

Editorial responsibility in the open access world

COPE: Promoting integrity in research and its publication

Chris Graf, Co-Chair, COPE, Committee on Publication Ethics,
at the [ALLEA workshop](#), [Ethical Aspects of Open Access: A
Windy Road](#), January 2018. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-4699-4333.

Disclosure: CG volunteers for COPE, Committee on Publication
Ethics. CG works for Wiley.

It's still all about quality

Research and research publishing is changing fast. But it's (still) really all about quality. With the backdrop of [COPE's 10 Core Practices](#), I'll share thoughts on what some editors, journals, and publishers are doing to embrace and help lead that change, with examples of how new approaches to methods validation and data validation are being added into the editorial process. I'll argue that transparency from journals is one way we can help researchers understand why reputable journals are valuable for them as authors and as readers. And I'll suggest that it's time to think carefully about what we aspire to, without losing sight of what matters most about research quality, so that we can help more researchers to express and communicate their research in the best possible way.

Agenda


COPE's Core practices

Support quality, actively
Methods validation

Data validation

Increase transparency

What we could aspire to



These are my personal observations, which
may or may not reflect COPE's
position

COPE's Core Practices

COPE assists editors of scholarly journals and publishers - as well as other parties, such as institutions - in their work to preserve and promote the integrity of the scholarly record through policies and practices. COPE describes these in 10 “Core Practices”. COPE's Core Practices should be considered alongside specific national and international codes of conduct for research.

<https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>

publicationethics.org

“Journals and publishers should have robust and well-described, publicly documented practices in all the following areas

Core practices are the policies and practices journals and publishers need, to reach the highest standards in publication ethics. We include cases with advice, guidance for day-to-day practice, education modules and events on topical issues, to support journals and publishers fulfil their policies.

[View all core practices](#)



1. Allegations of misconduct



2. Authorship and contributorship



3. Complaints and appeals



4. Conflicts of interest / Competing interests



5. Data and reproducibility



6. Ethical oversight



7. Intellectual property



8. Journal management



9. Peer review processes



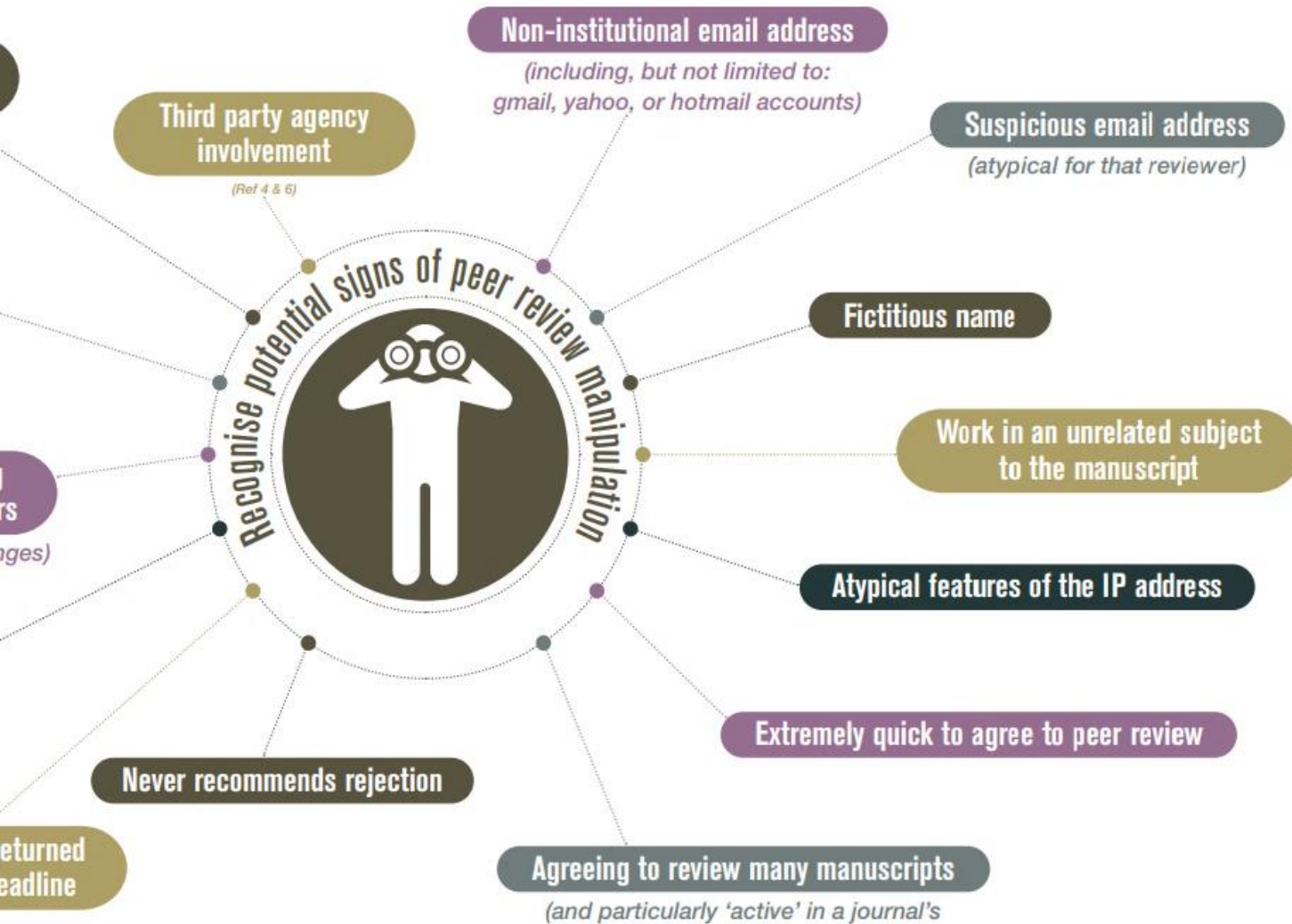
10. Post-publication discussions and corrections

