

TRR Editor Handbook

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Welcome to the TRR Editorial Board!

Thank you for volunteering as an editor for *Transportation Research Record: The Journal of the Transportation Research Board*. The quality of TRR and the impact we have on research, practice, and policy is dependent on our peer review process. As an Associate or Handling Editor, you are at the heart of that process. You bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to this role, which we appreciate.

This Handbook brings together guidance on the process of making decisions about papers (e.g., What is a good peer review? When should I reject a paper?) as well as the mechanics of using Editorial Manager (EM). Some of TRR's practices may vary from your experience at other journals, so please review the Handbook carefully.

The guidance and advice provided was compiled by the TRR Editorial Office and will continue to be updated as needed. If you ever have suggestions for improving the process, please email the Editor-in-Chief (Jennifer Dill, trr-eic@pdx.edu) or the team at TRB (trr@nas.edu).

An Overview of the Peer Review Process

Stage 1: Manuscript Quality Control

Once a manuscript has been submitted, a member of the editorial staff performs a technical check, ensuring that the submission is complete and in good form. Staff then invites an editor to evaluate/handle the submission.

Stage 2: Editor Evaluation

Senior Associate and Associate Editors will look a paper over to see if it is a good fit for the TRR. If they feel that it has potential, they will then invite a Handling Editor to handle it. They can also handle a paper directly if so inclined. At this stage a paper can also be desk rejected.

Stage 3: Reviewer Selection/Invitation

If the editor feels that a paper is a good fit and of high enough quality to warrant peer review, they will then select and invite reviewers to review the manuscript.

Stage 4: Reviewer Evaluation

Once a reviewer agrees to review, they will evaluate and submit a review of the manuscript.

Stage 5: Decision

Once all reviews are in, the editor will then enter a decision on the manuscript. Decisions are proofed by the EIC or AE before the decision letter is sent to the authors. Decisions may occasionally be rescinded and returned to the editor for changes – an explanation of why the decision is being rescinded will be provided.

Editor Duties

All editors are expected to do the following:

- Uphold ethical standards and confidentiality throughout the editorial process. Report ethical concerns, including conflicts of interest, to the EIC and TRR Managing Editor.
- Attend all required training, including Ethics Training.
- Provide information to TRR on areas of expertise, which will be used to assign editors.
- Notify TRR staff when temporarily unavailable to carry out editor duties (e.g., on vacation, etc.)

Senior Associate Editor (SAE)

In addition to the roles of an Associate Editor, a SAE does the following:

- Assist in triaging Annual Meeting papers
- Assist EIC in adjudicating decisions in areas of expertise
- Collaborate with EIC on developing strategic direction for TRR. Provide subject matter expertise and perspective in helping to strengthen TRR's impact.
- Assist in identifying and recruiting new editors in areas of expertise. Review applications for new editors.

Associate Editor (AE)

- Review assigned papers to decide if the paper meets criteria for desk rejection or should undergo peer review.
- Assign papers to HEs.
- Handle some papers when necessary (e.g., when no HEs are available) or when desired by the AE.
- Respond to requests from HEs for guidance. Provide feedback to HEs when necessary.
- Provide recommendations to the EIC for new AEs and HEs. Upon request, assist in reviewing new AE and HE applications.

Handling Editor

- Review assigned papers to decide if the paper meets criteria for desk rejection or should undergo peer review.
- Ensure a high quality, thorough peer review process:
 - Assign reviewers with appropriate expertise for the paper, including an appropriate balance of types of expertise;
 - Avoid assigning reviewers with conflicts of interest (e.g. from the same institution);
 - Obtain an adequate number of comprehensive reviews;
 - Carefully read and independently assess all reviews;
 - Recommend a decision; and
 - When appropriate include specific comments to authors explaining the decision

Guidance on Handling Papers

This section of the Editor Handbook focuses on the paper review process and the decisions Handling Editors make.

A video covering some of this information by the Editor-in-Chief is available [here](#).

Who's who

Throughout the process of handling papers, you may interact with one or more people in the TRR editorial office, listed and described in the table below. The first four people listed here are employees of the Transportation Research Board at the National Academies of Science. You can reach them by emailing trr@nas.edu.

Name	Title	Roles in the paper review process
John Dodson	Director of Publishing and Outreach	
Kisna Quimby	Assistant Managing Editor	
Brie Schwartz	Communications/Media Specialist	
Amy Hardcastle	Peer Review Coordinator and Publications Graphics Specialist	
Jennifer Dill trr-eic@pdx.edu	Editor-in-Chief	Review editors' decisions Handle appeals by authors Desk Reject decisions before assignment to editor Involved in other issues, such as misconduct, conflicts of interest, etc.

Invitation to handle a paper

“Handle a paper” is a term used to describe the process of an editor either (1) desk rejecting the paper; or (2) putting the paper through the peer review process.

When a paper is submitted and ready for possible review, the TRR Editorial Office will usually assign it to an Associate Editor (AE). The AE may decide to Desk Reject the paper without further review. If the AE feels the paper may have merit, they will usually assign it to a Handling Editor (HE) with appropriate expertise; sometimes an AE will handle a paper themselves. Sometimes the Editorial Office will assign a paper directly to an HE.

When you receive an email asking you to handle a paper, you must decide to do so within seven days. The sooner you make the decision, the better.

Consider the following factors when making the decision:

- You do not need to be an expert on the paper's specific topic. You should know enough about the topic to be able to identify possible reviewers and understand and interpret their comments about the paper.
- Do not handle papers outside your areas of expertise.
- Make sure you have time.

First decision: Send for review?

After you agree to handle a paper, the first decision is whether to Desk Reject the paper. Even if an AE has assigned you the paper, a HE may still Desk Reject a paper. To lessen the burden on reviewers and to avoid having authors revise papers unlikely to be published, we recommend you decline papers with the following issues:

- Findings do not contribute to the current practice or literature
- Findings that are purely descriptive in content
- Repetition of well-established findings
- Focus of study too narrow to be applied elsewhere
- Writing that cannot be easily understood
- Topics outside the scope of the Transportation Research Board
- Inappropriate or offensive language
- Endorsement or promotion of a commercial product
- Unclear or confusing paper organization
- Excessive length and rambling narrative

If you choose to Desk Reject a paper, please provide a brief rationale for the author in the Editor Comments to Author box.

If you do not Desk Reject the paper, the most common thing to do is to send it out for peer review. However, there is one additional option. If you feel the paper has potential, but notice some key shortcomings that reviewers are likely to identify, you can enter a Revise decision and provide the authors clear guidance on how they need to revise the paper before you agree to send it for peer review. Examples could be that the methods are not described adequately, or the paper is excessively long.

Finding reviewers

What to look for in peer reviewers

Once you have decided to send a paper for peer review, you need to find qualified reviewers. This is a very crucial part of the process. Here are some things to consider when identifying peer reviewers:

- **Experience.** Perhaps the most important characteristic to look for in a reviewer is experience with the topic and/or methods of the paper. People with years of experience in the field can be very strong reviewers. However, they are not always available; it is also important to provide review experience for younger experts. The TRR reviewer pool includes many graduate students who are involved in research and have been authors on published

papers. You can include graduate students as reviewers, but you should aim for having some more experienced reviewers as well.

- **Range of expertise.** You may need a combination of reviewers with complementary expertise. For example, for a paper using machine learning techniques to understand traffic flow and estimate changes in fuel consumption, you will want expertise in ML methods, traffic flow, and fuel consumption analysis. There may be reviewers with all three, but more likely you will need to find a set of reviewers that, combined, cover all aspects of the paper.
- **Mix of academic researchers and practitioners.** It is often useful to include both active researchers at universities who have published on a relevant topic and people working in the transportation industry who may use the research and/or conduct applied research. One strength of TRR is its focus on research that can be applied to practice and policy. TRR's reviewer pool in Editorial Manager includes many people working at public agencies, consulting firms, and other organizations that have been involved in TRB that can provide a useful perspective on a research paper.
- **Conflicts of interest.** You should not choose peer reviewers that are from the same organization as any of the authors. The EM system will ask invited reviewers about potential conflicts of interest, however, some reviewers may not believe this is a conflict of interest (COI).
- **Consider geography.** Depending on the subject, it may be useful to have one or more reviewers that have experience in the same country or region as where the research took place. It may also be useful to include a reviewer from another country or region, who can provide a broader perspective on the transferability of the research.
- **Not from the same organization.** It is important to have a range of perspectives among the reviewers. Therefore, you should avoid having reviewers from the same organization.
- **Qualitative research.** TRR publishes papers using a wide range of methods, including qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, and content analysis. If you are handling a paper that uses qualitative methods, you should make an effort to find reviewers who are familiar with such methods. Some reviewers who only understand quantitative methods will apply inappropriate criteria in a review of a qualitative methods paper.
- **Review papers.** Review papers are papers that review, synthesize, and assess the existing research on a topic. These papers can be very useful when they are done well. Therefore, they should be reviewed by more experienced researchers in the field – people who will know the topic well.
- **Case study papers.** Papers that present a case study (e.g., a careful, objective evaluation of the implementation of an innovative solution) can be valuable, particularly to advance practice and policy. For such papers, it can be even more important to include reviewers working in the transportation industry.

How to find reviewers

The most common method to find reviewers is within **Editorial Manager (EM)**. There are thousands of reviewers in TRR's EM system. You can search for these reviewers based on classifications that match the paper. However, you should not assume that just because the person's classifications match those of the paper that they will be a good reviewer. The names in the system have accumulated over the years from a variety of sources. Some reviewers in the system are very active

and provide high quality reviews. Others may have limited review or research experience. Not all reviewer profiles are up to date. Therefore, once you find a potential reviewer, you should look at their profile to assess the qualities they may bring to the review. If they have an ORCID linked, that will provide more information.

If you are not getting good potential reviewers within EM, you should consider adding or removing classifications on the paper. If you narrow the classifications to the most important aspects of the paper, your search results may improve.

There will be data for each reviewer on their review history with TRR, including how many papers they may be reviewing now and whether they have not responded to previous requests to review. Consider this data when inviting a reviewer.

Also note that EM will display flags for reviewers who are also TRR editors. While some editors are open to doing reviews, others may not have the time because of their editorial responsibilities. Be considerate of their workload before inviting another editor to review.

There are effective methods of finding reviewers outside of EM:

- **References in the paper.** Look for authors of recent papers referenced in the paper.
- **Google Scholar.** Search Google Scholar (or other research databases) to find authors of closely related research.
- **Your networks.** As an expert in the field, use your network as potential reviewers.

Once you identify people through these methods that would be good reviewers, you can search for them in EM. If they are not in the system, there is a method to add them.

Finally, it is possible to assign yourself as a reviewer. Sometimes editors do this when they have strong expertise on the topic, and they are having a difficult time finding reviewers.

Inviting reviewers

Your objective is to get three quality, useful reviews. We recommend that you initially invite 3-5 reviewers. EM will send a standard invitation to the reviewers, with a deadline for responding. There are also options in the system for specific types of invitation letters, such as for Annual Meeting papers. Sometimes it can be helpful for the editor to customize the invitation letter, such as explaining why their expertise would be particularly useful.

If you have more potential reviewer names, enter them in EM as [alternate reviewers](#). Once an invited reviewer declines or does not respond within the required time, EM will automatically invite the first alternate. If you invite more than 3-5 reviewers and they all complete reviews, that can create problems. When the reviewers see the decision letter, with six or more reviews, they may feel that you have wasted their time and will be reluctant to review again. Having so many reviews can also create unnecessary burden on the authors.

If you do a thorough job identifying potential reviewers (e.g., not just randomly picking the first three names from the EM search), you should have better success in having reviewers accept the invitation. Even still, many reviewers decline the invitation or never reply. If you have identified alternate reviewers, this saves time if reviewers decline. EM will notify you if the paper does not

have enough reviewers, after any alternates have been exhausted. If this happens, you should find and invite more reviewers or consider assigning yourself as a reviewer.

If a reviewer agrees to review, but does not complete the review by the deadline, it can be helpful for you to send them a personal email explaining how important their review is. You are also able to extend review deadlines if requested by the reviewer.

The reviews are back

What's in the review?

Each review includes the components shown in the table below. It is important to keep in mind that authors will only see the comments to the authors.

