

The journal's aims and scope:

In the Editor's view, the formal mathematical expression of economic ideas is of vital importance to economics. Such expression can determine whether a loose economic intuition has a coherent, logical meaning. Also, a full formal development of economic ideas can itself suggest new economic concepts and intuitions.

The primary objective of the Journal is to provide a forum for work in economic theory which expresses economic ideas using formal mathematical reasoning. For work to add to this primary objective, it is not sufficient that the mathematical reasoning be new and correct. The work must have real economic content. The economic ideas must be interesting and important. These ideas may pertain to any field of economics or any school of economic thought.

The editorial process:

The journal's Editorial Board consists of the Editor-in-Chief (EiC), the Co-Editors (CEs) and the Associate Editors (AEs).¹ The board will aim to handle submissions that meet the guidelines below as follows:

1. In the first week, the EiC summarily rejects the ones that are a poor fit for the journal, or don't seem to be of enough quality, trying to ensure that only papers with at least a 40% probability of acceptance go to CEs, AEs and reviewers.
2. The week after, the handling editor (HE, the person in charge of the paper) can again desk-reject the paper. If not, s/he sends it to three reviewers, in the hope that at least two of them will commit to submitting a report within six weeks.
3. Between the eighth and tenth weeks after submission, the HE receives from the referees clear and sound feedback on the merits of the paper.
4. By the 12th week after submission, the HE makes a decision and the EiC or a CE communicates it to the submitter.

¹ Starting in January 2021, six up-and-coming researchers will be appointed as Junior Associate Editors (JAEs) each year, for periods of two years. They will play the same role as AEs, except that they will be accompanied by a CE or the EiC in the handling of submissions. This senior editor will mentor the JAE but will *not* interfere with her/his ultimate decision.

The board of Advisory Editors of the journal provide input about the long-run perspectives of the journal, but are not involved in its editorial operation.

5. If the decision is to request a revision, the submitter is told not just what the expectations for the re-submission are, but also that, except in exceptional circumstances, the journal expects to see such revision within 18 weeks, namely 30 weeks after submission. It is also made clear that if the re-submission does not address the concerns expressed in the decision letter to the HE's satisfaction, it *will* be rejected. Only in exceptional circumstances will we go through further rounds of revision.
6. When a revision is received by the EiC, within one week it is sent to the person who made the initial decision. At her/his discretion, the re-submission is sent to the original referees, within one more week. Only in exceptional circumstances can new reviewers be invited, in which case they can *only* assess whether the concerns expressed in the first decision letter have been addressed, and *cannot* make new requests. Whether sent to referees or not, a second and final decision is made and communicated to the submitter within six weeks, namely 38 weeks after submission.
7. The author has two weeks to make the last minor changes, and the manuscript is published online by week 40. In the published version, the name of the HE is acknowledged,² along with the submission and decision dates.
8. After a negative decision, the submitter will have a period of four weeks to appeal it. The burden of argument lies with the submitter: s/he will have to argue that a *mathematical mistake* was made in the evaluation of the paper, or that a *conflict of interest was not correctly dealt with by the EiC*.

At any point in the process, a paper can be rejected regardless of previous decisions, but only because a *mathematical mistake* has been found, whether by referees (original or invited for the second round), by the HE, or by anyone else. *No paper is to be rejected at the second round because it does not seem interesting or important, as these considerations are made by the first decision.*

Considerations to be made:

1. *By the authors:* Submissions should be concise. There is no need for a very long introduction, nor for a section devoted to the *whole* literature in the area of the paper. The insight of the paper should be delivered in a context that is as rich as it has to be, but no more than that. Once the insight is established in the most natural context, only challenging extensions should be presented—immediate ones can be mentioned but don't have to be developed. There is no need to repeat at the

² When the HE is a JAE, the name to be disclosed is the one of the senior editor who mentored the JAE during the editorial handling of the submission.

end of the paper the message that was announced at the beginning and argued throughout the paper.

Ideally, submissions should be under 40 pages long, using the L^AT_EX article class offered by Elsevier.³

2. *By the referees:* The referees are *not* expected to summarize in detail the paper for the HE's benefit, *nor* to re-write the paper for the author's benefit. The burden of clarity should be with the the author, so an expert referee who finds it impossible to figure out in a reasonable time what the paper is trying to do should let the HE know that that is the case, which is grounds for rejection. As a principle, refereeing a paper should not be such an insurmountable task that one feels unable to do it in one average month.

