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International Society for the Study of Vernacular Settlements
ISVS e-journal
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Review Process

Preamble

ISVS e-journal is a research journal. As a research journal, it shares new knowledge produced by scientists, presented in an orderly manner. Before it publishes any of the papers submitted, it ascertains from two reputed scientists dealing with the issues having been examined, if the paper stands up to the scrutiny of science. That is what it accomplishes through the review process, which involves two other veteran scientists, who are not known to the authors of the paper.

Review Process

Intentions:

Papers submitted to the ISVS e-journal undergo a rigorous review process, with its primary intention to ensure that the research presented is of high academic value and report new findings, contributing to and advancing knowledge. Its secondary intention is to facilitate the authors to recognise the weaknesses in their scientific papers if any, and develop them up to the standards expected if possible.

Reviewers: Papers submitted to the ISVS e-journal are reviewed always by at least two reviewers.

1. One of them is almost always a member of the editorial board. When a paper is sent to a member of the editorial board, either he or she will review the paper or may coordinate with another reviewer from the country where he/she resides, depending on the issue and the expertise required, and send the review back to the Editor-in-Chief.
2. Every paper is also reviewed by one other reviewer: either from the list of reviewers and sometimes any other subject specialist outside that list published on the website. If the paper is sent to a reviewer from the list of reviewers, or any other special invitee, then he or she will review the paper and send it back to the Editor-in-Chief.
3. In any case, the Editor-in-Chief reads every paper at least twice: once at the beginning to ascertain if the paper falls within the realm of the journal and to figure out which reviewers it should be sent to. He also reads it after the revisions are done to ensure that the revisions have been done as recommended. He will also follow up any shortcomings afterwards.

Review Procedure

1. Once received, each paper is vetted for compatibility with the broad area (not the narrow definition of vernacular) within which the journal publishes: architecture, culture and human settlements - especially the vernacular practices, which means processes involving ordinary people, without professionals.
2. If unrelated to this broad definition, the author is notified that the paper cannot be accepted for review.
3. Once accepted for review, each paper is assigned an identity number. It is then blinded and presented to an independent reviewer for close examination and for review comments on a structured review form

(sample available on the website). However, the reviews may take either of the two forms: track change comments embedded in the paper itself, or completion of the standard review form. These comments are finally shared with the editor-in-chief.

4. Once the reviews are accomplished, they are compiled as one and sent to the authors with instructions to revise and develop the paper. The review recommendations could be either: 'reject', 'minor revisions', 'major revisions' or 'accept as submitted'. It should be noted, that the ISVS e-journal has never issued 'accept as submitted' as a review recommendation. Almost all, often receive 'major revision' recommendations and some, very rarely, a 'minor revision'.
5. The authors should revise and send the paper back to the editor-in chief, who will check the revisions for compliance with the comments and observations.
6. If the revision is inadequate, poor and does not address the issues raised, it will then be returned to the author with further comments for any refinements. This process happens only one time to ensure that the paper is properly revised and developed if so possible. If there are minor technical lapses, such as incomplete references, they will be sent back separately for revision and perfection.
7. In the cases if an author fails to develop the paper up to the standards, even after the second review and revision, then the paper is rejected.
8. If revisions are done up to the standards expected, then the paper is provisionally accepted for publication and move to final check-up for clarity of language and formatting issues.
9. However, papers with poor language are not accepted, and it is the responsibility of the authors to have their English writing refined, when the reviewers or the editor-in-chief indicate that the language is poor.
10. The author will be informed that the paper will be accepted provided that all the language and formatting issues are resolved; If not, the paper will be rejected. However, some minor editing is always done by the editor-in-chief, or the editorial staff..

Separate Editorial Services

Subsequent to step 9, if the authors have not done the language and formatting corrections requested, the authors will be asked to pay attention to them and have them accomplished either by themselves, or by seeking external support. As an option, ISVS will offer to get this done by the ISVS editorial team through a separate editorial service. If the authors agree to, ISVS e-journal editorial office may do so.

This, however, is a separate eservice which is done by a professional editor sourced outside and a fee will be involved depending on the complexity of the task. This is not part of the review process. The authors have a choice: do it by themselves, hire someone else or seek services from the ISVS e-journal. This service is offered because most authors are from developing countries and have poor language skills and often seek help. ISVS e-journal does not publish papers with poor language and formatting.

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