

SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE



Directorate of Postgraduate Studies, Research,
Technology Transfer and Consultancy

GUIDELINES FOR JOURNALS AFFILIATED WITH SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE



Edited by:
Prof. Eron D. Karimuribo
Prof. Japhet J. Kashaigili

JULY 2023

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Guidelines for Journals Affiliated with Sokoine University of Agriculture
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FOREWORD

In recent years, Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) continued to do well in terms of research and is highly ranked nationally and internationally. In addition, SUA researchers continue to rank in top positions in research citations in Tanzania. Despite of these achievements, the University recognises the need to increase the capacity and quality of research, publications, and innovations as envisioned in 5th SUA Corporate Strategic Plan (2021-2026). SUA values the contribution of scholarly journals in the recorded achievements including the contribution of SUA affiliated journals. The journals provide an avenue for national and international scientists to disseminate new technologies and knowledge that are relevant for the development of humankind.

However, it is also a known fact that there are challenges and threats to the scientific integrity that may come with negative consequences to the society if peer reviewed journals are not guided properly. These include but not limited to the global increase of unscrupulous researchers and publication malpractices. In order to prepare the journals affiliated with SUA to be resilient amid the increasingly challenging environment, it has become necessary to develop the guidelines that will assist these journals to navigate through the existing and future challenges while ensuring that the journals remain to be the trusted platform of scholarly disseminations and source of knowledge and innovations. Therefore, the guidelines are designed primarily to help the journals and scholars to maintain best publication practices as they communicate research findings to the community. In addition, the guidelines provide the means for SUA to improve and strengthen the research and publications management system.

It is the expectation of SUA management that all stakeholders will implement the guidelines at their respective levels of responsibility. I assure the community that, SUA management will provide all the necessary assistance required to facilitate the implementation of these guidelines.

Lastly, but not least, on behalf of the SUA management, I extend

appreciations to all stakeholders whose valuable input enabled the completion of this document.

Prof. Raphael T. Chibunda
Vice Chancellor

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Currently there are five journals at SUA which are affiliated with different colleges namely: Tanzania Journal of Forestry and Nature Conservation (TJFNC), Tanzania Veterinary Journal (TVJ), Tanzania Journal of Agricultural Sciences (TAJAS), Sub-Saharan Journal of Social Science and Humanities (SSJSSH), and Journal of Agricultural Economics and Business Studies (JAED).

Tanzania Journal of Forestry and Nature Conservation was founded in the late 1970s and was known as Forest Records. Forest Records was founded and owned by the then Division of Forestry, under the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. In 2004, after 74 issues of the Forest Records, the publication transformed into an online/print journal with the new name of Tanzania Journal of Forestry and Nature Conservation. From 2008, the journal started to publish online under the auspices of the African Journals Online (AJOL). The journal is based at the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Tourism.

Tanzania Veterinary Journal was founded by the Tanzania Veterinary Association (TVA) in 1979¹² and is jointly owned by TVA and the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (CVMBS). The Journal office is based at CVMBS. Currently, TVA elects the Chief editor, Associate editor and Circulation manager every three years through TVA Annual General Meetings. CVMBS provides office space, day to day support and quality control mechanisms. Before the launch of TVJ in 1979, the journal was originally known as Tanzania Veterinary Bulletin and changed to

¹ Editor, R. Tucker (1979) "On The Birth of the Tanzanian Veterinary Bulletin", Tanzania Veterinary Journal, 1(1), p. 3. Available at: <https://tvj.sua.ac.tz/vet2/index.php/TVJ/article/view/263> (Accessed: 31 March 2023).

² C.L. Kombo (1979) "Letter From the Chairman", Tanzania Veterinary Journal, 1(1). Available at: <https://tvj.sua.ac.tz/vet2/index.php/TVJ/article/view/554> (Accessed: 31 March 2023).

Tanzania Veterinary Journal in 1991³. From 2007, TVJ joined online publications through African Journals Online and later in 2020 launched its own website, online manuscript submission, tracking and publication system, and implemented a number of other reforms with the aim of improving accessibility and publication practices. Currently, TVJ is registered in six electronic databases which are African Journals Online, EBSCO, African Index Medicus (AIM), CABI Full text (CABI), CrossRef (DOI #: 10.4314/tvj), and Google Scholar. TVJ maintains electronic manuscript submission, tracking and publication platforms that can be accessed through the journal website.

