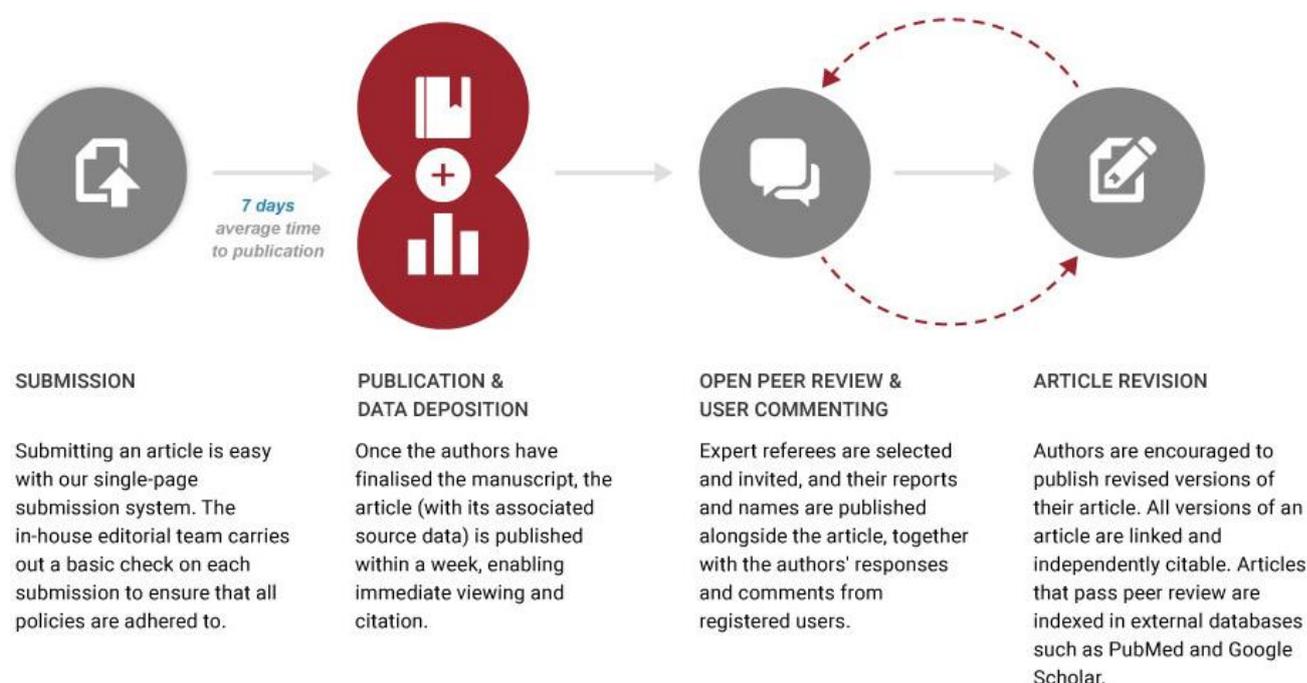


GATES OPEN RESEARCH

How It Works

Immediate & Transparent Publishing

Gates Open Research provides all Gates-funded researchers with a place to rapidly publish any results they think are worth sharing. All articles benefit from immediate publication, transparent refereeing and the inclusion of all source data.



Aims and Scope

What is Gates Open Research's Scope?

Gates Open Research publishes scholarly articles reporting any basic scientific, translational, applied and clinical research (including quantitative and qualitative studies) that has been funded (or co-funded) by the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#).

Each publication must have [at least one author](#) who has been, or still is, a recipient of a Gates Foundation grant.

Articles must be original (not duplications). All research, including clinical trials, systematic reviews, software tools, method articles, and many others, is welcome and will be published irrespective of the perceived level of interest or novelty; confirmatory and negative results, as well as null studies are all suitable. See the full list of article types [here](#).

All articles are published using a fully transparent, author-driven model: the authors are solely responsible for the content of their article. Invited peer review takes place openly after publication, and the authors play a crucial role in ensuring that the article is peer reviewed by independent experts in a timely manner. Articles that pass peer review will be indexed in PubMed and elsewhere.

Gates Open Research is an Open Research platform: all articles are published open access under a [CC-BY license](#); the publishing and peer-review processes are fully transparent; and authors are asked to include detailed descriptions of methods and to provide full and easy access to source data underlying the results to improve reproducibility.

Publishing Model and Processes

Checks before publication

Article submissions to Gates Open Research go through a rapid initial check undertaken by the in-house editorial team before being published with the status 'Awaiting Peer Review'. There is no Editor (or Editor-in-Chief) to make a decision on whether to accept or reject the article, or to oversee the peer-review process.

The editorial team will ensure that the authors are eligible to publish on Gates Open Research and that articles represent scholarly communications that adhere to the [author guidelines](#) and the [ethical and editorial policies](#), including [data policies](#). The team will also check that the article is intelligible and written in good English, so it is suitable for peer review and its content can be fully assessed by invited peer reviewers and readers. If a submission fails the initial checks, it will be returned to the authors to address the issues, and if they are not resolved satisfactorily, the article will be rejected.