Component of review	Shared with authors?
Answers to questions about the reviewer	No
Numeric scores (1-5) for manuscript rating questions	No
An overall recommendation (Accept with no changes, Revise, or Reject)	No
Comments to the authors	Yes
Confidential comments to the editor	No

The manuscript rating questions are:

1. Narrative is clear and easy to understand.
 2. Abstract clearly communicates the scope and outcome of the study.
 7. Methodology is sufficiently explained for a knowledgeable reader to repeat the study
 8. Methodology is technically sound
 9. Data are valid and contribute to the findings
 6. Conclusions are valid and properly supported
 4. Existing research is adequately reviewed and used to identify this paper's contribution
 3. Tables and figures are clear and contribute meaningfully to the paper.
 5. Findings are compared to existing research
 10. The paper contributes to methodological and/or theoretical advances in the field/topic.
 11. The paper provides substantive empirical contributions to the field/topic.
 12. The paper has specific applications to or advances practice or policy.
 13. The paper's contributions noted in Q 10, 11, or 12 are clearly articulated.
- 1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree.

Are the reviews adequate?

TRR prefers that you have three quality reviews to make a decision. However, we do allow editors to make decisions with only two quality reviews.

A quality review of a submission (that has not been reviewed before) should include written comments that do the following:

- Do more than describe what the paper did.
- Assess the quality of the substance of the paper.
- Substantiate low numeric scores.
- Provide suggestions on how to improve the paper.
- Do more than comment on non-substantive issues, such as wording mistakes and formatting

Reviews that include no comments or only non-substantive comments, even with the quantitative scores, are not adequate. It is extremely rare for a paper that has not undergone any prior review to not have room for improvement. Also be wary of reviews that have the same score for every manuscript rating criterion.

If you do not have at least two quality reviews, invite a new reviewer and/or add yourself as a reviewer.

Interpreting the reviews

Your job as the editor is to read the reviews carefully and with a critical eye, both the numeric scores and the comments. Here are some things to consider:

- **Confirm that the points are valid.** Look at the parts of the paper the comments refer to to confirm their validity. Reviewers are not always perfect. Do not assume they are correct.
- **Do not rely on the reviewer's overall recommendation** of Revise, Accept, etc. This recommendation may not match the comments. For example, some reviewers recommend Accept, but have lots of substantive comments. Others say Revise, but their comments support a Reject decision. You need to use a combination of all parts of the review to make your decision.
- **Note conflicting comments between reviewers.** In such cases, your job is to interpret which comments are valid and provide appropriate direction to the authors.
- **Consider the expertise of the reviewer in interpreting their comments.**
- **Pay attention to comments about the contribution the paper makes.** This is an important factor in deciding whether the paper should be rejected or eventually accepted. Some reviewers may have a narrow definition of what makes a contribution. You need to exercise your judgment on the contribution.
- **Note comments that conflict with TRR policies.** For example, some reviewers will recommend against using first person in the writing. However, this is acceptable in TRR and is particularly helpful in avoiding passive voice when describing methods. Some reviewers dismiss review papers as “no new research.” TRR encourages the publication of strong review papers as a way to advance the field and inform practice and policy.
- **Confidential comments to the editor.** Pay attention to these. Some reviewers will only include comments to the editor and not to the authors. Sometimes this is a mistake. If this happens and if the comments are clearly written as if they were intended for the authors, you may edit the decision letter to copy the comments into the section where the reviewer

comments should appear. Otherwise, you should not share these comments with the authors. What is more common is for reviewers to be more direct in their opinion of the paper in these comments compared to comments to the authors. You may draw from and paraphrase confidential reviewer comments, if necessary, when providing additional justification for your decision.

- **Citation boosting.** Be on the lookout for reviewers suggesting the authors cite papers that they authored. If this happens, check to confirm that the suggested papers are appropriate. If not, you can remove that portion of the reviewer's comment. Alternatively, you can inform the authors that they are not required to include references that reviewers suggest. It is also good practice to provide feedback to the reviewer that it is not appropriate to recommend including their papers when not directly relevant.

Generally, you should not edit or remove reviewer comments. In addition to the exception when the reviewer inappropriately asks authors to cite their papers, you can edit or remove reviewer comments that are rude or inappropriate.

Making a decision

Your next step is to make a decision on the paper, which will be reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief or an Associate Editor. In making your decision, consider all of the input from the reviewers, not just their overall recommendation.

When to recommend Reject:

- The shortcomings cannot not be resolved through editing and additional narrative, e.g., they would require new data collection. Note that new analysis of the data is often a reasonable revision.
- Fundamental flaws in the conceptual model or theory that drives the research.
- Fundamental flaws in how the research was designed.
- The methods are inappropriate or have other serious limitations. Note that sometimes simple methods are perfectly adequate for the research question and data. More sophisticated methods do not always yield more insightful results.
- The results are not significant or meaningful; they are unlikely to impact research or practice. Note that “null” results are often significant and meaningful.

When to recommend Revise:

- The paper can be revised to be a strong paper, with an impact on research and/or practice/policy.

When to recommend Accept:

- Rarely is a paper good enough to accept after a single round of review without revision.
- This may happen with a paper that was reviewed and revised from the Annual Meeting.

When to recommend Accept after a paper has been revised:

- When you believe that the paper satisfies all of the manuscript rating questions.
- When there are no remaining comments from reviewers that need to be addressed.

When to recommend Accept with Minor Revisions:

- If the only valid comments from reviewers are not substantive, e.g., typos, minor wording issues, formatting, etc. Papers that are Accepted with Minor Revisions are not reviewed again by an editor.

If you choose Accept, but one or more reviewers provide comments that suggest further revisions, you need to provide clear directions to the authors that they do not need to revise the paper to respond to those comments. Otherwise, if the comments are minor, choose Accept with Minor Revisions.

Decision letters include your name and your editor role (except for Desk Reject letters). You should not remove your name without consulting with the AE or EIC.

Editor comments to the authors

When you make a decision about the paper, think about the decision letter the authors will receive. If you were the author and received the letter, would you understand why the decision was made? Would you know how to revise the paper?

Authors only see the reviewer and editor comments to the authors. They do not see the overall recommendation or numerical scores from the reviewers. The decision letter will only include the decision and the comments from the editor and reviewers to the authors. Therefore, before finalizing your decision, consider how well the decision matches the comments the authors will see. Reviewers are often very polite in comments to the authors, even when they feel strongly the paper should be rejected. **If the comments do not appear to justify the decision (most likely when the decision is Reject), you need to add comments from the editor to the authors explaining the decision.**

It is also useful for the editor to make comments to the authors in other situations, such as:

- Explaining how to deal with conflicting comments between reviewers.
- Noting when a reviewer's comments may not be necessary to address. This might happen, for example, if the reviewer has misinterpreted the paper or they are asking for changes that you think are not reasonable.
- Additional comments from you on improvements.

Other things to do:

- Rate the review. You may enter a 0-100 rating for the review. Review scores are accumulated by reviewer. This can be helpful to other editors in selecting reviewers. Reviewers do not see their scores.
- Pay attention to potential conflicts of interest between the authors and their research. This might happen, for example, if the authors have a commercial interest in a product or service that is central to the research conducted. Such potential conflicts must be declared. If you are concerned that there is a conflict of interest, contact the TRR Editorial office (trr@nas.edu).

What happens next

After submitting your decision, it will be reviewed by the EIC or an Associate Editor. Most decisions are approved. If the decision is Desk Reject or Reject, the EIC sends the decision letter to the authors, with blind copies to reviewers. If the decision is Revise or Accept, the TRR Editorial office performs a “technical check” in conjunction with the EIC/AE review before the letter is sent to the authors.

If the EIC needs more information before approving the decision, they may ask the HE or AE a question. This will normally happen by initiating a Discussion with the editor through EM. You will receive an email if this occurs.

In some cases, the EIC may rescind a decision and send it back to the editor, with an explanation. This may occur in the following cases:

- The editor has recommended Reject, but the reviewer comments and decision letter do not clearly support a Reject decision. The EIC will rescind the decision asking the editor to provide comments to the authors explaining the decision.
- The editor did not conduct a thorough review process. Examples: they did not send the paper for peer review; there were not two quality reviews; there are conflicts of interest among the reviewers.
- The editor notices that the reviews are inadequate, based on their knowledge of the topic, and do not support the decision.
- It appears that the editor made a mistake. For example, they entered Revise, but there are no comments from reviewers or the editor for the authors.

In very rare cases, the EIC will change a decision without consulting with the editor. This is most likely to occur when an editor chooses Reject, but did not send the paper for peer review. In such cases the decision should be Desk Reject.

A revised paper is back

If you entered a Revise decision, and the authors revise and resubmit the paper, you will be notified when the revised paper is ready for your review.

Read the responses to the reviewers and review the highlighted revisions.

In most cases, you should send it back to the same reviewers for re-review. Only omit a reviewer if you do not think their review was appropriate or had other flaws.

You can add a new reviewer, but this is only recommended when:

- you do not think the original reviews were adequate;
- one or more of the original reviewers declines the re-review, there are serious issues with the paper, and you want additional expertise;
- there are strong conflicting opinions that you cannot resolve without another expert; and/or
- the reviewers lacked necessary expertise.

Sometimes, particularly after a second round of revisions, an editor can review the edits and response to reviewers and make a decision without sending the paper for re-review.

The reviews are back on a revised paper

Read the reviews carefully.

Authors do not need to do everything the reviewers ask for. Reviewers are not perfect. Your job as editor is to determine whether the authors have responded adequately, with the reviewer's input.

If there are still substantive comments that, if addressed by the authors, you think the paper could be accepted, a Revise decision is warranted.

It is acceptable to reject a paper after a revision when the authors have not adequately improved the paper, and you believe it unlikely that it could be improved to be acceptable.

The authors are challenging a decision

Some authors of rejected papers will challenge the decision. As the Handling Editor, you may be asked by the TRR editorial office to help respond to such requests.

What if you don't know what to do?

Reach out to the Associate Editor that assigned you the paper and/or the EIC if you...

- are having a difficult time making a decision on a paper and want another opinion
- are struggling with finding reviewers and think the AE or EIC might have ideas
- if an author contacts you directly challenging a decision

Reach out to the TRR editorial office (trr@nas.edu) if you...

- need help with the mechanics of EM
- suspect plagiarism, ethical issues, or other misconduct
- have questions about submission policies
- have a question about potential conflict of interest

Timeliness

Please do your best to meet deadlines. Long timelines discourage authors from submitting to TRR.

Inform TRR when you are [unavailable to accept new assignments](#), such as when you are on vacation or have temporary commitments that restrict your availability.

Ethics Guidelines

When you join the TRR editorial board, you will be asked to complete an ethics training course.

As a TRR Editor, you are expected to maintain the confidentiality of the review process, ensure the transparency of and respect for the academic record, and be transparent about real or apparent competing interests.

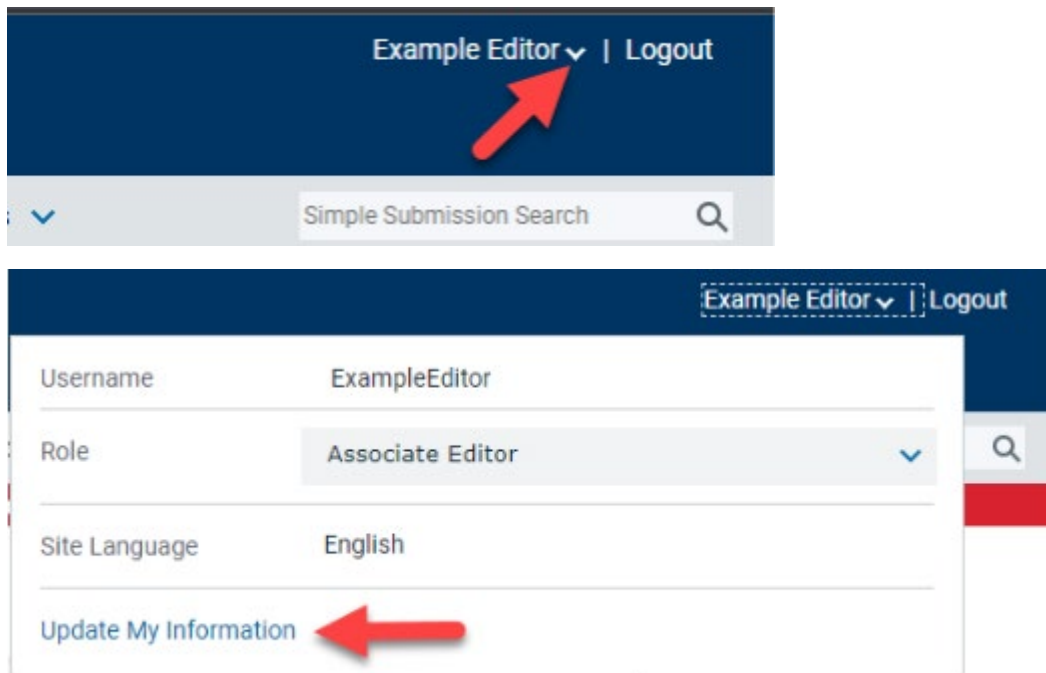
The National Academies, TRB, and Sage are committed to upholding the integrity of the work we review and publish. The value of our efforts relies upon everyone involved acting ethically. The ethics training module is intended to give a broad overview and is not exhaustive. We encourage our editors to refer to the [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\) website](#) for more information.