<https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>

https://publicationethics.org/files/editable-bean/COPE_Core_Practices_0.pdf

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COPE flowcharts: How to spot manipulation of the peer review process



Fake reviewers

The retractions earlier this year of 107 cancer papers were arguably a case of identity fraud. These 107 papers were retracted after the publisher discovered that their peer review process had been compromised by fake peer reviewers.

It's not clear that the researchers involved did this wittingly. It may have been the fault of a third-party they paid to help with language editing and submission, to help them get their work published.

Resource: COPE guide (to the left) to spotting manipulations in peer review.

https://publicationethics.org/files/COPE%20PR_Manipulation_Process.pdf

<http://retractionwatch.com/2017/04/20/new-record-major-publisher-retracting-100-studies-cancer-journal-fake-peer-reviews/>

The same standards apply

The same publication ethics standards defined by our core practices are expected of all COPE members, irrespective of their business model.

COPE supports and aims to inspire good practice amongst our members. We support campaigns that help researchers to make good journal choices, like [think.check.submit](#). We have a [sanctions process](#) for occasions where our members need to demonstrate better practice. COPE doesn't often refer to blacklists or predatory journals, and explains more in "[The changing face and future of publication ethics](#)"

Beyond editorial responsibilities

The 16 Principles of Transparency from COPE, DOAJ, OASPA, and WAME include some specifics about business responsibilities (beyond editorial responsibilities).

https://publicationethics.org/files/Principles_of_Transparency_and_Best_Practice_in_Scholarly_Publishingv3.pdf

Principles of Transparency

This version
Published 15 January 2018

1. Website: A journal's website, including the text that it contains, shall demonstrate that care has been taken to ensure high ethical and professional standards. It must not contain information that might mislead readers or authors, including any attempt to mimic another journal/publisher's site.

[Version 2](#)
Published 22 June 2015

An 'Aims & Scope' statement should be included on the website and the readership clearly defined. There should be a statement on what a journal will consider for publication including authorship criteria (e.g., not considering multiple submissions, redundant publications) to be included. ISSNs should be clearly displayed (separate for print and electronic).

[Version 1](#)
Published 10 January 2014

2. Name of journal: The Journal name shall be unique and not be one that is easily confused with another journal or that might mislead potential authors and readers about the Journal's origin or association with other journals.



4. Ownership and management: Information about the ownership and/or management of a journal shall be clearly indicated on the journal's website. Publishers shall not use organizational or journal names that would mislead potential authors and editors about the nature of the journal's owner.