In addition to the journals that were launched in late 1970s, there are relatively newer journals that were established later on including TAJAS which was established in 1998 by the Faculty of Agriculture in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. Currently, TAJAS is based at the College of Agriculture. Others include the Sub-Saharan Journal of Social Science and Humanities based at the College of Social Science and Humanities, and the Journal of Agricultural Economics and Business Studies based at the College of Economics and Business Studies.

It is undisputable that these journals are important repositories of scientific research outputs and continue to form a critical component of academic life notwithstanding the existing challenges such as limited investment, lack of motivation to core journal staff, difficult operational environment including lack of offices, among others. In the absence of guidelines that could guide SUA on how to support these journals for their day-to-day operations, it is not surprising that the development of these journals remains solely dependent on personal will and initiatives. The situation may

³ Editor (1992) "TANZANIA VETERINARY JOURNAL", Tanzania Veterinary Journal, 11(1). Available at: <https://tvj.sua.ac.tz/vet2/index.php/TVJ/article/view/371> (Accessed: 31 March 2023).

explain the existing disparity among these journals with respect to what is considered as best publication practices.

In the backdrop of the increasingly challenging environment posed by unscrupulous researchers and the emergency of predatory journals and publishers, the need for guidelines has become inevitable. Furthermore, it is in the best interest of the University to support these journals to ensure adherence to best publication practices and increase their contribution in promoting the visibility and contribution of SUA research for advancing knowledge, innovations and solutions to current and future socio-economic challenges.

2.0 RATIONALE

The guideline provides the roadmap for guiding the journals affiliated with SUA and SUA management in order to match up with the University expectations as stipulated in the 5th SUA Corporate Strategic Plan (2021-2026) that emphasizes the need to increase the volume and quality of research, publications, and innovations from researchers.

The guidelines provide the means for the University to promote and monitor quality of publications, and strengthen the research and publications management system in these journals. Furthermore, the guidelines promote the implementation of quality control mechanisms that are widely recognized as best practices in scholarly publications.

3.0 SCOPE

These guidelines are complementary to other approved University and National regulatory instruments for ensuring quality and excellence in scholarly publications. In case of contradictions, the existing University and National regulations should prevail.

4.0 ADMINISTRATION OF JOURNALS AFFILIATED WITH SUA

4.1 Responsible Offices

The Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor responsible for Academic, Research and Consultancy through the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications in collaboration with the College/School hosting journals affiliated with SUA should be responsible for the provision of office space, furniture and working tools such as computers, printer, scanning equipment and provision of support staff required for secretarial services such as type setting. In addition, the Directorate responsible for Research and Publication should provide linkage between the journal and the University authority as well as to the other partners where applicable.

4.2 Editorial Advisory Board

Editorial Advisory Board as its name suggests is the organ tasked with an important responsibility to ensure the Journal achieves its intended objectives. Its main function should be to provide advice to the Chief Editor on matters related to journal development, scope of the journal, relevant promotional opportunities, and where applicable provide advice to the Professional Associations or publishers on matters directly related to the functions of the journal including the development of the journal, journal policies, monitoring the quality of published manuscripts and propose measures for improvement, promote the journal to their peers and in their respective geographical regions and where applicable serve as secondary reviewers.

In order to efficiently play their roles, the Board should be comprised of a team of senior experts with track records of publications in reputable journals on relevant

topics that fall within the scope of the respective Journal and should be affiliated with reputable research institution(s). Furthermore, distribution of members of the Editorial Advisory Board should preferably consider international, gender and expertise attributes.