Editorial Manager Guides

Setting and Updating Your Profile

Updating Your Profile

Once you've logged in, find your name in the upper right corner of the screen – it will have a downward facing arrow at the end. Click on it and then press Update My Information.



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Editorial Manager interface. On the right side, the text "Example Editor" is followed by a downward-pointing arrow and the word "Logout". A red arrow points to the "Example Editor" text. Below this, a search bar labeled "Simple Submission Search" is visible. A dropdown menu is open, displaying the following information:

Username	ExampleEditor
Role	Associate Editor
Site Language	English
Update My Information	

A red arrow points to the "Update My Information" link at the bottom of the dropdown menu.

This will take you to a screen with several areas you can update, as broken down below. Any item that is in red and has an asterisk next to it is required and must be filled out before you can save.

Login Information

If you want to change your Username or Password, this is where you do it. You can also set your Default Login Role here if you like.

Login Information

The username you choose must be unique within the system. If the one you choose is already in use, you will be asked for another.

Username *

Password *

Re-type Password *

Default Login Role: Author
 Author
 Reviewer
 Editor

Insert Special Character

Personal Information

Make updates to your name/title/etc as needed in this section. You can also add and verify your ORCID if you have one. There's also a section to set up Alternate Contact Information when applicable.

One thing to note – you can have more than one email address attached to your account. We suggest you have a secondary email address listed, in case your primary address filters emails from the EM system into a junk folder.

Personal Information

Insert Special Character

Title

Given/First Name *

Middle Name

Family/Last Name *

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

Preferred Name (nickname)

Primary Phone (including country code)

Secondary Phone (including country code)

Secondary Phone is for ☐ Mobile ☐ Beeper ☐ Home ☐ Work ☐ Admin. Asst.

Fax Number (including country code)

E-mail Address *

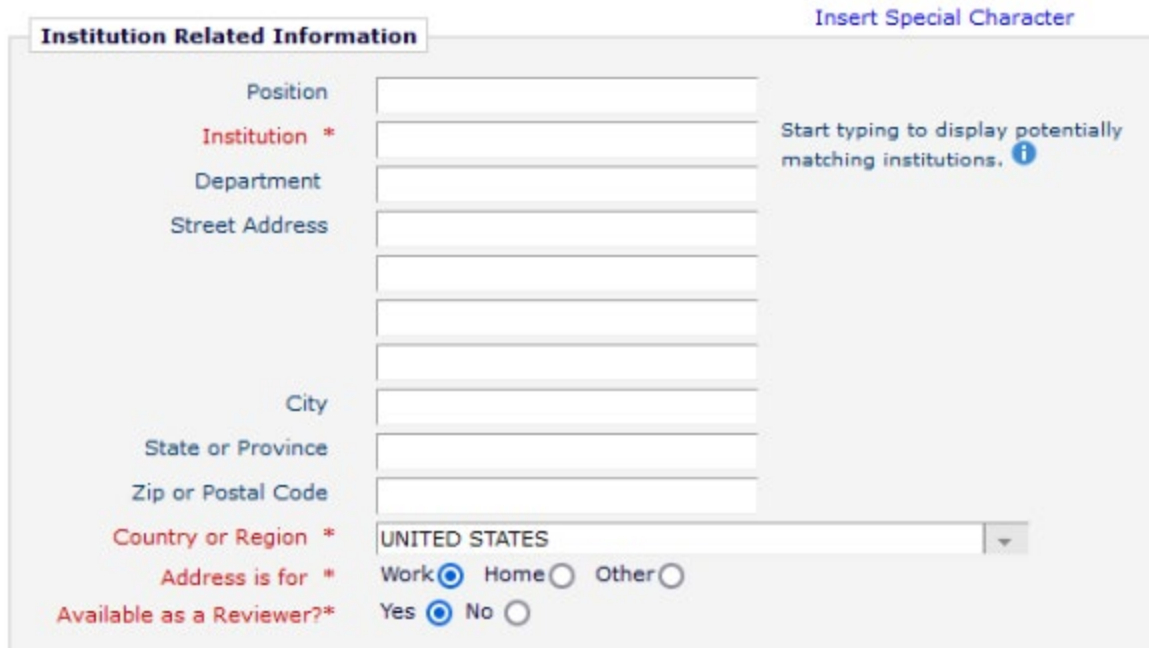
If entering more than one e-mail address, use a semi-colon between each address (e.g., joe@thejournal.com;joe@yahoo.com) **Entering a second e-mail address from a different e-mail provider decreases the chance that SPAM filters will trap e-mails sent to you from online systems. [Read More.](#)**

ORCID

[Alternate Contact Information](#)

Institution Related Information

You can list profession related information here – your position title, institution (or workplace), department, etc.



The form is titled "Institution Related Information" and includes a link "Insert Special Character" in the top right. It contains several input fields: "Position", "Institution *" (with a hint "Start typing to display potentially matching institutions."), "Department", "Street Address" (with three stacked input boxes), "City", "State or Province", "Zip or Postal Code", and "Country or Region *" (a dropdown menu currently showing "UNITED STATES"). At the bottom, there are two radio button groups: "Address is for *" with options "Work" (selected), "Home", and "Other"; and "Available as a Reviewer?*" with options "Yes" (selected) and "No".

Areas of Interest or Expertise

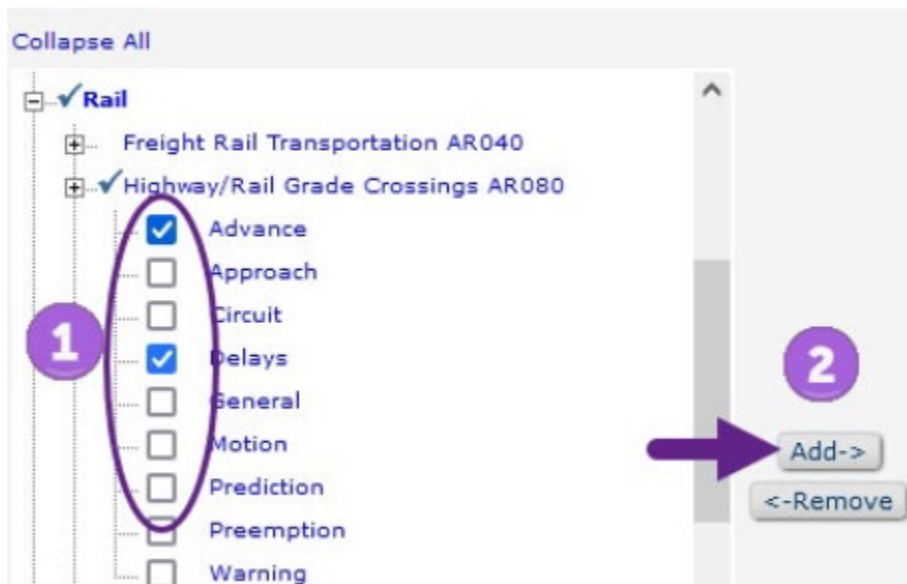
This area contains both the classifications that help define your expertise as an editor and reviewer and any personal keywords included with your profile.

Click on Select Personal Classifications to further define your expertise as a reviewer.

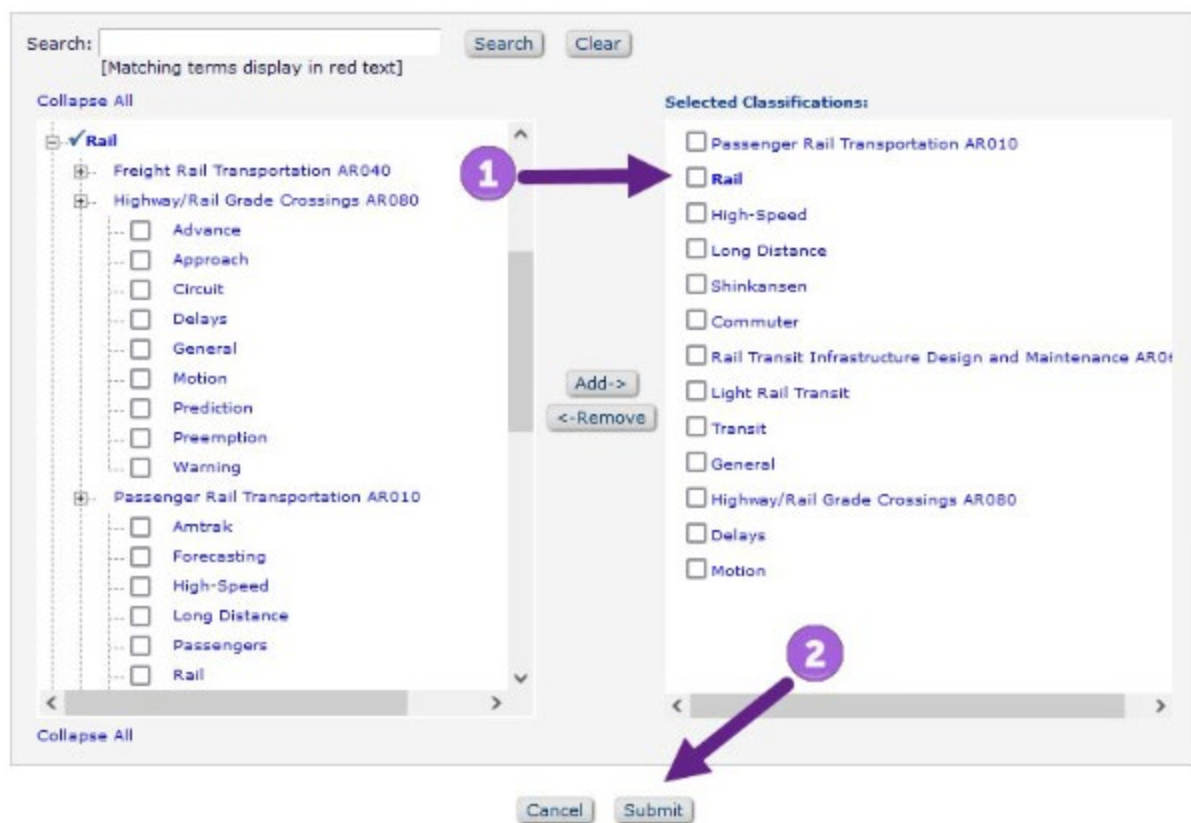


The form is titled "Areas of Interest or Expertise" and includes a text box with the instruction: "Please indicate your areas of expertise by selecting from the pre-defined list using the 'Select Personal Classifications' button." Below this, there are two sections: "Personal Classifications" showing "(None Selected)" with a "Select Personal Classifications" button (highlighted by a purple arrow), and "Personal Keywords" showing "(None Defined)" with an "Edit Personal Keywords" button.

Select only those classifications that reflect your ability to handle/review papers on that subject and click Add.



Review your selections and click Submit.



Scroll down to the bottom of the screen and click Submit to save all your changes.

Setting Reviewer Preferences

The first time you go into the Invite Reviewers section of Editorial Manager, you should take a moment to set your reviewer preferences along the left side of the screen.

Invite Reviewers Menu

Review Settings - [Edit](#)

Required Reviews - ☐

Uninvite After -

Unassign After -

View Submission Information

[View Reviews and Comments](#)

[Manuscript Details](#) ▾

[History](#)

Quick Action Links

[Send E-mail](#)

[Register and Select New Reviewer](#)

Set Preferences

[My Suggest Reviewer Preferences](#)

[My Reviewer Display Preferences](#)

On the “My Suggest Reviewer Preferences” page, you should tell Editorial Manager to exclude people from the same institution as **the corresponding author**. This would be a conflict of interest. You can also exclude people from the same city and anyone that does not have any matches to the classification matches.

Note: This only affects the results when you use the “Suggest Reviewer” search for reviewers and the corresponding author. Therefore, you should continue to check reviewer affiliations carefully, compared to all of the authors.

The second section sets up how you want the results to be sorted. Enter numbers 1-7 in the boxes next to the criteria to indicate rank order of importance. Click “Submit” to save your changes.