At the same time, the paper should be what the author wants it to be, not the version that the referees or editors would (like to) have written. If pretty much everything has to be re-done, it is better to reject the paper. If a *very important* extension seems natural, it should be requested, sure, but not much more than that. Ideally, the resubmission should be similar enough to the first version that the author can reasonably accomplish it in four months, and that the referees and the HE can assess it without the feeling that they need to start from zero again.

As a principle, the editorial process is meant to choose papers of high quality, and in the process it helps the authors develop a better version of the paper, not a completely new paper.

*Ethical guidelines:*⁴

The underlying principle of the journal's editorial practice is that "Integrity in the publication process requires impartiality at all levels of review".⁵

1. *Ultimate responsibility:* The EiC is solely and independently responsible for deciding which of the articles submitted to the journal should be published. S/he is guided by the policies of the journal's editorial board and constrained by legal requirements in force regarding issues such as libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The EiC shall ensure that the peer review process is fair, unbiased, and timely.

³ It is for submissions that adhere to this limit that the Editorial Board will make every effort to meet the goal of providing the author with a decision at most 12 weeks after submission. Longer submissions are more taxing for reviewers and their authors should *not* expect similarly swift decisions.

⁴ The following is based on the ethical guidelines of Elsevier, and also borrows from documents used by the *International Committee of Medical Journal Editors*.

⁵ Conflict of Interest Policy, Editorial Board of the *Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences*.

The editorial policies of the journal must encourage transparency and complete, honest reporting, and the EiC must ensure that CEs, AEs, peer reviewers and authors have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

2. *Conflicts of interest:* The EiC, CEs or AEs must not be involved in decisions about papers which they have written themselves or which have been written by family members or colleagues. To be precise:

- (a) A paper submitted by an author who is at the same institution as a member of the editorial board will be handled by one of the other members who is not at that institution. This includes continuing employment or negotiations for prospective employment at the institution of the author(s), which could affect or be affected by the peer review outcome.
- (b) A paper submitted by a board member (including submission as a co-author or serving as an adviser to the author) will be handled by one of the other members who are not at the same institution as the submitting author. If the conflicted member is the EiC of the journal, s/he will refer the submission to *all* the CEs, who will chose one of them to be the HE.

The chosen HE will select referees and make all decisions on the paper, and the conflicted member will be barred from participating in any discussion pertaining to such manuscripts. Further, any such submission must be subject to all of the journal's usual procedures, and there must be a clear statement to this effect on any such paper that is published

- (c) Board members will also recuse themselves from handling manuscripts submitted by former students, fellows, mentors, and collaborators with whom they have worked in the previous three years. Another HE will select referees and make all decisions on the paper.
- (d) The invitation letter to reviewers must also include the following paragraph:

If you feel there is any potential conflict of interest in your refereeing this paper because of your relationship with the author (e.g. in terms of close friendship or conflict/rivalry) or for any other reason, please declare it. By accepting this invitation, it is assumed that you declare that there is no potential conflict of interest.

Standard policy will be to not use a referee from the same institution as the author, but the HEs may use their discretion on this matter.

3. Reviewing process: Each submission must typically be reviewed by at least two external and independent reviewers, and where necessary its HE should seek additional opinions. The HE shall select reviewers who have suitable expertise in the relevant field and shall follow best practice in avoiding the selection of fraudulent peer reviewers. The HE and the EiC shall review all disclosures of potential conflicts of interest and suggestions for self-citation made by reviewers in order to determine whether there is any potential for bias.

The HE must evaluate the manuscript for its intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.

4. Reviewers: A reviewer should be alert to potential ethical issues in the paper and should bring these to the attention of the HE and the EiC, including any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper of which the reviewer has personal knowledge.

Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. Reviewers must not share the review or information about the paper with anyone or contact the authors directly without permission from the HE. Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in a reviewer's own research without the express written consent of the author. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage.

In addition, the invitation letter to reviewers must also include the following sentence:

Please treat the authors and their work as you would like to be treated yourself.

The HE must be alert to cases where a reviewer fails to observe good reviewing etiquette.

5. Communications: The HE and the EiC shall use the journal's standard electronic submission system for *all* communications regarding submissions to the journal. In their role as HE, the EiC and Co-Editors can communicate with the author(s) of a submission, using that system.

When handling a submission for the journal, the communications between an AE and the author will be mediated by the EiC. This includes the communication of the final decision on the submission.

6. Confidentiality: The name of reviewers must never be disclosed to anyone, but:

- (a) Starting in 2021 the journal will publish the name of the HE of each published paper, unless expressly requested otherwise. When the HE is a JAE, her/his name will remain confidential under all circumstances.
- (b) Starting in the first issue of 2021 the journal will publish the list of all referees who contributed reports to the journal during the previous year.