4.3 Recruitment and composition of Editorial Advisory Board

For the journals owed by SUA, the Chief Editor should scout and initiate contact with potential candidates for the purpose of obtaining consent, and request curriculum vitae to the respective Committee responsible for research and publications of the College where the Journal is based. The committee should process and recommend three potential candidates to the Academic Committee and eventually to the College Board. For journals whole owned by SUA through Colleges, the College Board should be the final appointing authority of members of editorial board but should notify the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications of any new appointment or changes to the Editorial Advisory Board. For journals which are co- owned between SUA and other professional associations, existing recruitment procedure should be adopted with emphasis that minimum requirements, as specified in these Guidelines, are met and with consultations with the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications. The Directorate responsible for Research and Publications should co-opt relevant Colleges depending on the specialization and scope of the journal during the consultation process. The Colleges through Directorate responsible for Research and Publications should notify the Deputy Vice Chancellor any changes to the Editorial Advisory Board within 30 days after approval of the changes of editorial Advisory Board.

The journal Editorial Board should have a minimum of seven (7) members and a maximum of twenty (20) members. In order

to make the journal international, the Editorial Advisory Board should have at least 25% of its members coming from outside Tanzania representing at least three continents.

4.4 Tenure of appointed Board members

The term of service of Board members should be a maximum of two terms of 3 years each. After every 3 years the existing members should be evaluated for potential re- appointment or termination based on reports provided by the respective journals. Terms in office for Editorial Advisory Board members will be renewed twice only. In case of resignation or any disability and/ or death before the end of 3-year term, appointment of new member(s) to fill vacancy should follow the same procedure specified under 4.3.

4.5 Editorial Advisory Committee

The size of Editorial Advisory Committee should be composed by a team of experts who will be led by the Chief Editor. The size of the team should depend on the range and scope of topics covered by the journal. However, it is expected that the team will include Associate Editors and Section Editors and other staff as needed. In addition, the journal should strive to have gender representation among the members of the respective Committee.

4.6 The Chief Editor

The Chief Editor also known as Editor-in-Chief should be eminent expert in the discipline covered by the journal with track record of scholarly publications in the scope relevant to the respective journal. In addition, the Chief Editor should possess a minimum qualification of PhD with specialization relevant to the scope of the Journal and willing to commit adequate time for their editorial responsibilities.

4.7 Recruitment of Editor in Chief

The Chief Editor of SUA affiliated Journal should be a Senior scientist. For the purpose of this guideline, Senior Scientist include those with academic or research positions such as Senior Lecturer or Senior Research Fellows or higher as specified in harmonised scheme of service, 2022 in addition to a proven track record of qualities specified under section 4.6.

For journals that are whole owned by SUA through Colleges, Candidates should be scouted and vetted by the Committee responsible for research and publications of the College, where the Journal is based and propose five potential candidates based on merits to the College Academic Committee that should suggest three names to the respective College Board for final appointment of the Chief Editor.

The recruitment of Chief Editor of the journals that are co-owned between SUA and Professional Associations, five vetted potential candidates should be presented to the academic committee by the committee responsible for research and publication in the college which the journal is linked based on the scope and history of the respective journal. The College Academic Committee that should rank the candidates in order of preference and present to the respective college Board. The College Board should recommend three potential candidates for Chief Editor to be voted during the annual general meeting (AGM) of the respective professional association. The results of the final voting and election of Chief Editor and Associate Editors should be reported to the College Board and the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications for noting.

4.8 Tenure of Chief Editor

The term of service of Chief Editor should be a maximum of

two terms of 4 years each. After every 4 years there should be an election or appointment of editors for the respective journals. The term can be extended under special circumstances as determined on case-by-case basis. Proposal for extension of the terms of service should be subject to approval by the appointing authority as specified in this guideline. The tenure of appointed Chief editor can be terminated before completion of the term of appointment if the appointing authority determine that the appointed Chief Editor could not perform in accordance with the expectations as defined in section 4.9. In case the position of Chief Editor becomes vacant for any reason, normal procedures for recruitment of Chief Editor should be used to fill the available vacancy.

4.9 Functions of Chief Editor

The day-to-day management of the respective journals including preparations of yearly working plan and budget of the journal and submit to the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications. In addition to routine editorial matters of the journal, the Chief Editor is expected to guarantee high quality and standards of the publication process. This may include but not limited to handling submission, timeliness of the journal's review process; timely publication of all articles and issues, and liaising with members of Editorial Advisory Committee and Advisory Board to achieve the journal objectives.

