

## SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS POLICY

### Publication planning

- FIND has a standard operating procedure (SOP) for publication of scientific manuscripts and congress presentations, owned by the FIND communications team, to which all FIND staff involved in the development of scientific communications should adhere
  - Editorials and opinion pieces are not covered by this SOP
- FIND study data should be submitted for journal publication in a timely manner, ideally within maximum 12 months of study completion, if no timelines are specified by the donor
  - For publications led by partners, FIND shall apprise the lead author of any relevant timelines
- FIND study data may be presented at scientific congresses
  - Data should normally not have already been published or presented elsewhere; however ‘encore’ abstracts can be submitted providing that the target congress guidelines state that they are acceptable and that the original congress imposes no copyright restrictions
- All manuscripts reporting FIND study data and all review articles with FIND authors should be published in an open-access, peer-reviewed journal, regardless of whether they are FIND-led or partner-led
  - The target journal should be agreed upon by all authors (see below)
  - ‘Predatory journals’ should be avoided (exploitative business models that do not sufficiently check articles for quality and do not offer many of the services that legitimate journals provide)
    - Signs of predatory journals include email submission (rather than through a web form), lack of information on journal website regarding the identity of editorial board members and adherence to codes of conduct such as [COPE](#), aggressive campaigning for submission of articles, and closely mimicking the name and/or website style of another more established journal
  - Duplicate publication should be avoided; findings should generally not be published in more than one peer-reviewed journal (unless data have been reanalyzed, are published in a different language, or are included as part of a review article)

### Publication development

- All publications reporting data from studies conducted by FIND (including those for which partners have the lead role) should be reported in an accurate, complete, balanced and transparent manner, in accordance with [Good Publication Practice \(GPP3\)](#)
- For all FIND-led publications, FIND will:
  - Ensure that the content of the publication or presentation is directed by the authors
  - Consult and follow established reporting standards for specific types of publications as appropriate (e.g. [CONSORT](#) for clinical trials, [PRISMA](#) for systematic literature reviews, [STARD](#) for diagnostic performance studies)
    - If unsure of the relevant guideline, visit the [EQUATOR network](#) for guidance
  - Consult and follow [SAGER guidelines](#) to ensure systematic and transparent reporting on sex and gender

- Ensure that the publication is developed in line with the requirements of the target journal or congress
- Include clinical trial registration or identifier numbers, for example NCT numbers from [clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov), in all presentations and publications, when available
- Ensure that for clinical studies, primary endpoints and objectives are prioritized over any secondary endpoints or objectives
- Ensure that review articles are comprehensive, and the methods used for searching, selecting, and summarizing information are clearly stated
- For publications led by partners on which FIND employees/representatives are authors – whether or not the work itself was conducted at FIND – FIND authors should be mindful of the above guidelines when contributing to manuscript drafts

### Authorship

- FIND advocates for in-country partners to take ownership of work conducted in partnership with FIND and encourages diversity among authors
  - FIND prefers in-country partners to take the first authorship position, where appropriate
  - For FIND-supported projects, FIND prefers to be listed as last author, where appropriate
  - When multiple parties have contributed equally (e.g. a multi-centre study), FIND should consider study group/consortium authorship where possible, where authors are listed alphabetically as part of a study group
  - When FIND has led a study that has involved multiple institutions, it may be appropriate for FIND to take both first and last authorship positions, but in this case the individual institutions are strongly encouraged to publish site-specific data separately; FIND can provide medical writing support for this if/where needed
- All FIND authors and all non-FIND authors of FIND-led publications should meet [ICMJE criteria for authorship](#), i.e. they should have:
  - Made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
  - Drafted the work or revised it critically for important intellectual content; AND
  - Approved the final version to be submitted/published; AND
  - Agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved
- For FIND-led publications, FIND will ensure that:
  - Authors are invited and agree to author the publication before publication preparation begins
  - All authors agree to the order of authors in the authorship byline and to the lead/responding author
  - Authors are not removed or added to the authorship byline after initiation of publication development without agreement from all authors
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  - In the event of a FIND author leaving the organization before a manuscript is published, that person can continue as an author on the publication if agreed with FIND
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  - Strategic lead (e.g. programme head; could also be FIND executive leadership/C-suite in some cases)
  - FIND project/technical lead
  - Data analystIf needed, additional FIND staff and other consultants can be named in the acknowledgements.
- For publications led by partners on which FIND staff are authors, FIND authors should:
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  - Provide the names of any additional FIND staff who have reviewed the publication but do not qualify as authors, who should be included in the acknowledgements section
- When FIND staff receives invitations to co-author articles not directly related to a specific study (e.g. reviews), FIND will verify that the invitation is appropriate and discuss the most suitable FIND representative for authorship

#### Use of professional medical writing services

- With the agreement of the study team and authors, FIND can provide the services of a contracted, independent professional medical writer to support manuscript preparation
  - When professional medical writers are used, all authors should agree to their involvement before publication preparation begins
  - To ensure that the content is directed by the authors, the medical writer should receive input from the authors at the earliest possible stage

#### Acknowledgements and disclosures

- All FIND authors should disclose any relationships or potential competing interests relating to the research and its publication or presentation
  - FIND authors should **not** state that they have nothing to disclose. All FIND authors should disclose that they are employees of FIND, e.g. "A.B., B.C. and C.D. declare that they are employed by FIND, the global alliance for diagnostics," alongside additional disclosures as needed
  - In the absence of specific journal or congress guidelines on reporting of other disclosures, including related financial activities, use the [ICMJE conflicts of interest form](#) for guidance
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  - Manuscripts include a description of each author's role in the study and in the development of the publication (in the absence of specific journal or congress guidelines on reporting of author contributions, use the [CRediT taxonomy](#) for guidance)
  - Sponsorship and funding sources are stated in the acknowledgements or under another appropriate header in accordance with journal or congress guidelines

- When professional medical writers are used, this is acknowledged in the manuscript or congress presentation, including the name and qualifications of the writer and the source of funding for their services
- For publications led by partners on which FIND staff are authors, FIND authors should ensure that the document includes their correct disclosure statement before providing sign-off for submission

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#### **Data sharing**

- For FIND-led publications, FIND will ensure that:
  - All authors have full access to the aggregate study data
  - No information that allows the retrieval of personal patient data will be shared or published
- FIND study data and/or study protocols may be posted in public repositories when required by the journal and/or donor
  - FIND has no specific preferred repository; if non-FIND authors' institutions have a repository, it is recommended that this is used, otherwise select from the list of repositories recommended in the journal guidelines