5. Governing body: Journals shall have editorial boards or other governing bodies whose members are recognized experts in the subject areas included within the journal's scope. The full names and affiliations of the journal's editorial board or other governing body shall be provided on the journal's website.



8. Author fees: Any fees or charges that are required for manuscript processing and/or publishing materials in the journal shall be clearly stated in a place that is easy for potential authors to find prior to submitting their manuscripts for review or explained to authors before they begin preparing their manuscript for submission. If no such fees are charged that should also be clearly stated.



14. Revenue sources: Business models or revenue sources (e.g., author fees, subscriptions, advertising, reprints, institutional support, and organizational support) shall be clearly stated or otherwise evident on the journal's website. Publishing fees or waiver status should not influence editorial decision making.



16. Direct marketing: Any direct marketing activities, including solicitation of manuscripts that are conducted on behalf of the journal, shall be appropriate, well targeted, and unobtrusive. Information provided about the publisher or journal is expected to be truthful and not misleading for readers or authors.

Note: The slides from here on are personal observations, which may or may not reflect COPE's position or recommendations

Support quality, actively

What about working in new ways?

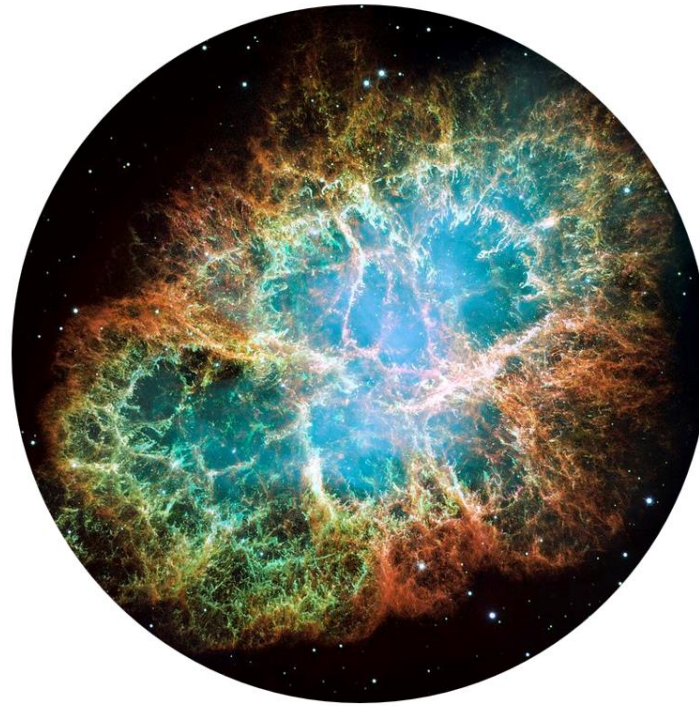
Methods validation

Data validation

John Schmidt's Top 5 solutions for the replication crisis

“Total vaporization of the Earth by an exploding sun *would* solve the replication crisis

Also: Zombies, deep impact, demons, ignoring it



<https://medium.com/@InOurLabs/top-five-real-solutions-to-the-replication-crisis-a2607a83d46f>

Image credit: Public domain image, with acknowledgement to NASA and STScI <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supernova>

A quality problem: Methods

Methods validation: Registered Reports

“Registered Reports will increase the transparency of our science and allow peer review of research before results are known... improving the quality of our research protocols, that will ultimately improve the robustness of our evidence base



Disclosure: Wiley publishes *J Neuropsychology* for BPS

<https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/we-are-working-wiley-improve-replicability-and-transparency-research>

<https://cos.io/rr/>



8 Answers about Registered Reports, an Interview
with David Mellor from Center for Open Science

[https://hub.wiley.com/community/exchanges/discover/
blog/2017/12/05/8-answers-about-registered-reports-
research-preregistration-and-why-both-are-important](https://hub.wiley.com/community/exchanges/discover/blog/2017/12/05/8-answers-about-registered-reports-research-preregistration-and-why-both-are-important)

A quality problem: Data

Perhaps 50% of published ^{13}C NMR datasets contain errors. Some are simple typos. Others are completely incorrect structures, where a chemist thinks they've made one structure but actually they've made something different.

