

# CHIA

Chronicles of Health  
Impact Assessment

Improving community health through health impact assessments

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## WHY SHOULD I BE A PEER REVIEWER?

*Cynthia Stone, DrPH, RN; Amber Comer, JD, PhD*

### Why should I be a peer reviewer?

Many SOPHIA members have been invited to be peer reviewers for CHIA and other journals and we appreciate everyone that has agreed to work with us in this role. For those that have not been a peer reviewer you might ask, why should I do this?

### What is peer review?

Peer review is defined as a “process that is integral to scholarly research. It is a process of subjecting research methods and findings to the scrutiny of others who are experts in the same field. The process is considered essential, but has also been criticized as “slow, ineffective, and misunderstood.” (California State University, n.d.)

### What is the purpose of peer review?

The peer review process is designed to prevent dissemination of irrelevant findings, unwarranted claims, unacceptable interpretations, and personal views. It relies on colleagues that review one another’s work and make an informed decision about whether it is legitimate, and adds to the large dialogue or findings in the field. (The California State University, n.d.)

### Why is peer review important?

“Peer review does the same thing for science that the inspected by #7 sticker does for your t-shirt: Provides assurance that someone who knows what they are doing has double checked it” (Berkeley, n.d.)

### How does a peer review work?

An article is submitted and reviewed by the editorial staff. Then it is sent to two or more reviewers who work in the same area, and they are considered “peers”. The reviewers give feedback and make recommendations to the editor whether to include the article or not. The peer reviewers also provide comments to the author to improve the article. Authors use the suggestions to revise their article and resubmit.

This process means that only published articles that meet high scientific standards, that build on previous research, and are based on good evidence are published.

When you read articles you want to check that they are published after a peer review process. You also want to submit your work for publication to journals that use the peer review process. In the past few years many



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more online journals are bypassing the peer review process. If the journal tells you it will be published two weeks after your submission it is probably not peer reviewed.

**Why is it important to secure more peer reviewers?**

We want to publish articles in CHIA that have been through the peer review process. We want to be efficient in getting articles out to the public. If we don't have enough peer reviewers, it slows down our ability to be timely.

**How can I be a peer reviewer?**

Complete the application to be a peer reviewer found in this issue of CHIA. When you receive a request to be a peer reviewer please be prompt in your reply. If you do not have time within the provided framework please decline the request. If you agree to be a reviewer please set aside time to carefully complete your review and return your recommendations. Your work as a peer reviewer is a critical step in the CHIA publishing process.

Thank you for your consideration to become a peer reviewer.

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## References

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- The California State University. (n.d.) Definition of Peer Review <http://teachingcommons.cidi.edu>

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