

# Art Institute Review

## **Peer Review Guidelines and Rubric**

The following guidelines are intended to help both peer reviewers and contributors navigate the peer review process at the *Art Institute Review*. Thank you for your participation in what we hope will be a productive and transparent exchange.

### **The review process and timeline**

Submissions to the journal begin as a proposal, which is vetted by the internal team and issue coeditors. Contributors whose proposals are selected submit a full manuscript (or completed project, if the contribution is in a different medium) for preliminary review. At this point, the coeditors and internal team may provide questions or feedback to guide development of the manuscript in advance of peer review, if needed.

Upon receipt of the full contribution, the coeditors and the internal team assess how well it fulfills its intended aims (as spelled out in the proposal), engages pressing issues in its field, and relates to the issue theme, among other considerations. Submissions that meet these considerations advance to peer review. Peer reviewers are identified by the issue coeditors, with input from *AIR* board members as needed. Selection is based on expertise, irrespective of seniority within the field or academia.

Invited peer reviewers have up to four weeks to generate an assessment and recommendation (publish, publish with revisions, do not publish). We request that reviewers abide by the journal's statement on peer review ethics and follow the review rubric.

Authors need not reply formally in writing but may consult with the issue editors (and, of course, the peer reviewer if utilizing the open review process).

### **Our approach to peer review**

*AIR* is committed to offering peer-review options that best support contributors' career goals and working practices. The journal sees peer review as a means of realizing the potential not only of the content it publishes but also of those who create that content. Scholarly essay contributions are subject to double-blind peer review or open review. Creative contributions are typically

subject to open review. Both models of peer review aim to be collegial, constructive, and generative processes that maximize quality while upholding equity and transparency.

### *Double-blind review*

A traditional double-blind review maintains strict anonymity between contributor(s) and reviewer. At its best, a double-blind structure reduces some forms of conscious and unconscious bias. The double-blind model is often required for academic advancement. *AIR* is committed to the rigorous, critical inquiry characteristic of double-blind review and aims to support the needs of emerging scholars. Double-blind reviewed articles will be clearly marked as such when published.

### *Open review (or mentored review)*

The open or mentored review model offers the potential for more direct interaction between contributor and reviewer. This more transparent process can help cultivate and shape ideas through attentive developmental editing. It may be of benefit to those not on the academic tenure track, or those who wish to engage a particular specialist for more collaborative and personal input. Contributors interested in open review are welcome to suggest potential interlocutors, whether they know them personally or not. For creative contributions, the details of the review process are customized based on what is appropriate to the particular piece. Generally speaking, reviewers look at the work in progress, not the final product.

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### **About the journal**

The *Art Institute Review* is dedicated to innovative object-centered scholarship. Linked to the Art Institute of Chicago's dynamic research program, the journal spurs collaborative, interdisciplinary dialogue and embraces art's radical potential to help us understand culture, history, and our current moment.

Our goal is to publish thought-provoking original scholarship that is aligned with the following values:

- We are dedicated to supporting the Art Institute of Chicago's values of **equity and inclusion**. As such, the journal seeks to provide a platform for new stories and voices, including topics and scholars historically underrepresented in publishing in art history and related fields.
- We are committed to **accessibility**. We value clarity of language and ideas approachable to nonscholarly audiences and adhere to best practices for digital accessibility.

- We embrace novel approaches structured by **collaboration** and co-authorship, especially when cross-disciplinary investigations produce a more rigorous or inventive analysis.
- We aim to foster conversations that **cross boundaries**, institutional silos, and levels/kinds of expertise to actively involve new participants and model new methodological approaches.
- We **experiment** with what it means to produce and publish art history digitally, using the museum as a laboratory and exploring new technological tools.
- We take a **mentorship-centered** approach to many dimensions of our practice, including author cultivation and the peer review process.

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### **Peer review ethics statement**

The ethical backbone of our peer review rubric

- Peer review builds engagement and strengthens scholarship constructively, not destructively.
- Peer review fosters the development of new ideas and methods, providing tools to help authors intellectually grow and thrive.
- Peer review fosters collaboration on questions and topics essential to enriching the field.
- Peer reviewers are valued for their unbiased professional assessments. Biases that are conscious, unconscious, or systemic perpetuate historic inequities and preclude the expansion of the field into new research areas led by path-breaking new voices and methods.
- We value a mentoring, dialogical approach to peer review, and our editors are here to support the cultivation of peer review skills and best practices in our reviewer community.

### **Review rubric**

A successful submission will:

- present original research and/or ideas that imaginatively engage new topics and perspectives
- enrich and complicate the issue's theme
- relate to current concerns in the world at large
- engage with objects in a meaningful way, whether at the micro or macro level
- be written in a manner accessible to smart and curious but nonspecialist readers
- articulate its relevance to thinkers and makers outside its discipline and specialty

- adopt a definite point of view on its material, even if that view embraces ambiguity and complexity

A constructive peer review will:

- reflect on the appropriateness of the topic and perspective for the identity and values of *AIR*
- offer ways to meaningfully improve the content or correct for errors and provide constructive feedback with clarity and specificity
- confirm the submission's integrity with respect to facts and data, ethical methods, and scholarly honesty (e.g., plagiarism)

## Resources

Here are some additional resources on the ethics of peer review and peer review best practices in digital publishing:

Alice Meadows and Karin Wulf, [“Quality is Multi-Dimensional: How Many Ways Can You Define Quality in Peer Review?”](#) *Scholarly Kitchen*, September 16, 2019.

Alice Meadows, [“Eight Ways to Tackle Diversity and Inclusion in Peer Review.”](#) *Scholarly Kitchen*, September 13, 2018.

Matthew Stiller-Reeve et al., [“How to Write a Thorough Peer Review.”](#) *Nature*, October 8, 2018.

Matthew Stiller-Reeve, Geraint Vaughan, and Bronwyn Wake, [A Peer Review Process Guide](#), *SciSnack.com*, April 2018.

If you're new to peer review or have questions about what AIR considers best practices, do reach out.

Please direct questions to [journal@artic.edu](mailto:journal@artic.edu).

## *Art Institute Review Peer Review Form*

Please record your review on this form and return this document to the editors of the *Art Institute Review*. The review consists of two parts:

- a summary assessment for the issue editors and the *AIR* team only; it is confidential and stays in-house
- a report to the author, to be shared with the author to aid in revisions

Please ensure that your comments for the editors are kept distinct from the report that will be transmitted to the author.

### **Summary assessment**

Recommendation: Publish / Publish with Revisions / Do Not Publish

What is your rationale?

In what ways is this contribution original and significant in its research question(s) or conclusion(s)? What potential contribution(s) does this essay make to the field?

Does the contribution adequately engage the issue theme and fit the goals and values of the journal?

Other remarks:

### **Report**

Summarize what, in your view, are the main point(s) of the paper, its argument, and method.

What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the paper?

Does the paper make adequate use of supporting resources, tools, and examples? Are these appropriate to the central thesis and questions?

Does the organization of the paper serve the flow of ideas and strengthen them?

How might the contribution be sharpened to fit the scope of this issue and the goals and values of the journal?

What is the value of this work for the field? How might it productively contribute to current scholarly discussions?