An example of new ways to validate data

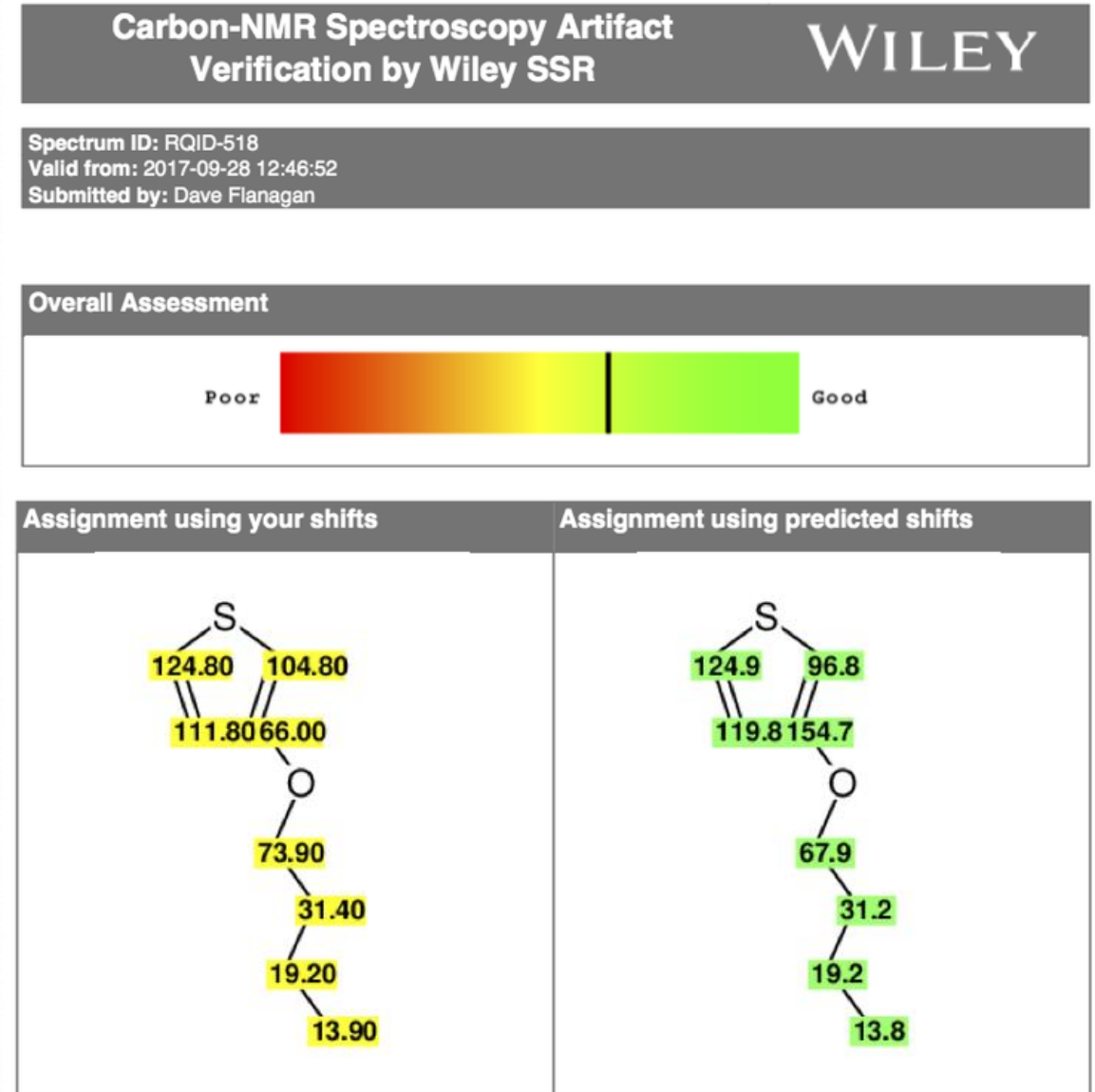
Data validation

Wiley Smart Spectra Repository (SSR) is a tool for research validation. It helps researchers publish higher-quality, correct data.

SSR checks if a chemical structure and the submitted ^{13}C NMR data are consistent and shows where errors might be.