The Chief Editor should be the final authority in making decision to publish or not to publish any submitted manuscript after consideration of opinion from peer reviewers and Associate/Section Editors. The decision related to publication of manuscripts by the Chief Editor should be final and should not be interfered with by any authority. However, Chief Editor shall not handle the review process and make decision on his/her own

manuscripts in his/her journal rather this responsibility should be delegated to his/her Associate Editor. In case of suspected irregularities conducted by the Chief Editor, investigations should be done through the existing normal University channels and/or Professional Association set aside for dealing with matters related to breach of ethics.

4.10 Associate Editor

The Associate Editor should be the Deputy Chief Editor and serves to assist the Chief Editor to oversee the day-to-day functions of the journal.

4.11 Recruitment of Associate Editor

Because of the need to work closely with the Chief Editor, the qualifications and procedures for recruiting the Associate Editor should be the same as those outlined for the Chief Editor.

4.12 Functions, tenure and replacement of Associate Editor

Associate Editor should perform functions assigned by the Chief Editor including but not limited to recruiting reviewers and oversee the manuscript processing from submission to the completion of the peer review process. Where applicable, the Chief Editor may appoint Section Editors who are expert in sub-disciplines within the scope of the journal to assist the Associate Editor and advise the Chief Editor in initial decisions after evaluation of the submitted manuscripts. The tenure, and procedures for filling the vacant position of the Associate Editor should be the same as those applicable for the Chief Editor. For the purpose of this guideline, an expert is any person with a bachelor degree that address the broader scope of the journal and master degree on one of the sub-discipline relevant for one of the specific scope of the journal. In addition, the candidate should have a PhD in related fields but not necessarily on the same subject as master

degree.

4.13 Section Editors and other supporting staff

It is recommended, where applicable, that each journal through the Chief Editor should recruit Section Editors to assist the Chief and Associate editors. The number of Section Editors and other support staff may vary depending on general and specific specialities required based on the scope of the journal.

The main function of Section Editors includes assisting editors to handle the review process of manuscripts submitted in the specific specialty. In absence of Section Editors, their roles are expected to be assumed by Associate Editors. The Chief Editors will have the overall responsibility for all functions of the journal.

Due to the necessity of increasing journal visibility by promoting online publications and engagement of end users through social media, journals should engage Information Communication Technologists when needed to facilitate online presence and promotion of the respective journal. Another position which might be needed by the Journals affiliated with SUA is the Journal Manager who will be responsible for managing journal publishing system including daily management and tracking of submissions and reviews of the manuscripts as well as managing Chief-, Associate- and Section Editors. Where Journal Managers are not available, their functions will be done by the Chief Editors.

4.14 Guest Editors

Journals should engage Guest Editors on need basis. Guest Editors should have temporary roles including inviting and coordinating invitation for specific contents intended for specific theme of great interest to the journal, hosting production of professional scientific conference proceedings or to respond to the emerging needs of scientific community. The Chief Editor in consultation

with other members of the Editorial team and the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications should appoint Guest Editor depending on the need and approved budget. Guest editors with good performance judged from outputs should be included in the database and considered for potential appointment as section editors for the respective topic. In addition to the functions listed above, Guest Editors may temporarily perform any other functions outlined in sections 4.9, 4.11, and 4.13 in case of any potential conflict of interests for the respective incumbent Editor(s).

4.15 Remuneration

Membership of the Editorial Advisory Board should be voluntary. There should be no monetary gains associated with Board membership. This criterion should be clearly made known by all potential members when initial contact is made. However, members of the Editorial Advisory Board may be allowed to access all volumes of the journals in case there is restricted access to them.

In recognition of critical roles of Chief Editors, the Chief Editors should be eligible for a monthly responsibility allowance. The responsibility allowance should be similar or equivalent to the rate provided to the Heads of academic departments.

Other technical staff including Associate Editors, Section Editors, Information Communication Technologists, Journal Managers and Guest Editors should be compensated for their extra time devoted for overseeing particular assignments in accordance with the existing University procedures. These costs should be planned and reflected in the overall journal operational budget under coordination of the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications.

