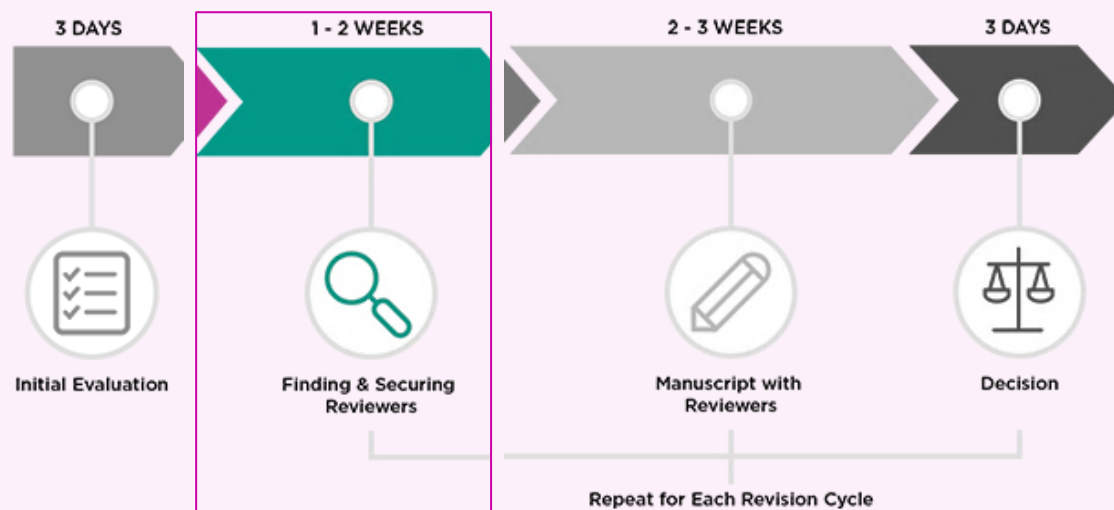


PLOS ONE

Finding & Securing Reviewers



✓ Key Takeaways & Contents

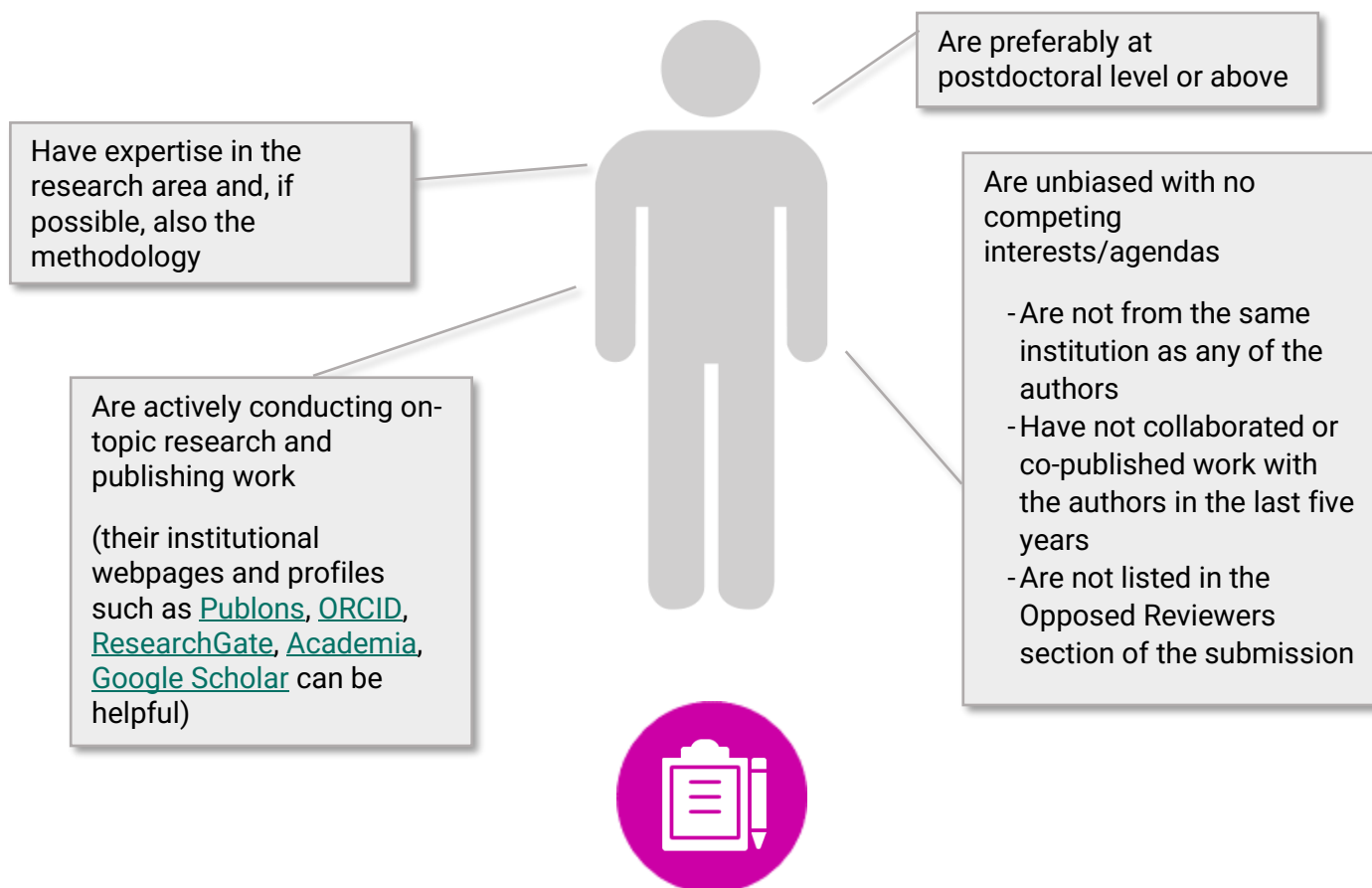
- Suitable reviewers have expertise in the subject matter and methodology, are actively publishing, and are unbiased
Go to: [Suitable Reviewers](#)
- Securing reviewers can be challenging. Editorial Board members have identified strategies and tips that can help.
Go to: [Reviewer Invitation Tips from Editors](#)
- Reviewers are invited and invitations are managed in Editorial Manager
Go to: [Inviting Reviewers in Editorial Manager](#)