<https://www.wsslabs.com>

Disclosure: This is a Wiley service



Consider what we aspire to

On rock stars and orchestras and new ways to think about quality

Rock stars

Nobel prizes

Nature articles

6 821
40.137

Nature Magazine's Impact Factor



Orchestras

Academics and post docs

17million

1,803,249

research articles in Scopus



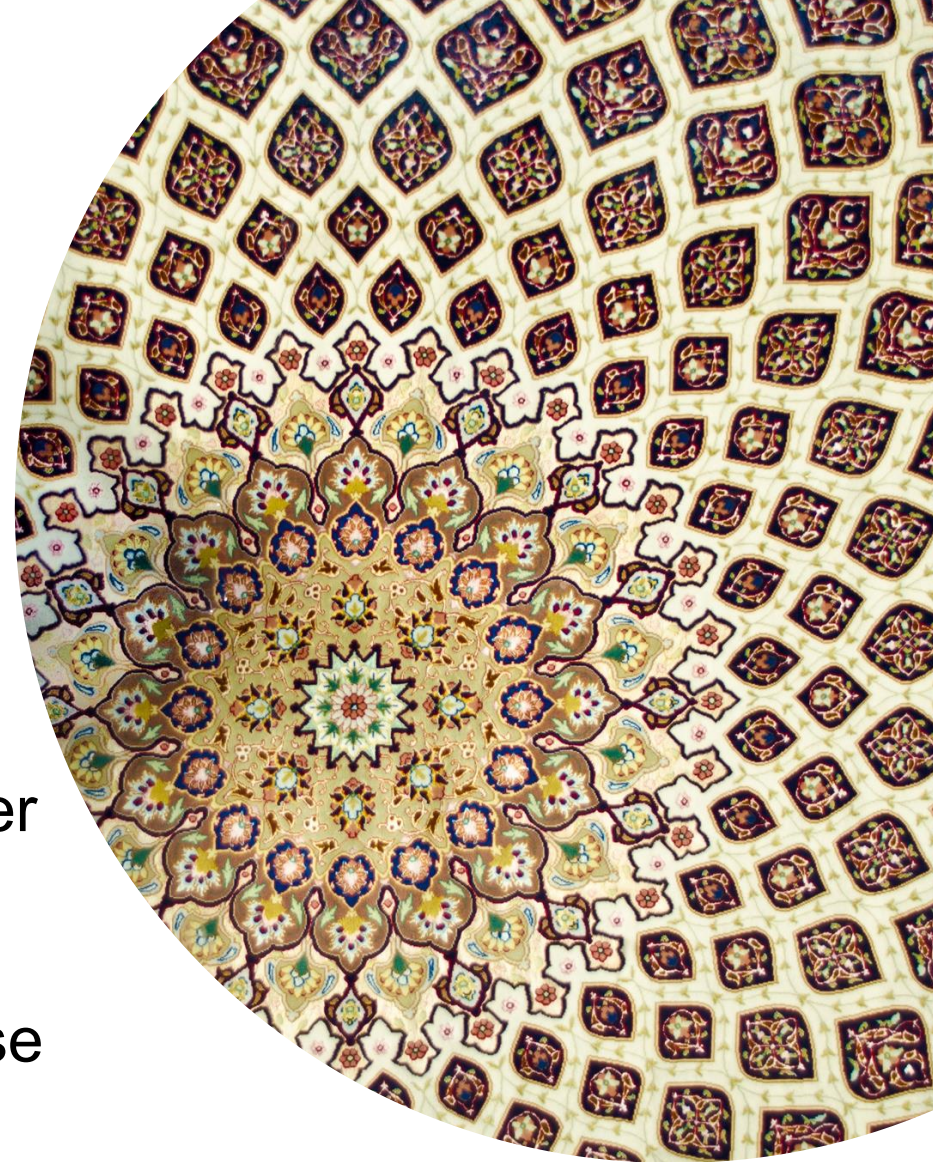
Increase transparency

Make being transparent easy and rewarding for researchers

<https://publicationethics.org/news/research-integrity-and-how-buy-persian-carpet-top-guidelines-part-2>

Carpets

In “[The art of buying a carpet](#),” Simon Busch suggests that a wise carpet buyer checks a carpet’s knot count (“You will find much truth under the carpet: turn it over”), examines its fibre (silk and wool, or something else?), and takes a close look at its colour (“Bend the carpet so as to expose individual threads from the base to the tip.”)