My Suggest Reviewer Preferences

Exclude the following from your search results:

☒ People from the same institution

☐ People from the same city

People with unavailable dates within the next days

People with more than pending reviews

People with fewer than matches to manuscript classifications

Sort the Suggest Reviewer search results in order of importance by:

Reorder List	
<input type="text" value="1"/>	Board membership
<input type="text" value="2"/>	Number of matches to manuscript classifications
<input type="text" value="3"/>	Number of pending reviews
<input type="text" value="4"/>	Average number of days reviews are outstanding
<input type="text" value="5"/>	Date last review completed
<input type="text" value="6"/>	Average Review Rating (Highest Ratings listed first)
<input type="text" value="7"/>	Total Number of Completed Reviews (Highest number displayed first)

Cancel

Submit

The “My Reviewer Display Preferences” page contains two sections. In the first section, use the radio button to select the option for how classifications are displayed: 1. Show only Classification matches with manuscript, 2. Suppress Classifications, 3. Show all Personal Classifications for the Reviewer candidate.

In the second section, define how the system should sort the results list: Enter numbers 1 – 5 in the boxes next to the criteria to indicate rank order of importance. Click Submit when done.

My Reviewer Display Preferences

Classifications

Choose how you would like Classifications to be displayed on your search results pages. This setting applies to all search types, except for Search by Personal Classifications.

- ☒ Show only Classification matches with manuscript
- ☐ Suppress Classifications
- ☐ Show all Personal Classifications for the Reviewer candidate

Sort your search results in order of importance

You may also choose how the Candidate Reviewer search results are sorted. These preferences apply to all search types, except for Suggest Reviewers, which has its own preferences.

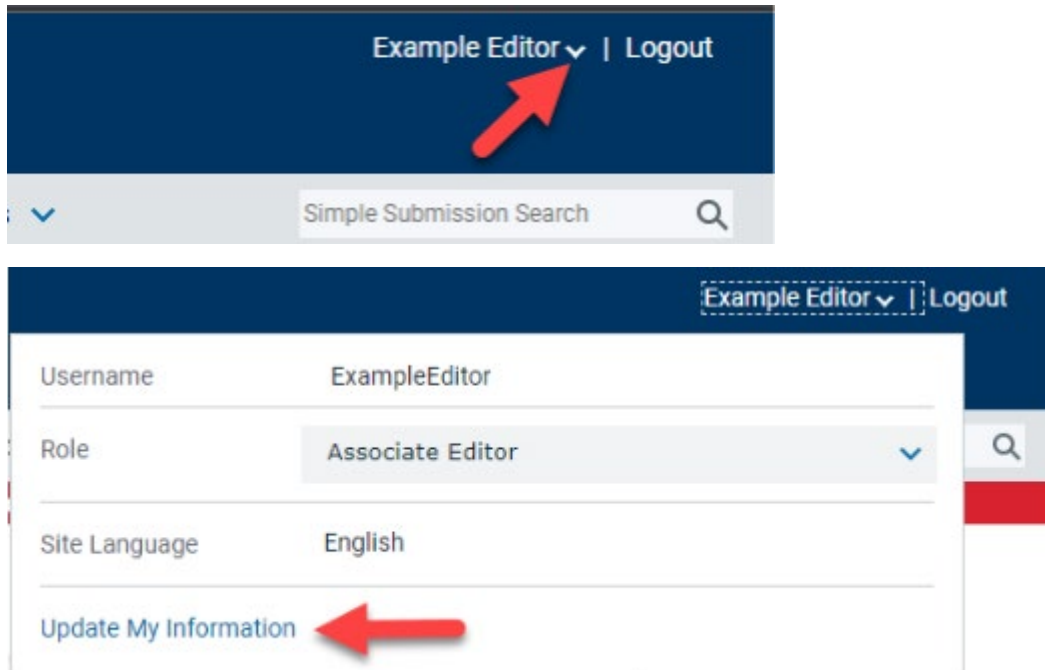
Reorder List	
1	Ascending Reviewer Name
2	Number of Matches to Manuscript Classifications (Most matches displayed first)
3	Board Membership (Board Members listed first)
4	Average Review Rating (Highest Ratings listed first)
5	Total Number of Completed Reviews (Highest number displayed first)

Cancel

Submit

Setting Unavailable Dates

Once you've logged in, find your name in the upper right corner of the screen – it will have a downward facing arrow at the end. Click on it and then press Update My Information.

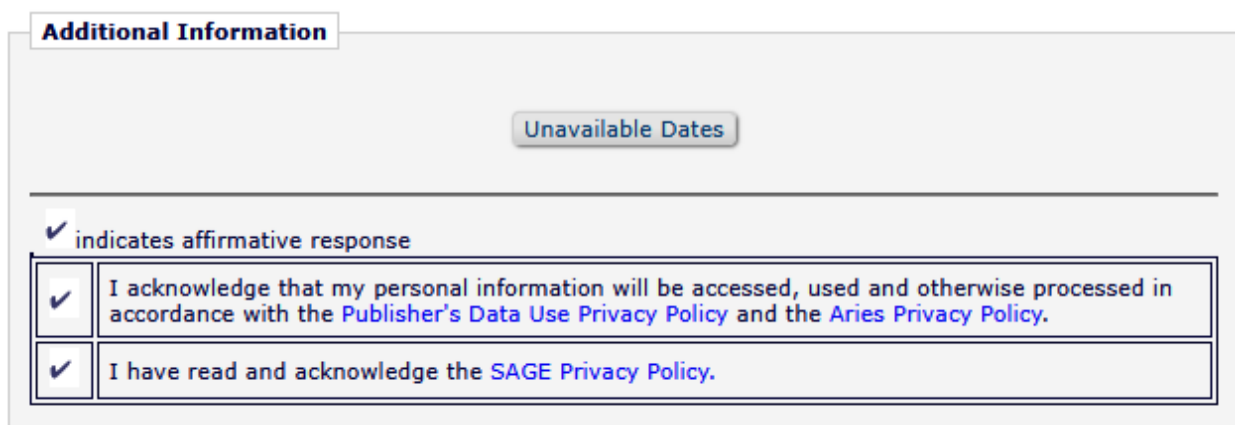


The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with a dark blue background. On the right, the text "Example Editor" is followed by a downward arrow and the word "Logout". A red arrow points to the downward arrow. Below this, a white dropdown menu is open, displaying the following information:

Username	ExampleEditor
Role	Associate Editor
Site Language	English
Update My Information	

A red arrow points to the "Update My Information" link. The background of the page is partially visible, showing a search bar with the text "Simple Submission Search" and a magnifying glass icon.

Scroll down to “Additional Information” near the bottom of the screen. Click on the button that says, “Unavailable Dates”.



The screenshot shows a section titled "Additional Information" with a light gray background. Below the title, there is a button labeled "Unavailable Dates". Below the button, there is a legend indicating that a checkmark (✓) indicates an affirmative response. Below the legend, there are two rows of checkboxes, each followed by a statement:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I acknowledge that my personal information will be accessed, used and otherwise processed in accordance with the Publisher's Data Use Privacy Policy and the Aries Privacy Policy .
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I have read and acknowledge the SAGE Privacy Policy .

This screen will show any previous unavailable dates, along with a link to set new unavailable dates.




Edit Unavailable Dates

No Unavailable Dates have been entered.

[Add New Unavailable Date](#)

Close


Click on “Add New Unavailable Date” to add the dates you will be unavailable to take on papers.


 www.editorialmanager.com/trr/AddEditUnavailableDate.aspx?unavailRecordID=0&f ☆ ☰

Add Unavailable Date

Please enter the dates that you are unavailable. This information will be taken into consideration when your assistance is desired. You may also enter details of up to three people who the publication may contact in your absence.

Please Enter the Following

Start Date:  (mm/dd/yyyy)

End Date:  (mm/dd/yyyy)

Reason:

Substitute Information

First Substitute Name:

First Substitute E-mail:

Second Substitute Name:

Second Substitute E-mail:

Third Substitute Name:

Third Substitute E-mail:

[Insert Special Character](#)

If there are other editors you would recommend taking on papers that may otherwise have been assigned to you, you can list them in the Substitute Information section. Press “Submit” once you’ve filled in the dates and reason for unavailability.

Edit Unavailable Dates

Start Date	End Date	Reason	First Substitute Name	First Substitute E-mail	Second Substitute Name	Second Substitute E-mail	Third Substitute Name	Third Substitute E-mail	
May 06, 2025	May 14, 2025	Vacation							Edit Remove

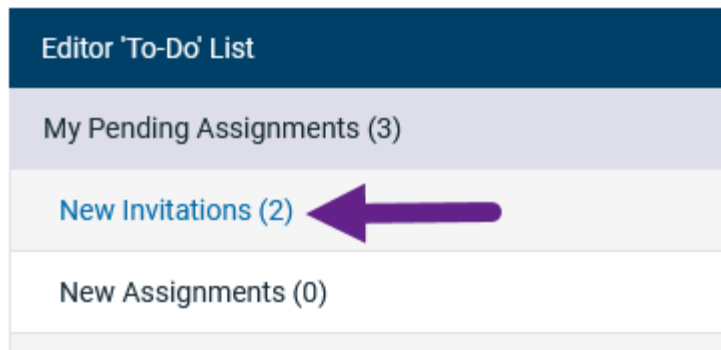
[Add New Unavailable Date](#)

[Close](#)

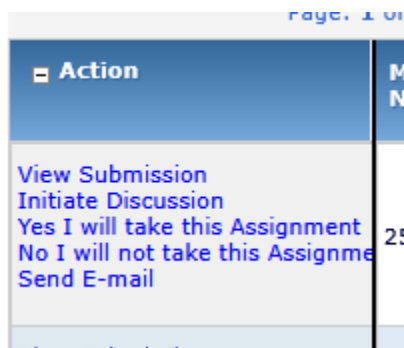
This is what it looks like after you add dates. If you need to edit it after adding, you should click the “Edit” link in the right column. Press the “Close” button once you’ve finished adding your dates.

Accepting/Declining Invitations

You'll receive an email with a link to accept or decline the invitation to handle a paper, along with the abstract of the paper. The invitations will also show up in your Editor To-Do list when you log into Editorial Manager.



When you click on New Invitations, you'll see all of your current invitations. From here, you'll be able to view the submission, initiate a discussion with another editor, agree to handle the paper or decline to handle the paper.



If you decline the assignment, you will have the chance to provide a reason why. Please let us know why you're declining. And if you have a suggestion for another editor that might be a better fit, tell us that as well.

Decline Invitation

Please state a reason for declining the assignment of Manuscript Number
Please suggest a colleague(s) within the journal organization who is qualified to serve as editor for this paper.
Provide some information that will help us contact this person(s).

Cancel

Submit

[Return to Main Menu](#)


When you accept an invitation, the paper will move to your New Assignments folder where you can review the paper details and invite reviewers.

What to do when you've agreed to handle a paper

Log into Editorial Manager as an Editor. Click on New Assignments on your Main Menu.

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


Under Action Links, click Details screen.

Action
View Submission Details 
Initiate Discussion
History
File Inventory
Classifications
Assign Editor
Unassign Editor
Invite Reviewers
View Reviews and Comments
Submit Editor's Decision and Comments
Send E-mail

The Details screen provides some key information you should review before inviting reviewers.

- Review the authors and their affiliations. Do not invite reviewers from the same institution as any of the authors.
- Review the classifications. These were chosen by the authors. Some authors may have missed classifications that could be particularly useful in finding reviewers. You can add or remove classifications for the paper from the main menu under Classifications.

- There may be submission flags to look for. Hover over the flag to see what it means. The telephone flag is for papers submitted through the Annual Meeting. There are flags for special collections and other topics,

Article Type:	Presentation and Publication
Discussion Forum:	Initiate Discussion
Submission Flags:	
Select Submissions Flags:	Add/Edit Submission Flags

- There is also a link to initiate a discussion. You can use this to ask the EIC, the associate editor, or the TRR publications staff a question about the paper. Using this option (vs. Email) will connect the discussion with the paper for easy reference later.
- If the paper is an Annual Meeting paper, scroll down to the bottom of the Details screen to find a link to view the transferred information, which will include the reviews.

Transfer Information	
Transferred Information:	View Transferred Information
Transferred from:	TRBAM - TRB Annual Meeting
More Information:	Transfer Letter from TRBAM


Inviting Reviewers

How to Invite Reviewers

Log into Editorial Manager as an Editor. Click on New Assignments on your Main Menu.

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

Click Invite Reviewers under Action Links when you are ready to look for reviewers.

