **Invite Reviewers** page you can view the status of the reviewer invitations, view the **Decline Reason** text, and check whether there are any outstanding **Alternate Reviewers**.

Review Status			
Invited Reviewers (18)			
 (Reviewer)	Review Complete Feb 17 2023 08:41AM		
 (Reviewer)	Reviewer Invited Feb 17 2023 10:04AM		<button>Uninvite Reviewer</button>
 (Reviewer)	Reviewer Invited Feb 17 2023 09:56AM		<button>Uninvite Reviewer</button>
 (Reviewer)	Reviewer Invited Feb 17 2023 09:46AM		<button>Uninvite Reviewer</button>
 (Reviewer)	Reviewer Invited Feb 17 2023 10:02AM		<button>Uninvite Reviewer</button>
 (Reviewer)	Reviewer Declined Feb 20 2023 10:35AM	No Reason Entered	<button>Reinvite Reviewer</button>
 (Reviewer)	Reviewer Declined Feb 21 2023 06:36PM	View	<button>Reinvite Reviewer</button>

Re-Inviting Previous Reviewers to a Revised Manuscript

- On the **Previous Reviewers** tab of the **Invite Reviewers** page, click the **Select From Previous Reviewers** button

Search Type			
My Publication	Previous Reviewers	Web of Science Reviewer Locator	
Previous Reviewers (2)			
	Email	Recommendation	
		Major Revision	<button>View Review</button>
		Minor Revision	<button>View Review</button>
			<button>Select From Previous Reviewers</button>

2. Select the previous reviewers you would like to re-invite then click **Proceed**

Page: 1 of 1 (2 total Reviewers)

Select As		Reviewer Name
Inv.	Alt.	
☒	☐	This publication: (This person reviewed the previous version as Reviewer 2)
☒	☐	This publication: (This person reviewed the previous version as Reviewer 1)

3. The appropriate letter template will already be selected, which you may customize as necessary

Letter
Invitation: Previous Reviewer on Revision ▼ Customize

4. Once you are ready, click **Confirm Selections and Proceed** to re-invite the selected previous reviewers

View Reviews and Comments

On this page you can view the reviewers, their recommendations and comments, decision letters, response to reviewers, and any reviews uploaded as attachments.

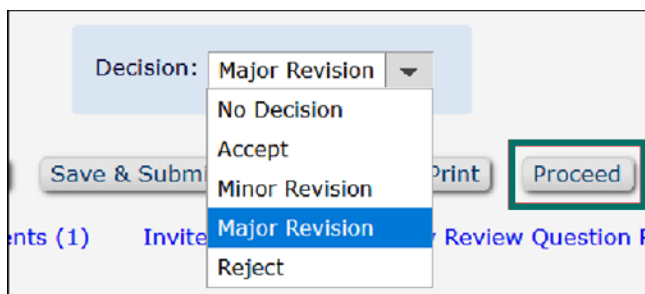
Attachments (1) View Manuscript Rating Card View Review Question Responses		
	Revision 1	Original Submission
(Reviewer 1)	(None)	Minor Revision
(Reviewer 2)	(None)	Accept
(Reviewer 3)	Accept	Major Revision
(Reviewer 4)	Major Revision	(None)
(Academic Editor)		Minor Revision (Decision Rescinded: Accept)
Author Decision Letter		Minor Revision
(Author)		Response to Reviewers

To view the reviewer comments, click the suggested decision type for each reviewer individually. This will show the completed reviewer form for that reviewer. These comments - except for the recommended decision - are automatically pulled into your decision letter.

Submit Editor's Decision and Comments

It is on this page that you will issue your **Decision**. You are also able to access the same content as the **View Reviews and Comments** page (e.g. reviewer comments)

1. Select your decision type at the top of the page then click **Proceed**. You do not need to type anything in the **Confidential Comments to Editor** nor the **Comments to Author** section. You will add your Academic Editor comments in the decision letter.



2. The next page shows the draft decision with reviewer Comments to the Author. Click **Proceed** once more, which will take you to the decision letter.
3. Replace the placeholder text with your own comments. You must add context to your editorial decision by replacing this text. It is not sufficient to leave this placeholder text nor leave the section blank.

Dear Dr. %LAST_NAME%,

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to PLOS ONE. After careful consideration, we feel that it has merit but does not fully meet PLOS ONE's publication criteria as it currently stands. Therefore, we invite you to submit a revised version of the manuscript that addresses the points raised during the review process.

=====

ACADEMIC EDITOR: Please insert comments here and delete this placeholder text when finished. Be sure to:

- Indicate which changes you require for acceptance versus which changes you recommend
- Address any conflicts between the reviews so that it's clear which advice the authors should follow
- Provide specific feedback from your evaluation of the manuscript

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