The same is true for research

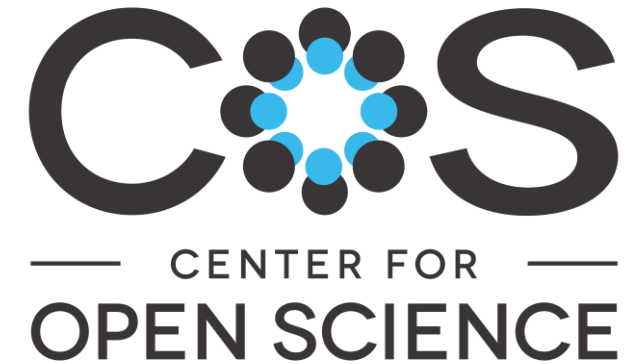
When research authors share and cite their data; describe their methods in detail; make their materials available; and share information about their analysis then other people can check the knot count, fibre, and colour of that particular research project.

<https://publicationethics.org/news/research-integrity-and-how-buy-persian-carpet-top-guidelines-part-2>

publicationethics.org

TOP, part 2: An ongoing draft

“Promoting an open research culture,” published by Nosek and colleagues in *Science*, presents the Transparency and Openness Promotion guidelines: How to aim for research transparency in 8 standards and 3 levels. TOP is widely endorsed. But not widely implemented. This is where TOP part 2 picks up.



And it is in draft now (January 2018) for you at this link:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NI6P4M2UKekXoZuFR2uuQ2Tj1xf0WrThn86H5XOR1uY>

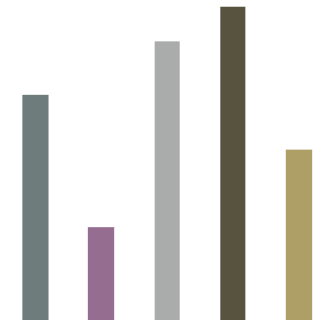
In the open access world editorial responsibility is still all about quality

But maybe we need to aspire to a kind of quality that works members of orchestras (as well as for Taylor Swift)

Thank you!
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About COPE (appendix 1)



publicationethics.org

12,000+ members, 100+ countries

- As an organization, COPE's role is to assist editors of scholarly journals and publisher/owners in their endeavour to **preserve and promote the integrity of the scholarly record** through policies and practices that reflect the current best principles of transparency as well as integrity.
- COPE is a membership organization. Our members are primarily editors of **journals and publishers** although we are currently exploring expanding our membership. Part of this potential expansion is being explored with a pilot project with **five universities around the world**.
- COPE operates, manages and governs the organization with a small group of paid employees and a large **group of very active volunteers** who serve on the trustee board and council.

10+ Trustees

Members of Council with
legal responsibilities for COPE

Vote

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graph TD; T[10+ Trustees] -- Vote --> C[30+ Council members]; C -- Vote --> M[12,000+ members]; M -- Appoint --> C;
```

30+ Council members

Lead all the work of COPE,
Subcommittees, Working groups

Appoint

Vote

12,000+ members



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03. Deborah Poff
04. Charon Pierson
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16. Jason Hu
17. Deborah Kahn

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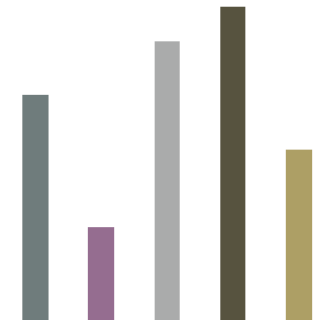
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28. Heather Tierney
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Key

- Co-Chairs
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Council Member
- Trustee

Free markets (appendix 2)



Led by an invisible hand

In [a free economy] there is one and only one social responsibility of business—to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits *so long as it stays within the rules of the game.*

It is the responsibility of the rest of us to establish a framework of law such that an individual in pursuing his own interest is, to quote Adam Smith again, ‘led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention.’



Corporate Social Responsibility: Friedman's View <https://bfi.uchicago.edu/news/feature-story/corporate-social-responsibility-friedmans-view> Quoting Capitalism and Freedom, University of Chicago Press, 2002 Fortieth Anniversary Edition, p 133

Picture by <http://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/milton-friedman-167.php> [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

“We need a culture of responsibility for the integrity of the literature... it's not just the job of editors



Ginny Barbour, 2012—2017 COPE Chair