Action	
View Submission Details ▾	
History	
File Inventory	
Assign Editor	
Unassign Editor	
Invite Reviewers	
Submit Editor's Decision and C	
Send E-mail	

For a new submission, there are four options for searching for reviewers:

1. My Publication
 - If you identified potential reviewers by name (e.g., through the paper's references, a search of Google Scholar or other database), use the My Publication option to search by name. This is probably the best/quickest way to search for reviewers.
2. Personal Classifications

- Searching by Personal Classification allows you to select classifications to use as search criteria. This method is currently not as useful because it limits you to 5 classifications max and the way the TRR classifications are organized, selecting one of the nested terms can take up all 5 slots.
3. Suggest Reviewers
 - Using the “Suggest Reviewers” search depends on how you’ve set up your “My Suggest Reviewer Preferences”, as shown in the guide above.
 4. Classification Matches.
 - The Classification Matches search will allow you to look for reviewers whose listed classifications match those of the submission. You’ll be able to select which specific classifications you want to look for from this screen.

Place a check in the box labeled “Inv.” next to each reviewer you wish to invite to review the paper. Checking the box under “Alt.” will have the system note them as an alternate reviewer in case an invited reviewer declines to review.

Select As		Reviewer Name	Board Member	Classifications	R (
Inv.	Alt.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Reviewer)	No		R C U T L L A M A
Inv. <input type="checkbox"/>	Alt. <input type="checkbox"/>	(Reviewer)	No	5 Class match with MS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Rail * Rail Safety AR070 * Human Factors * Human Factors in Crashes * Railroad Simulators 	R C U T L L

If a reviewer has classification matches with the paper, that will show up in the Classifications column, as seen above. Once you have selected the reviews you want to invite, scroll to the bottom of the screen and press Proceed.

Reviewers to Invite			
Name	Letter	Due Date	Do Not Invite
E (Reviewer)	Reviewer Invitation Customize	04/27/2023 (mm/dd/yyyy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
(Reviewer)	Reviewer Invitation Customize	04/27/2023 (mm/dd/yyyy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
F (Reviewer)	Reviewer Invitation Customize	04/27/2023 (mm/dd/yyyy)	<input type="checkbox"/>

[Change Selections](#)

[Cancel](#)

[Confirm Selections and Proceed](#)

You can customize the invitation letter by pressing customize (you'll have to do this for each individual letter) or just send the default letter.

You can also update the due date for the review if needed.

Press "Confirm Selections and Proceed"

An E-mail has been sent to the following Reviewers notifying them of the invitation:



[Send E-mail](#)

[Reviewer Selection Summary](#)

[Back to New Assignments](#)

[Editor Main Menu](#)

You'll receive confirmation that the reviewers have been invited. Selecting "Back to New Assignments" will take you back to your list of papers to continue inviting reviewers.


Setting Up Alternate Reviewers

As you are inviting reviewers, you should also consider setting up some alternate reviewers as well. This means that if one of the 3-5 originally invited reviewers decline, the system would then invite the next 'alternate' reviewer, keeping the review process moving.

On the inviting reviewers screen, instead of placing a check in the box under "Inv." You would check the box labeled as "Alt." You can set up as many alternate reviewers as you like.

Page: 1 of 1 (1 total Reviewer)

Select As		Reviewer Name
Inv.	Alt.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Example Reviewer ▾ (Reviewer)



You can do this at the same time as you are selecting which reviewers to invite.

How to View Transferred Annual Meeting/Committee Reviews

On the Details link for a paper, at the bottom of the screen under “Transfer Information”, click the link “View Transferred Information.” This opens a window that shows the complete history of the paper from the TRB Annual Meeting site, including the SPO, Committee PRC that handled it, and the reviewer information.

Transfer Information	
Transferred Information:	View Transferred Information
Transferred from:	TRBAM - TRB Annual Meeting
More Information:	Transfer Letter from TRBAM

In some cases, a reviewer may have elected not to include their name and/or review when the paper transferred. If this is the case, you will be unable to invite them to re-review.

☐ Reviewer 3

(This Reviewer declined to transfer identifying information.)

Date Reviewer Invited: Aug 12, 2024
Date Review Completed: Sep 13, 2024

Transfer Authorization Questions	Response
If this paper is recommended to the TRR Editorial Board for publication review, can TRB share your name and email with the Board for re-review purposes?	No
If so, do you consent for the Editorial Office to share your review comments with the TRR Editorial Board?	No

If a reviewer agreed to share their review, you will be able to see how they responded to the custom review questions, their responses to the manuscript rating questions, and the reviewer comments to both the authors and editors.

Inviting Annual Meeting Reviewers

The Editorial Manager system for TRR is completely separate from the one used for the Annual Meeting. Therefore, the reviewer pools are not the same. If you want to use reviewers that reviewed the paper for the Annual Meeting, find their name using the View Transferred Information link at the bottom of the Details screen. Then search by their name under the “My Publication” search type. If you do not see their name, you can add them by following the instructions for [registering a new reviewer](#) (shown below).

Registering a New Reviewer

From your New Assignments folder, click on “Invite Reviewers”



On the next page, on the left side of the screen, you'll want to click on “Register and Select New Reviewer” if you know the reviewer is not currently in the Editorial Manager system. **Do Not** do this if they are in the system with an outdated email address – send an email to trr@nas.edu if the email address needs to be updated.

Invite Reviewers Menu

Review Settings - [Edit](#)

Required Reviews - 3

Uninvite After - 9 days

Unassign After - 7 days

View Submission Information

[Manuscript Details](#) ▾ ✖

[History](#)

Quick Action Links

[Send E-mail](#)

[Register and Select New Reviewer](#)

Set Preferences

[My Suggest Reviewer Preferences](#)

[My Reviewer Display Preferences](#)

If you have searched for the reviewer and do not find them, you will find the “Register and Select New Reviewer” link at the top of the page.

Manuscript Details ▾ ✕ **Register and Select New Reviewer** View All Decline Reasons

Change Search Type

☒ Search My Publication Search for Reviewers from Entire Database Go

Once you’ve clicked the link, you will need to put in the email address for the reviewer and press “Proceed”

[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.](#)

Editorial Manager checks to make sure the address is not currently registered in the system and will alert you if it’s currently in use. If it is not in use, it will then prompt you to fill out some basic information for the individual. The minimum requirement is their first and last name, and the country they are in. Once you’ve filled that out, you can press “Register User and Send Letter”.

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.](#)

Required Information

Personal Information

Given/First Name *

Family/Last Name *

Institution Related Information

Country or Region *

Address is for (Work, Home, Other) * ☒ Work ☐ Home ☐ Other

☐ **User Information**

☐ **Enter More Contact Information**

☐ **User Information**

☐ **Enter More Contact Information**

The next page will allow you to preview the letter before it is sent. You can add additional text to the letter if you wish. Make sure that you do not remove any of the links/information in the letter when you do so. Once you've sent the letter, the system will take you to Reviewer Candidates page, with text that mentions you've successfully registered the user. Proceed as normal to invite them to review the paper.

Reviewer Candidates

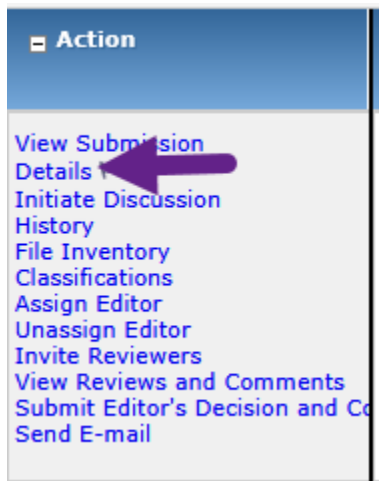
You have successfully registered this person; if you wish to select them for this submission, please check/tick the relevant box before proceeding ([more...](#))

Page: 1 of 1 (1 total Reviewers) Results per page 50

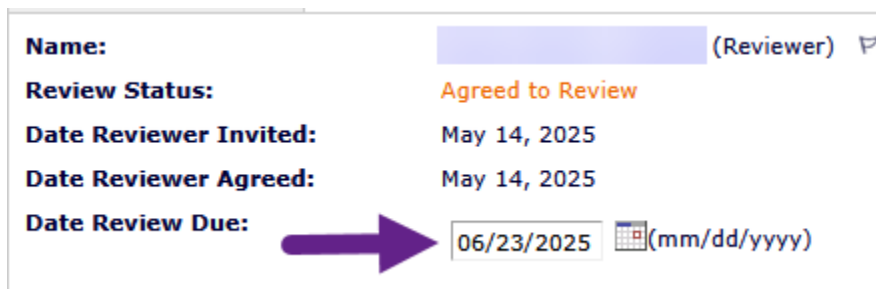
Select As		Reviewer Name	Board Member	Classifications	Reviewer Statistics (Agreed Invitations)	Invitation Statistics
Inv.	Alt.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Example Reviewer (Reviewer)	No		Reviews in Progress: 0 Completed Reviews: 0 Un-assigned After Agreeing: 0 Terminated After Agreeing: 0 Last Review Agreed: - Last Review Completed: -	Date Last Invited: - Outstanding Invitations: 0 Agreed: 0 Declined: 0 Un-invited Before Agreeing: 0 Terminated: 0

How to Extend a Due Date in Editorial Manager

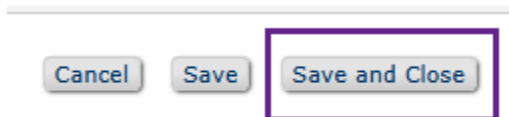
Log-in as an editor. Find the submission that you need to extend the due date on and click on Details.



Scroll down to the list of Reviewers and find the reviewer you want to extend the due date for – change the date in the box labeled “Date Review Due.”

A screenshot of the reviewer details form in Editorial Manager. The form has a white background with a light gray border. It contains the following fields: 'Name:' with a purple box and '(Reviewer)' text; 'Review Status:' with 'Agreed to Review' in orange text; 'Date Reviewer Invited:' with 'May 14, 2025'; 'Date Reviewer Agreed:' with 'May 14, 2025'; and 'Date Review Due:' with a purple arrow pointing to a date input box containing '06/23/2025' and a calendar icon. The date input box has a placeholder '(mm/dd/yyyy)'.

Save and close once you're done updating. The reviewer is sent an email notifying them of the update once this is done.

A screenshot of the bottom of the reviewer details form. It shows three buttons: 'Cancel', 'Save', and 'Save and Close'. The 'Save and Close' button is highlighted with a purple rectangular box.

Inviting Reviewers to Review a Revised Paper

To send a revised paper back to the original reviewer, use the Previous Reviewers option from the Assign Reviewers menu.

Search Type


- [My Publication](#)
- Personal Classifications
- Previous Reviewers
- Suggest Reviewers
- Classification Matches

Once you click the “Previous Reviewers” tab on the Assign Reviewers menu, you’ll see a list of the previous reviewers, their email addresses, and previous recommendations. You can also view their reviews from this page. Click the “Select from Previous Reviewers” button.

Search Type

- My Publication
- Personal Classifications
- Previous Reviewers
- Suggest Reviewers
- Classification Matches

Previous Reviewers (2)		Email	Recommendation	
			Accept with Minor Revisions	<button>View Review</button>
			Reject	<button>View Review</button>

Select From Previous Reviewers

You can then check off the reviewer you wish to invite, as normal. This page will also tell you which reviewer each person listed was for the paper.

Select As		Reviewer Name
Inv.	Alt.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div><div></div><div>(Reviewer)</div><div>This publication: (This person reviewed the previous version as Reviewer 1)</div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div><div></div><div>(Reviewer)</div><div>This publication: (This person reviewed the previous version as Reviewer 3)</div></div>

Scroll to the bottom of the page and press “Proceed”



If you want to send the reviewers copies of the previous reviews, check the box next to the reviewer name to the left. You can also customize the invitation to the reviewer by clicking on the Customize link under “Reviewer Invitation” and you can adjust the due date for the review here as well.

Otherwise, press “Confirm Selections and Proceed” – the invitations will be sent out once you have done so.

Previously Submitted Reviews

The following reviews have been submitted. You may include a copy of each Reviewer's comments in invitations to new Reviewers by clicking the checkbox. These comments will display in invitation letters if the appropriate Reviewer comment merge fields are used. To see the comments, click the Reviewer's name. Customize each letter to edit the comment text that will be seen by the Invited Reviewer, but note that customizing a letter creates a fixed copy of that letter that is not affected by subsequent changes to your selections.

Please select any previously submitted reviews for inclusion before customizing invitation letters.