5.0 ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Each of the SUA affiliated journals should have:

- i. Unique name also known as title that should not in any way be confused with another journal within and outside Tanzania.
- ii. Each journal should have its vision and mission statements. A mission statement should be a short piece of text summarizing answers to the questions: What field will the journal be in? What gaps are there today? What problem the journal wants to address? Type of target authors and readers. This will form the basis for the Aims and Scope section of the journal website.
- iii. The journal should state clearly about the journal's origin, scope, and any association with other journal titles in case of title changes, and any relationship with other organisations.
- iv. Every journal should have an international serial number(s) (ISSN) based on the media of distribution for its publications. Journals with both print and online publications should have two separate ISSN for each type or medium of publication, one for print and one for online publications respectively.
- v. The ISSN must be displayed on the website and specified whether it is for online or print contents;
- vi. Every SUA affiliated journal should state clearly the name and contact address of the publisher.
- vii. Name and contact of Editors, and physical address of the respective Journal.
- viii. List all members of Editorial Board, Editorial Advisory Committee, their institutional affiliations, areas of specialization, and highest academic qualifications.
- ix. State clearly policies, type of peer review process and should not guarantee the acceptance of the manuscript submitted.
- x. State clearly policies of publishing Scientific Conference Proceedings especially those which are of significant interests and high quality in order not to compromise reputation of that journal.

- xi. Every journal should have a policy on handling publication misconduct and breach of ethics and should include:
 - a. Authorships and handling of authorship conflicts;
 - b. Handling of complaints against the journal before or after publication;
 - c. Handling of whistle-blower information;
 - d. Clear definitions of conflicts of interest and processes for handling conflicts of interest of authors, reviewers, editors, journals, publishers, and sponsors before and after publication;
 - e. Make effort to avoid conflict of interest.
 - f. Policy on submissions of any member of editorial team in the journal they are managing, including how the submission will be reviewed, and make the handling procedures for such manuscripts as transparent as possible.
 - g. Policy on pre-and post-publication data sharing; and
 - h. Ethical conduct of research using dangerous materials and chemicals, animals, animals and protected plants, protected environments such as water sources and reservoirs, human subjects, personal information and photographs, and the use of published data.
- xii. The journal should state procedures for handling cases of plagiarism, duplicate publication, errata, article withdrawal and retraction.
- xiii. For the purpose of this guide, definition of plagiarism provided in SUA research regulations and guidelines should be adopted.
- xiv. Journal marketing policies including advertisements should be stated.
- xv. If advertisements are accepted, should not influence editorial decisions and should not be included in the published manuscript.

- xvi. Editorial decisions regarding acceptance or rejection of an article should be the responsibility of the Chief Editor and should not be influenced by any organs, individual or institution regardless of whether the influence comes from political, commercial, publisher, professional associations/ societies or anywhere.
- xvii. The decisions to accept or reject a paper for publication should be based on merits such as the paper's importance, originality, and clarity, the study's relevance to scope of the journal with consideration of the opinion of reviewers.
- xviii. The copyright and license terms should be stated and visible at the journal websites and published articles.
- xix. Information for all the applicable charges, currency and mode of payment should be easily accessible, and it should be stated when the charges are to be paid.
- xx. Journals affiliated at SUA should be able to collect article processing charges. However, the journals should not collect publication charges before the respective article passes peer review and is accepted for publication.
- xxi. Journals should disclose any other type of support received from any organizations or individuals.
- xxii. Every journal should have a known publication schedule.