Post-Publication Peer Review of Articles

Peer review of articles published in Gates Open Research takes place after publication: Once the article is published, expert referees are invited. The peer review is administered on behalf of the authors by the editorial team.

The peer review is entirely transparent: The referees' names and affiliation, their referee report and the approval status they choose are published alongside the article. Referee reports are

posted as soon as they are received and the peer review status of the article is updated with every published report.

The Author's Role during Peer Review of Articles

Authors are responsible for identifying suitable referees who are experts in the field and can provide unbiased reports on their article. Before publication, authors are asked to suggest 5 potential referees, who must meet our basic criteria for referees. Authors can suggest referees who they know are experts in their fields; we also provide a tool that suggests referee candidates who have published on the topic presented in the article. The editorial team will ask authors to suggest more referees until at least two reports have been published.

Referee Criteria

When selecting peer reviewers, authors must apply the following criteria:

1. Scientific expertise: Referees must have demonstrated expertise in the key topics of the study presented and/or the methods used. They must have published as lead authors at least 5 articles in international journals.
2. Level of experience: Referees must have reached a certain level of qualification (in the life sciences, usually a PhD or MD) and have a formal appointment at a recognised institution or organization.
3. Independence: Referees must not be working at the same institute as the authors, should not be close collaborators of the authors or in other ways personally, financially or professionally associated with them. Referees must declare any conflicts of interest on the published report.

The Referee's Role

Referees are given guidelines specific to each article type. They are generally asked to assess whether the research is scientifically sound, that is:

- whether the work is discussed appropriately in the context of the current literature
- whether suitable methods have been used
- whether sufficient information and source data have been provided to allow others to repeat every step of the work
- whether the conclusions are supported by the findings.

In addition to their written report, referees also select one of three statuses:

- **Approved:** No or only minor changes are required. This means that the experimental design, including controls and methods, is adequate; results are presented accurately and the conclusions are justified and supported by the data.
- **Approved with Reservations:** The article is not fully technically sound in its current version, but the reviewer's criticisms could be addressed with specific, sometimes major, revisions.
- **Not Approved:** The article is of very poor quality and there are fundamental flaws in the article that seriously undermine the findings and conclusions.

The approval status is shown on the article, together with the referee's name and affiliation, and the detailed report supporting the status they selected.

If an author decides to revise the article to address the reviewers' comments, all referees are invited to provide additional reports on the new version; in particular if they had originally given an 'Approved with Reservations' or 'Not Approved' status, they are asked to assess whether the work has been sufficiently improved to achieve a better approval status.

Revisions and Updates

We strongly encourage authors to address the reviewers' criticisms by publishing revised versions and/or by adding author comments to the referee reports.

All versions of an article are accessible and can be independently cited, but the latest version will be displayed as the default on Gates Open Research. A short summary of the changes is displayed at the start of each new version.

All articles are 'living', even after peer review is complete: Authors can 'update' their articles at any time if there have been small developments relevant to the findings.

Peer Review Status and Indexing

The peer review status of an article is clearly indicated at all stages: Immediately on publication, and until the first referee report is published, the article is labelled as *AWAITING PEER REVIEW* as part of the article title and in the Open Peer Review summary box within the article HTML and PDF. As soon as a referee report is received, it is published alongside the article and the current approval status is displayed. As additional reports are received, the peer review status is updated.

Once an article receives two 'Approved' statuses, or two 'Approved with Reservations' statuses and one 'Approved' status, it will be indexed in PubMed and elsewhere.

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Citing Articles and Datasets

Citing an Article

Articles in Gates Open Research can be updated and amended at any time post publication, but each version is independently citable with its own DOI (digital object identifier). The most recent version is displayed as the default. The citation can be found by clicking the Cite button on the article page.

Every article is indexed by the CrossMark Identification Service™, which summarizes the history of an article and any linked publications. Clicking on the CrossMark logo in the HTML or PDF of the article provides up-to-date information on the latest article version, as well as new referee reports and any associated articles (which will be linked [threaded] together).

Standard citation approaches are insufficient for Gates Open Research articles because:

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- The referee status of an article will change after publication
 - An article may have multiple versions following revision or update by the authors
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After discussion with major indexing services and others, the traditional system of citation has been adapted to include an indication of the referee status and the version of an article.

This citation includes two additional elements, placed in square brackets, immediately after the article title (to avoid them being accidentally removed on copying):

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1. Article version number, for example version 1 for the first version, and version 2 for the next version, and so on.
 2. Details of the peer review status, i.e. number of reviews that are 'Approved', 'Approved with Reservations', or 'Not Approved'. The status will be 'Awaiting Peer Review' before the reviews are published.
-

An article should be cited like this:

Authors. Article title [version number; details of peer review status]. *Gates Open Res* Year, Volume: Publication number (doi:)

Citing a Dataset

Source datasets associated with Gates Open Research articles are deposited in repositories that meet [certain criteria](#). Articles includes a “Data Availability” section outlining where the source data can be found, including the permanent identifier the dataset(s) have been assigned by the repository and a reference with details of how to cite the dataset.