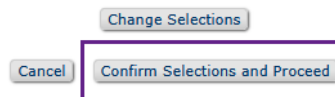
Current Submission

☐

☐

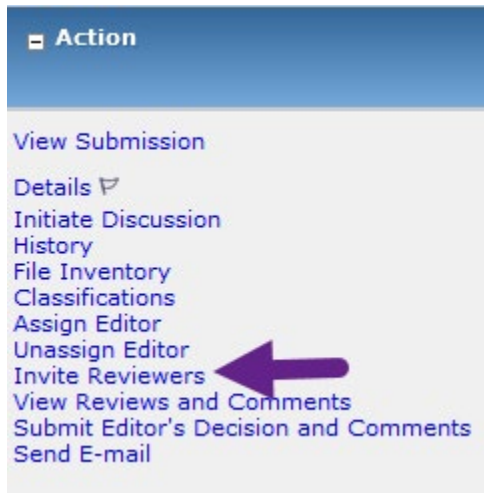
Reviewers to Invite

Name	Letter	Due Date	Do Not Invite
<div><div></div> (Reviewer)</div>	<div>Reviewer Invitation on Revision</div> <div>Customize</div>	<div>06/22/2025</div> <div>(mm/dd/yyyy)</div>	<input type="checkbox"/>



How to Unassign a Reviewer

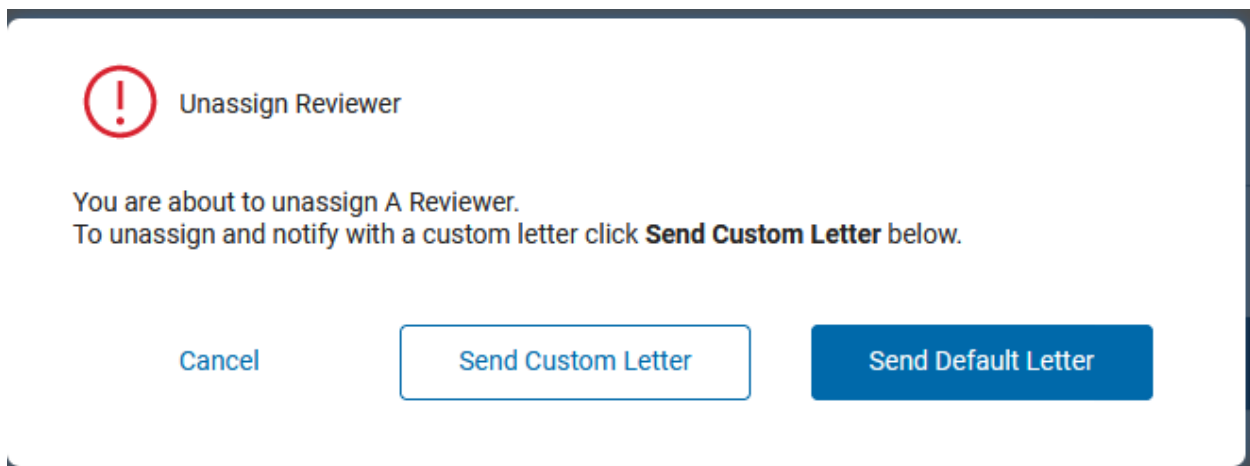
Locate the paper that the reviewer needs to be unassigned from and in the Action column, click on “Invite Reviewers”.



On the next screen, there is an area that says, “Review Status” and under that “Invited Reviewers” and “Alternate Reviewers”. You will need to click “Unassign Reviewer” next to the reviewer that you wish to remove from the paper.

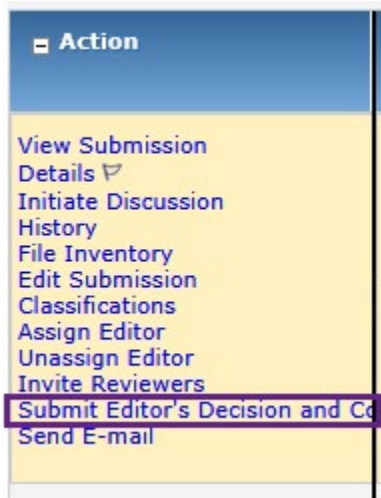


This will pop-up a window that allows you to send a Custom or Default letter to the person being unassigned. The reviewer is removed once the letter is sent.



How to Terminate Reviewer Assignments

Find the paper that you wish to take action on. Then click “Submit Editor’s Decision and Comments” in the Action column.



On the next screen, you’ll see the button “Terminate Outstanding Assignments and Proceed” at the top of the screen, under the paper title. Press it.




The system will show you a list of reviewers that have not completed their reviews, so their assignments need to be terminated. You will need to press the “Yes” button to continue.

Reviewers

Reviewer A Reviewer has agreed to review but has not started entering the review in the system.


Warning! If you Terminate All Outstanding Assignments, the submission will disappear from the menu of the Reviewer(s) identified above. You will have the opportunity to customize a notification letter for each Reviewer terminated on the assignment. You will also be able to re-invite Reviewers who have been terminated on this assignment later, if necessary.

Do you want to terminate the Reviewer assignment(s) above, so you can Submit a Decision for this manuscript?



The system prompts you to notify the reviewers that their reviews are no longer needed. We recommend that you send the letters out. If you wish to customize a letter for a specific reviewer, you would click the “Customize” link in the right hand column for the row containing their name.

Otherwise, you can just send out the default letters by pressing “Terminate and Send All Letters.”

Name	Letter	
A Reviewer (Reviewer)	Terminate Assignment - Agreed/Invited Reviewer ▼	 Customize

[Cancel](#) [Terminate and Send All Letters](#) [Terminate without Sending Letters](#)

The next screen confirms that the emails were sent out. From there, you will press “Proceed to Submit Editor’s Decision and Comments.” You would then follow the normal steps for entering your decision.

Terminate Assignments Confirmation

An e-mail has been sent to the following people notifying them of the terminated assignment:

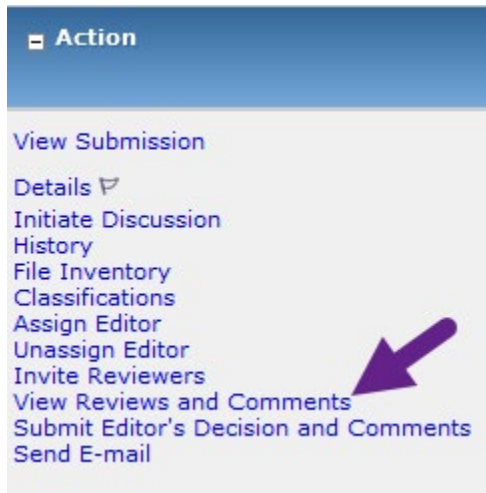
A Reviewer

[Proceed to Submit Editor’s Decision and Comments](#)

[Return to Main Menu](#)

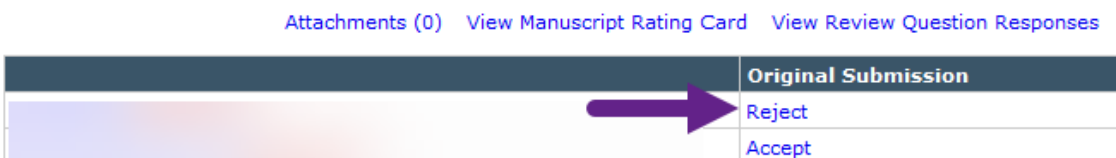
How to Re-open a Review in Editorial Manager

Find the paper with the review that needs to be re-opened. Click on “View Reviews and Comments”.

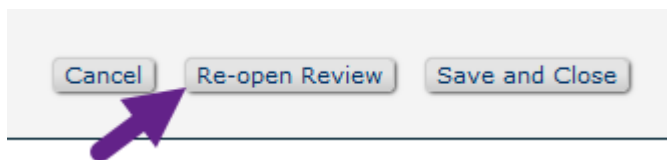


Click on the recommendation term of the review that you need to re-open.

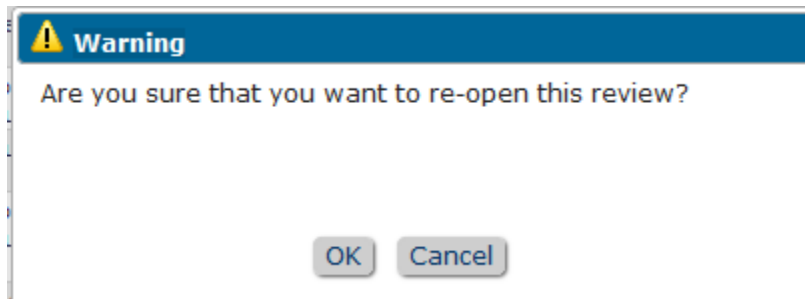
Click the recommendation term to view the comments for the submission.



Another window will open with the reviewer comments and ratings. At the top of the window, you'll see a button that says “Re-open Review” – press this.



A pop-up warning will appear, asking if you're sure you want to re-open the review. Press “Ok”.



You'll have the opportunity to send a letter to the reviewer letting them know it has been re-opened. Feel free to customize the letter if desired. After you confirm the selection and send the letter, the review has been re-opened, and the reviewer once again has access to it.

Viewing Reviews/Comments and Ratings

Log into your Editor Main Menu and click on “Submissions with Required Reviews Complete” to see all papers that have the required number of completed reviews.

Editor 'To-Do' List
My Pending Assignments (5)
New Invitations (0)
New Assignments (0)
Submissions with Required Reviews Complete (1)
Submissions Requiring Additional Reviewers (4)
Submissions with One or More Late Reviews (0)
Reviews in Progress (0)
Reviewers Invited - No Response (0)
Submissions Under Review (0)

In the Action column, click on “View Reviews and Comments” for the paper you want to work on.

Action
View Submission
Details
Initiate Discussion
History
File Inventory
Classifications
Assign Editor
Unassign Editor
Invite Reviewers
View Reviews and Comments
Submit Editor's Decision and C
Send E-mail

This will open the “View Reviews and Comments for Manuscript” screen in a new window.

Click on the recommendation term to see each individual review. This screen will show you the reviewer recommendation term, their answers to the custom review questions and their responses, as well as their comments to the editor (you) and the comments for the author.

View Reviews and Comments for Manuscript



Click the recommendation term to view the comments for the submission.

[Attachments \(0\)](#) [View Manuscript Rating Card](#) [View Review Question Responses](#)

Original Submission	
	Reject
	Accept
	Accept
	Accept



Entering Decisions

Criteria for Desk Rejection

To lessen the burden on reviewers and to avoid having authors revise papers unlikely to be published, we recommend you decline papers with the following issues:

- Findings do not contribute to the current practice or literature
- Findings that are purely descriptive in content
- Repetition of well-established findings
- Focus of study too narrow to be applied elsewhere
- Writing that cannot be easily understood
- Topics outside the scope of the Transportation Research Board
- Inappropriate or offensive language
- Endorsement or promotion of a commercial product
- Unclear or confusing paper organization
- Excessive length and rambling narrative

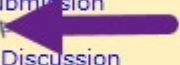
If you choose to Desk Reject a paper, please provide a brief rationale for the Author.

How to Desk Reject a Paper

From your Editor Main Menu, go to New Assignments. Only papers in this folder are eligible for Desk Rejection (Rejection without Review).

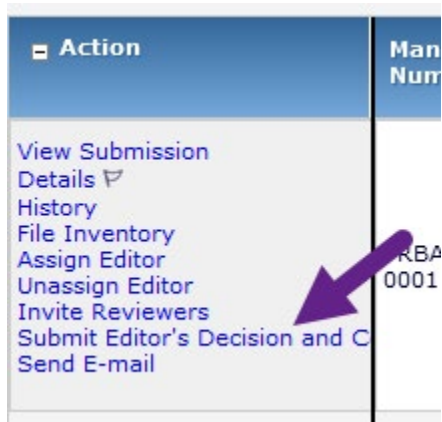
Editor 'To-Do' List	
My Pending Assignments (7)	
New Invitations (0)	
New Assignments (5)	
Submissions with Required Reviews Complete (1)	
Submissions Requiring Additional Reviewers (1)	
Submissions with One or More Late Reviews (0)	
Reviews in Progress (4)	
Reviewers Invited - No Response (4)	
Submissions Under Review (3)	

Open the Details page to see the paper abstract and other information.

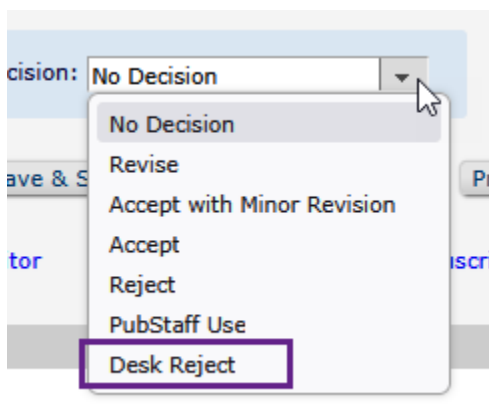
Action	Manu Num
View Submission Details 	
Initiate Discussion History	
File Inventory	
Edit Submission	TRBAI
Classifications	00013
Assign Editor	
Unassign Editor	
Invite Reviewers	
Submit Editor's Decision and C	
Send E-mail	

Once you've looked over the information in the Details page, if you feel that the paper falls under the Criteria for Desk Rejection or is otherwise not up to the standards for being sent out to review, you can choose to Desk Reject it.