6.0 SPECIFIC SUA JOURNAL POLICY

Establishment of any journal after the publication of this guidelines should require approval of the University Senate after receiving adequate justification. All existing and future SUA affiliated journals should: -

- i. Be owned by Sokoine University of Agriculture or co-owned between Sokoine University of Agriculture and other parties;
- ii. Have a website that support encrypted traffic, accessible worldwide, and linked to SUA website;
- iii. Have a website and contents that are made visible to search engines through good website design, and the use of

- metatags, and should support mobile devices;
- iv. Implement online manuscript submission and processing platform for handling of submitted manuscripts;
- v. Maintain a local offline copy of all online published contents, and the online contents must be clear and easy to navigate;
- vi. Ensure the names of editors and members of Editorial Advisory Board and their affiliations are displayed in the website of the respective journal website;
- vii. Ensure the Journal's policies on publishing ethics are accessible on the website;
- viii. Make effort to provide automated reference formatting output styles that are compatible with major citation managers to assist authors to comply with reference formatting requirements of the respective journal;
- ix. Ensure that, any particular journal policy should not contravene with the national laws, SUA Code of Conduct for Research Ethics, plagiarism policy, research regulations and guidelines, intellectual property rights (IPR), data and material transfer, and other policies relevant for scholarly publications;
- x. Ensure that, any change of Journal name or ISSN obtain authorization of the University Senate or its delegated committee for handling research and publications. In case approval is granted to change the ISSN or Journal name, such changes should be communicated to the National Centre responsible for registering and assigning of ISSN and change of titles;
- xi. Make effort to acquire Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) and include the DOI number in all subsequent manuscripts published. DOI is a standardized code, allows libraries, citation indexes, and the publishing industry to discover the journal content;
- xii. Register with at least one general electronic database such as Google scholar and any two international and reputable

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- databases that implements quality control before admission to the database such as DOAJ, CABI, AIM and others;
 - xiii. Be included in a SUA library's online catalogue;
 - xiv. Be timely released and maintain regularity;
 - xv. Include special issues from time to time to address emerging issues of national or international interest through invitation of papers or publication of special issues of proceedings of scientific conferences, and
 - xvi. Submit progress reports through the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications.

7.0 FUNDING OF JOURNAL ACTIVITIES

- i. Sokoine University of Agriculture is determined to ensure sustainability of Journals affiliated at SUA as its obligation to the provision of quality publications.
- ii. Thus, SUA, shall facilitate basic operations of these journals through provision of financial support, offices and other basic office working tools. For journals co-owned by SUA and Professional Associations, financial support responsibility should be shared between SUA and respective Association.
- iii. SUA affiliated journals should raise additional funds from other sources including: Article Processing Charges (APC) to all accepted manuscripts; open access publication charges; subscriptions from individual, institutions and corporate sponsors and sympathizers.
- iv. For journals that are whole owned by the Colleges, the proceeds collected by journals should be managed in accordance with SUA financial regulations.
- v. For journals that are co-owned between Colleges and Professional Association, the proceeds should be collected and managed using existing mechanism. The Chief Editor will be required to monitor and report proceeds collected by the respective journal to the hosting College and the respective Professional Association.

- vi. Professional Association that co-own journals hosted at SUA should have equal responsibility to ensure financial stability and sustainability of the respective journal.
- vii. The respective College and Professional Association should agree a mechanism through which the respective partners should contribute towards the operational cost of the journal.
- viii. To be eligible for financial support from SUA, every SUA affiliated journal should prepare and submit annual work plan and budget to the Directorate responsible for Research and Publications.
- ix. The work plan should be extracted from journal business plan with short- and long-term development foresights including details of planned journal developments, expenditures, and other sources of funds.

8.0 OBLIGATIONS OF SUA AND SUA AFFILIATED JOURNALS

- i. Each journal should meet a set of minimum requirements to qualify becoming a SUA-affiliated Journal by December 2024;
- ii. SUA should invest to support University affiliated journals as stipulated in these guidelines by July 2025;
- iii. All other recommended improvements of SUA affiliated journal outlined in this guideline should be implemented in full by end of December 2025 or within two years since the formal publication of this guideline;
- iv. The University after receiving necessary recommendations should make decision to dissolve any journal failing to adhere to the proposed guidelines by end of 2025 despite receiving all the necessary supports, and
- v. For the interest of reducing running costs, increasing efficiency, and without compromising the scope of the respective journals, Sokoine University of Agriculture may

merge two or more of its affiliated journals. In the event of the need to merge journals, Directorate responsible for Research and Publications should coordinate stakeholder consultations and advise the University management through the respective Senate Committee responsible for Research and Publications.

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