SUITABLE REVIEWERS

Suitable reviewers are those who can provide a qualified and unbiased assessment of the scientific rigor of the manuscript. Please ensure that you invite reviewers that encompass the necessary expertise on both the topic and methods reported in the submission or, if necessary, thoroughly assess this yourself. All accepted manuscripts must have at least one external reviewer.

Invite reviewers that:



REVIEWER INVITATION TIPS FROM EDITORS

Generally speaking, Academic Editors approach finding reviewers in three “stages.”

1. **Researchers you know**

Because they know you, it stands to reason they are more likely to accept an invitation to review. Additionally, you are familiar with their work and relevance to the paper.

2. Researchers whose work you know

These are people whose work you might know from the literature, conferences, etc. You may not know them personally, but you know their experience is on-topic for the manuscript.

3. Broader search

Using resources such as [PubMed](#), [Google Scholar](#), and [Web of Science](#), you can find articles similar to the one you're working on. You can also check out the reference list in the article, just be mindful of [conflicts of interest](#).

Additional Tips

- Early career researchers tend to have more time and willingness to review than senior researchers
- Personalizing the invitation template can help secure reviewers
- The default turnaround time for reviewers is 10 days. You can extend this but within reason. We recommend no more than 21 days. Reviewers can always request an extension.
- The Editorial Manager (EM) database is uncurated and is not set up as a resource to identify suitable reviewers. Please verify expertise and current contact information in an external database and then use EM to send invitations and manage peer review.
- Setting up alternate reviewers can save you from multiple visits to EM. Alternate reviewers are automatically invited when a previous reviewer declines or doesn't respond. You can even link reviewers with similar expertise to each other.
- If necessary, the journal can help with [statistical reviews](#). PLOS staff automatically invite a statistical reviewer for Clinical Trial manuscripts.



Find additional [resources and tips](#) on securing reviewers from other Editorial Board members on the *PLOS ONE* Discourse forum.



INVITING REVIEWERS IN EDITORIAL MANAGER

All contact with reviewers occurs through Editorial Manager (EM). EM is an uncurated database of contact information only; it cannot be used to search by keyword. If a reviewer already has an account in EM you'll be able to see some basic statistics on their past contributions.

On the **Invite Reviewers** page you can:

- Search for reviewers – from a recent publication, find the reviewer's current contact information and then search by email in EM
- Invite reviewers as primary or alternates
- Register new reviewers - if someone does not have an account you can create one on their behalf in order to invite them
- Manage reviewer invitations - see the status of invitations, due dates, and decline reasons



Visit the [Resources for Editors](#) page to find a [guide](#) and watch how-to videos on navigating Editorial Manager.



Setting Expectations

- Securing reviewers can be challenging; people are busy. Aim to start inviting reviewers as soon as possible.
- On average, it takes 6-8 total invitations to secure 2 reviewers, but this varies depending on approach, subject area, time of year, etc.
- Expect to spend about an hour searching for and inviting reviewers per batch of 6-8 invites. We suggest making use of the alternate reviewer function rather than sending all invitations at once.
- Invitations automatically expire after 6 days if the reviewer does not respond. Secured reviewers are automatically invited if they are 15 days late to submit (read more about [reminders](#)).
- Be sure to check your email. All manuscript communications including reviewer status updates and important reminders occur over email. It's your role as Academic Editor to manage the peer review process and ensure the timely securing of reviewers for the authors.



Proceed to [Assessing Reviews & Making Decisions](#)

More [Resources for Editors](#)

Need help? Contact plosone@plos.org