Close the Details window and click on “Submit Editor’s Decision and Comments” in the Action column to begin the Desk Rejection process.



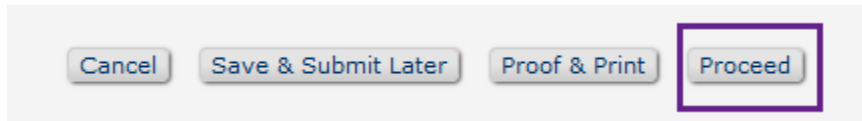
In the decision dropdown, select “Desk Reject” and then scroll down to the “Comments to Author” text box.



You must include the reason why you are rejecting the paper without review for the authors, so that they have some feedback.

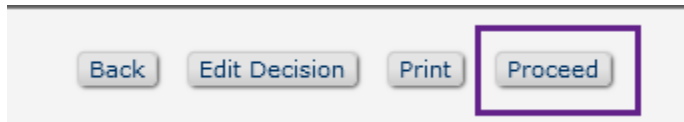


Once you have entered this information, scroll down to the Proceed button.



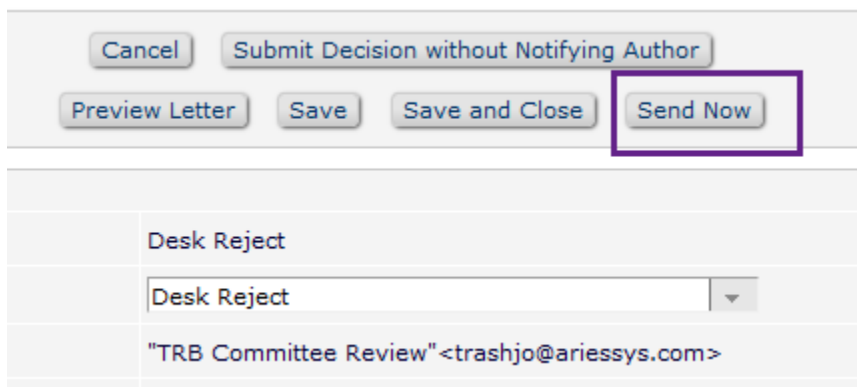
Cancel Save & Submit Later Proof & Print Proceed

The next page will give you a summary of the information you entered on the previous page. If you need to make any changes, press “Back”. Otherwise, press “Proceed”.



Back Edit Decision Print Proceed

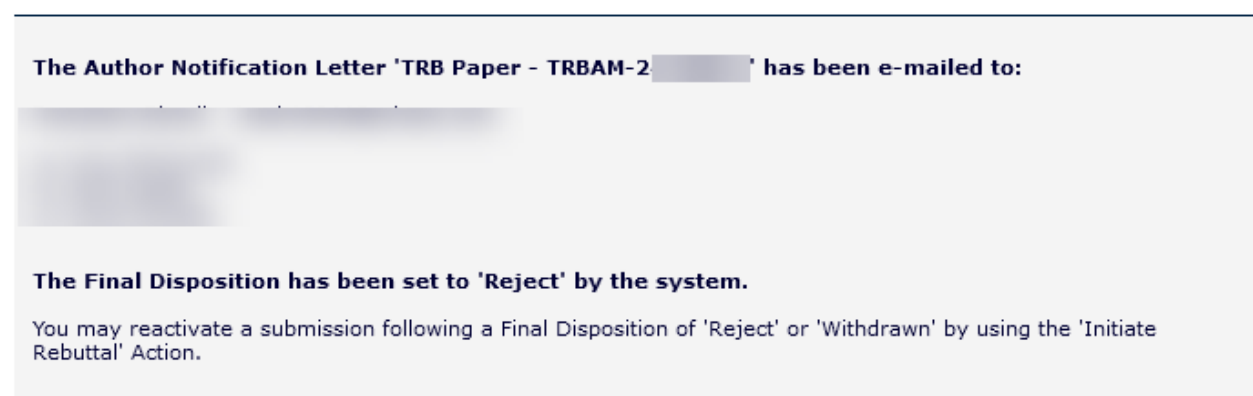
The next screen allows you to look at the full letter that will go out to the authors. Look it over, make sure everything appears as you want and then press “Send Now”. This will send the decision to the authors and close the paper in the system.



Cancel Submit Decision without Notifying Author Preview Letter Save Save and Close Send Now

Desk Reject	Desk Reject	'TRB Committee Review' <trashjo@ariessys.com>
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You’ll receive a confirmation screen stating the letter has been emailed to the authors and final disposition set to “Reject.”



The Author Notification Letter 'TRB Paper - TRBAM-2 [redacted]' has been e-mailed to:

[redacted]

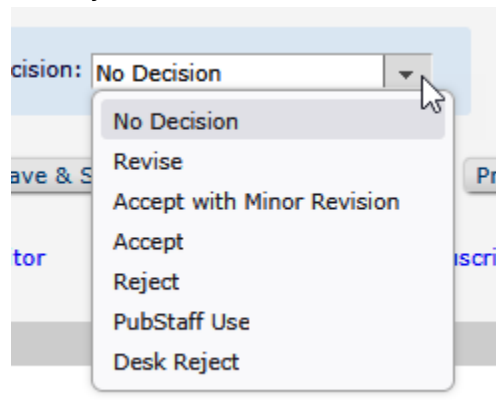
The Final Disposition has been set to 'Reject' by the system.

You may reactivate a submission following a Final Disposition of 'Reject' or 'Withdrawn' by using the 'Initiate Rebuttal' Action.

From here, you can return to your main menu and continue processing papers.

Decision Overview

When you submit a decision in Editorial Manager, you will see the following options:



This guide breaks down when each decision should be used.

New Submissions

1. Desk Reject – this option is for papers that fall under the Criteria for Desk Reject and have not undergone peer review for publication. You must include some comments to the authors indicating why you are rejecting the paper without review.
2. Reject – if after obtaining 2 (or more) reviews on a paper, you feel that a paper is not of publication quality and revision would not bring it up to the TRR standards, you would select this decision.
3. Revise – this option is used for papers that have undergone peer review and you feel that with revision, the paper would be closer to publication quality. Revised papers can be sent back out for another round of review to continue refining the paper.
4. Accept with Minor Revision – this option is used for papers (mostly previously committee reviewed) that have undergone peer review for publication and you feel like they only need some minor edits to be worthy of publication. Papers that receive this decision are not sent back to you when the revised paper come in and are instead accepted and sent on to SAGE for publication.

Revised Submissions

You can tell a paper is a revised paper by the appearance of R# at the end of the manuscript number.



The number after the R indicates what round of revision the paper is on – R1 means it is the first revision of the paper.

1. Accept – if the authors have made revisions in accordance with the reviewer comments and any comments that you made on the previous version, and you feel that the paper does not need further refining, select this decision.
2. Accept with Minor Revision – this option is used for papers that have undergone peer review and you feel like they only need some minor edits to be worthy of publication. Papers that receive this decision are not sent back to you when the revised paper come in, and are instead accepted and sent on to SAGE for publication.

3. Revise – if after the revision comes in, there are still areas you (or the reviewers, if you send it out for re-review) feel need improvement, you would select the Revise decision again.
4. Reject – if a paper comes back in but the revision has not improved the quality, or it appears that further revision will not bring it up to publication quality, please select this decision.

How to Submit a Decision

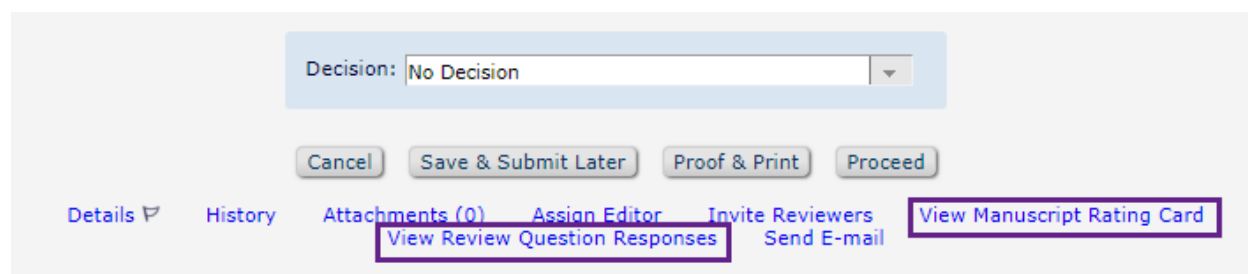
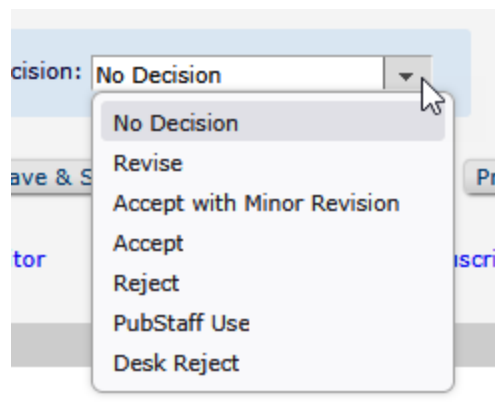
Log in to your Editor Main Menu. In the Editor 'To-Do' List, click on Submissions with Required Reviews Complete to see all your papers that have reached the number of required reviews.

Editor 'To-Do' List 	
My Pending Assignments (2)	
New Assignments (1)	
Submissions with Required Reviews Complete (1)	
Submissions Requiring Additional Reviewers (0)	
Submissions with One or More Late Reviews (0)	
Reviews in Progress (1)	
Reviewers Invited - No Response (1)	
Submissions Under Review (0)	

Click on Submit Editor's Decision and Comments.






Action
View Submission
Details 
Initiate Discussion
History
File Inventory
Classifications
Assign Editor
Unassign Editor
Invite Reviewers
View Reviews and Comments
Submit Editor's Decision and Comments
Send E-mail

You'll need to select your recommendation term from the Decision drop-down menu.



There's a list of relevant links under the decision dropdown. You can view the Review Question Responses by clicking on those links. You can find more information on them in the Viewing Reviews/Comments and Ratings guide.

Below the links you'll see a table with the reviewers and their recommendations. If you click on the recommendation term, you can see the full review that the reviewer provided.

	Original Submission
 (Reviewer 1)	Accept with No Changes
 (Reviewer 2)	Revise
 (Reviewer 3)	Revise
 (Handling Editor)	
Author Decision Letter	
 (Author)	

Further down the page, you'll see a text box titled Confidential Comments to Editor. Any comments the reviewers included here are solely for you. They should not be shared with the authors.

Confidential Comments to Editor

[Insert Special Character](#)
[Open in New Window](#)

Please give a frank account of the strengths and weaknesses of the article:

Reviewer, [REDACTED]: Excellent paper! It'll make a good presentation.

Reviewer, [REDACTED]: Non perspiciatis quis est iure nihil eum quis odio et laudantium voluptatem ad fuga dicta ea tempora excepturi. Aut molestias pariatur sed sunt molestiae et velit autem. Qui doloribus nihil sed enim quibusdam ex repudiandae placeat aut dicta unde non explicabo modi a error quidem! Ea fugit consequuntur qui voluptas suscipit eos delectus quam ex molestiae provident est minima molestiae cum blanditiis molestiae. Non perspiciatis architecto ad dolor libero est inventore quaerat et quam quia. Sed dolores blanditiis sit doloribus incidunt et pariatur praesentium non natus quod ex laudantium rerum et quod rerum hic perferendis earum. Hic ipsam deleniti eos soluta

Below that is the Comments to Author text box. You'll see a blank box – this is for any comment you want to include for the authors.

Comments to Author

[Insert Special Character](#)
[Open in New Window](#)

After that is a section labeled Individual Reviewer Comments to Author (Editor's Copy). This is where each individual reviewer comments appear. If there is an inappropriate comment, unchecking the box next to the reviewer name will remove it from the decision letter. **Please be cautious** when using this ability – it should **only** be used in extreme circumstances.

Individual Reviewer Comments to Author (Editor's Copy)

Select comments for inclusion in the Decision Letter sent to the Author. * indicates a comment modified from the original.

[Insert Special Character](#)
[Open in New Window](#)

☒ [REDACTED]
Reviewer 1

Et distinctio animi ut quas fugit et totam quae ut totam voluptas aut similique quidem. Qui aliquam deleniti eum voluptas voluptatem vel culpa adipisci sed odio quam quo dolorum accusamus eos delectus quae. A quidem voluptatum aut debitis autem sed iusto tenetur ut voluptas doloremque et eius animi At doloremque velit. Est minus similique cum velit culpa et provident velit ab autem nulla eos officiis eligendi. Ad consequuntur vero et quis voluptatem qui consectetur laborum et sint quam qui internos eaque ut distinctio iste qui culpa quis!

☒ [REDACTED]
Reviewer 2

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Est dicta numquam At adipisci corrupti qui vero facilis vel odio rerum ut voluptatem cumque est commodi nulla ea ratione porro. Qui numquam praesentium et quam eligendi aut odit perspiciatis sit nesciunt officiis et ipsa dolorem At obcaecati internos. Ab Quis autem eum dolores officia ut natus blanditiis non quia laborum. 33 iste iure qui eaque quas in libero blanditiis eos quia dolorem in reiciendis quia et eveniet eveniet. Aut unde atque est maiores internos sed minus eligendi. In odio adipisci qui quas labore est provident voluptates qui rerum quis cum voluptatum consequuntur. Et delectus voluptatem et distinctio dolorum vel nulla voluptas ex accusantium doloremque est necessitatibus quos et autem aperiam et dignissimos minus. Qui culpa eveniet sed reiciendis quam rem ipsum commodi! Vel voluptates sint aut quos quisquam non corporis deleniti! Ut accusamus delectus qui enim consectetur aut debitis ipsa eos quam illum sit perferendis enim et tempore blanditiis aut odio quibusdam? Et fugit assumenda aut voluptatem similique et recusandae maxime id consectetur maiores id esse voluptatem. Et dignissimos recusandae ut debitis deleniti et ipsum facere cum sapiente dolor. Aut voluptas ullam aut

At the bottom of the screen, you will find responses from each reviewer to the review questions.

Reviewer Questions and Responses	
Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2
Do you have any conflicts of interest to declare? (What's this?)	
No	No
Is this paper free of sensitive statements advocating special interests, advertising, and recommendations on go	
Yes	Yes
Do you want to receive recognition for this review on a Web of Science researcher profile ?	
<i>Don't let your reviewing work go unnoticed! Researchers the world over use Web of Science to effortlessly track contributions for any journal. If you opt in, your Web of Science researcher profile will automatically be updated review in full compliance with the journal's review policy. If you don't have a Web of Science profile, you will be [Learn more]</i>	
No	Yes
By submitting this review, I declare that the technical assessment in my review comments is derived from my o output of Artificial Intelligence/Learned Language Model/AI Chat Bot or other modules.	
Yes	Yes

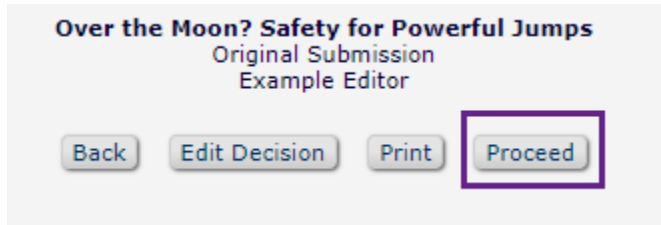
There are also some Editor Review questions that you must answer before you can proceed with submitting your review. They are on a 1-5 scale, 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree. This rating should be based on the current state of the paper.

Editor Review Questions
<p>*This paper is likely to be read and cited frequently by researchers [Instructions]</p> <p>Please select a response ▼</p>
<p>*This paper is likely to be read and used by practitioners or policymakers. [Instructions]</p> <p>Please select a response ▼</p>

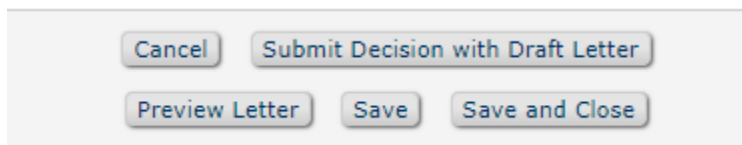
Press the Proceed button when you are ready to submit your recommendation.

Cancel	Save & Submit Later	Proof & Print	Proceed
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The next page gives a summary of the comments on the previous page. Press Proceed again to continue submitting your recommendation.



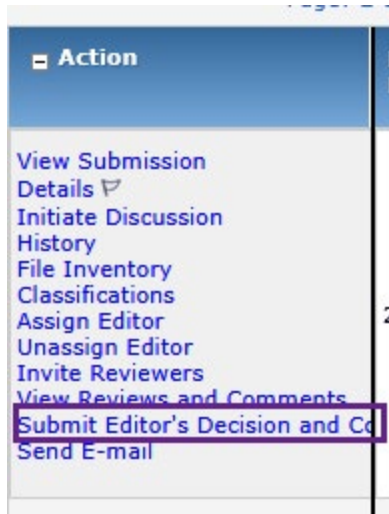
This next screen will allow you to edit the recommendation letter before it goes to the EIC/editorial staff. There is a draft template in place, so you can add any additional text as needed. When done, you can “Preview Letter” and then “Submit Decision with Draft Letter”.



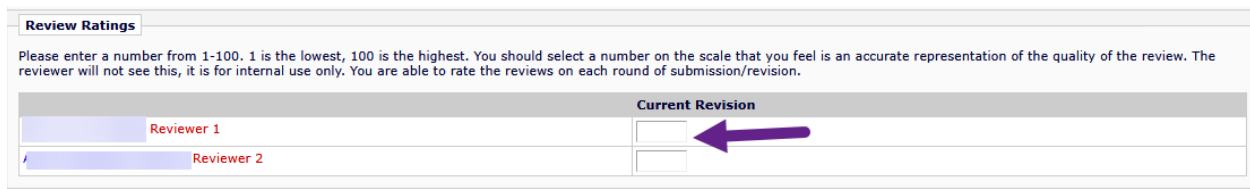
When complete, you’ll see an acknowledgement screen that thanks you for submitting a Decision on Manuscript #XX-XXXX. You can then either go back to the main menu or return to the Submissions with Required Reviews Complete folder to work on the next paper.

Rating Reviews/Reviewers

You will be able to rate the quality of the reviews you receive on a paper you are handling when you are submitting your decision. It is optional, but it can be helpful in the future as editors are looking to invite reviewers. The reviewers will not see these ratings, they are for internal use only.



Click on “Submit Editor’s Decision and Comments”. On the next page, after the reviewer comments to author, there is a section titled “Review Ratings”.

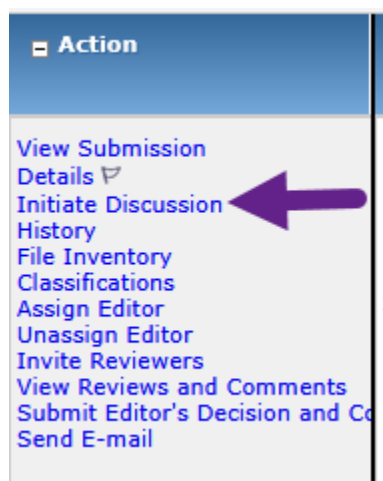
A screenshot of the 'Review Ratings' section in a web application. At the top, there is a title 'Review Ratings' in a small box. Below it is a paragraph of instructions: 'Please enter a number from 1-100. 1 is the lowest, 100 is the highest. You should select a number on the scale that you feel is an accurate representation of the quality of the review. The reviewer will not see this, it is for internal use only. You are able to rate the reviews on each round of submission/revision.' Below the text is a table with two columns. The first column has two rows: 'Reviewer 1' and 'Reviewer 2'. The second column is titled 'Current Revision' and contains two empty input boxes. A red arrow points to the input box for 'Reviewer 1' in the 'Current Revision' column.

The names of each reviewer that completed a review for this version of the paper will appear here and includes their reviewer number as well. You’ll be able to enter a number from 1-100 in the boxes next to their names. 1 is the lowest, and 100 is the highest. You should select a number on the scale that you feel is an accurate representation of the quality of the review.

Once you’ve entered your ratings, you can continue with submitting your decision recommendation as normal.

Initiating Discussions

On the paper that you wish to discuss with other editors, click the “Initiate Discussion” link in the Action column on the left.



In the window that opens, there are two fields “Topic” and “Initial Comments”. You will need to fill in both fields. Topic should be what the discussion is about, and the initial comments are your first comments for the discussion, likely expanding on the topic.

A screenshot of the 'Initiate Discussion' form. At the top, it says 'Initiate Discussion for Manuscript Number: [redacted]'. Below this is a large text area for the topic. At the bottom, there are two input fields: 'Topic' and 'Initial Comments'.

The Editor Candidates section is where you invite other editors to the discussion. You can look through the list or search by last name to find the editors you wish to invite to the discussion. Place a check mark next to the editor(s) that you wish to invite in the Select column on the left.

Select	Editor Role	Editor Description	Editor Name	Current Assignments	View Reviews and Comments	Download Files(source and companion)	View Draft Decision Letter	# Classification Matches	Classification Matches	Available during next 30 days	Past Assignments for the last 90 days
--------	-------------	--------------------	-------------	---------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------------------

You can invite multiple editors at the same time.

Select	Editor Role	Editor Description	Editor Name	Current Assignments
<input type="checkbox"/>				0
<input type="checkbox"/>				0

Once you've selected the editors to participate in the discussion, you can either start the discussion without sending emails or you can customize the letters to your invited editors. We strongly encourage sending customized letters to notify editors about the discussion.

[Cancel](#)
[Start Discussion without Sending Letters](#)
[Proceed To Customize Letters](#)

Once the discussion has been started, you and the other invited editors will be able to see these submissions on your Editor Main Menu, in the area "Submissions with Active Discussions." This page contains all of the discussions that you have been invited to/started. If there are discussions/comments you have not yet seen, there will be a blue circle with the number of unread comments next to this link.



Clicking on that link will show you a list of all of the submissions with open discussions that are you involved in. You'll need to click the "Discussions" link next to a specific submission to see the discussions for that submission.

Submissions with Active Discussions										
Page: 1 of 1 (1 total submissions)						Results per page 10				
Action	Manuscript Number	Article Type	Article Title	Corresponding Author	Topic	Date of Last Post	Date Discussion Started	Discussion Initiator	Editorial Status	Current Editorial Status
Discussions View Submission Details Send E-mail				✓	Example	Jun 01, 2025	Jun 01, 2025	Kisna Quimby		Manuscript Submitted
Page: 1 of 1 (1 total submissions)						Results per page 10				

The Discussions link for a specific submission will open a page with all of the discussions for that paper. If a paper has more than one active discussion, it would be shown here.

Discussions for Manuscript Number: [REDACTED]

Action ▲	Topic ▲▼	Type ▲▼	Last Post Date ▲▼	Posted By ▲▼	Discussion Status ▲▼	Date Initiated ▲▼	Initiated By ▲▼	Initial Participant
View	Example	Editor Consultation	Jun 01, 2025	Kisna Quimby	Open	Jun 01, 2025	Kisna Quimby	

[Close](#)

[Start New Topic](#)

Clicking on “View” will open the screen below. There’s a “Comments:” area, you would add any comments you have here – pressing the “Post” button when ready to submit them. On the right side, you will see the comments already posted, with the name of the participant that posted it and the date it was posted.

At the bottom of the screen, you can see a list of the current participants. And if you need to add additional editors after the discussion is created, you can do so by pressing the “Add Participants” button.

Discussion for Manuscript Number:

F

Cancel Save and Close Conclude Discussion

Participant Summary

View Submission

File Inventory

Add/Edit Submission Flags

Details ▾ ▲ C

Topic:

Example

Comments:

View/Print All

Participant ▲ ▾	Comments	Date ▲ ▾
Kisna Quimby	lalldladlafdaf	Jun 01, 2025

Post

Add Participants

Editor Participants

Editor Participant ▲ ▾	Role ▲ ▾	# Posts	Latest Post	Participant Status ▲ ▾	View Reviews and Comments	Download Files	View Draft Decision Letter	
TRR Editorial Office ▾	Publications Staff	0		Active	✓	✓	✓	Send E-mail
Kisna Quimby ▾	Publications Staff	1	Jun 01, 2025	Active	✓	✓	✓	Send E-mail

Cancel Save and Close Conclude Discussion

The person that initiated the discussion can select “Conclude Discussion” at any time to close the discussion. All comments made will be saved and accessible via the Discussions link in the Actions column of that paper, but new comments cannot be added after that.