

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

I. Aim and Scope:

Circulation Reports is an official open-access scientific journal of the Japanese Circulation Society. The journal will consider various types of original research articles, including studies conducted with human subjects and experimental models, as well as high-quality applied clinical, epidemiological, and healthcare policy papers related to cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases. Specific content areas of interest are: arrhythmia and electrophysiology, cardiovascular nursing, cardiovascular surgery, congenital heart disease, coronary artery disease, epidemiology, exercise physiology, genetics and translational biology, health services and outcomes research, heart failure, hypertension, imaging, interventional cardiology, molecular cardiology, nutrition, pediatric cardiology, pericardial disease, peripheral vascular disease, preventive cardiology, renal disease, resuscitation science, stroke, transplantation, valvular heart disease, vascular medicine, rehabilitation, obesity, metabolism, medical engineering, medical policy, medical economy, and medical education. The journal will also consider the publication of review articles summarizing the present state of knowledge in a particular field, and manuscripts transferred from its sister journal, *Circulation Journal*. All manuscripts are peer-reviewed. The types of manuscripts the journal publishes are listed in **VII. Manuscript Types**.

II. Editorial Policy:

1. General:

The journal supports and adheres to industry guidelines, including “Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals” (ICMJE Recommendations) (<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/>) by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and the “Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing” (<http://doaj.org/bestpractice>), a joint statement by the Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE), the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), and the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA).

2. Clinical Trials:

In accordance with the Clinical Trial Registration Statement from the ICMJE (<http://www.icmje.org/>), all clinical trials published in *Circulation Reports* should be registered in a public trials registry before the first participant recruitment. In accordance with ICMJE, acceptable registries are: Australian New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry (ANZCTR) (www.anzctr.org.au), ClinicalTrials.gov (www.clinicaltrials.gov), ISRCTN registry (www.ISRCTN.org), UMIN Clinical Trials Registry (UMIN-CTR) (www.umin.ac.jp/ctr/index/htm), Netherlands Trial Register (www.trialregister.nl), and European Union Drug Regulating Authorities Clinical Trials Database (EudraCT) (<https://eudract.ema.europa.eu/>). If a study has been granted an exemption from requiring ethics approval, this should be detailed in the manuscript, including the name of the ethics committee that granted the exemption.

3. Reporting Guidelines:

Authors are encouraged to follow published reporting guidelines for different study designs and complete their checklist prior to submission. Manuscripts of observational studies should conform to the “Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology” statement (STROBE statement) (<http://www.strobe-statement.org/>). Reports of randomized controlled trials should comply with the “Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials” statement (CONSORT statement) (<http://www.consort-statement.org/>). Systematic reviews and meta-analyses should follow PRISMA (<http://prisma-statement.org/>). Studies of diagnostic accuracy are encouraged to conform to STARD (www.stard-statement.org/).

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4. Data Sharing:

In accordance with ICMJE, manuscripts submitted to *Circulation Reports* that report the results of clinical trials must contain a data sharing statement in the “Data Availability” section of the main document file, indicating all of the following:

- (1) Whether individual deidentified participant data (including data dictionaries) will be shared (“undecided” is not an acceptable answer)
- (2) What data in particular will be shared
- (3) Whether additional, related documents will be available (e.g., study protocol, statistical analysis plan, etc.)
- (4) When the data will become available and for how long
- (5) By what access criteria the data will be shared (including with whom)
- (6) For what types of analyses, and by what mechanism the data will be available

Examples:

Data Availability

1. The deidentified participant data is accessible. (The information regarding (2) – (6) should follow.)
2. The deidentified participant data will be shared on a request basis. Please directly contact the corresponding author to request data sharing. (The information regarding (2) – (6) should follow.)
3. The deidentified participant data will not be shared. (When this option is selected, the information regarding (2)–(6) is not required.)

5. Research Ethics:

- (1) When reporting experiments on human subjects, indicate whether the procedures followed were in accordance with the “Declaration of Helsinki” and the ethical standards of the responsible committee on human experimentation (institutional or regional). Manuscripts may be rejected if the Editor-in-Chief considers that the research has not been carried out within an appropriate ethical framework. Written informed consent must be obtained from the patient (or parent or legal guardian) and should be indicated in the manuscript. Any information or data that may identify patients must not appear anywhere in the manuscript, including the main text, tables, figures and supplementary files. Appropriate written consent must be obtained when any personal information and/or images of patients or other individuals, including but not limited to the patient’s name, specific date and time, patient ID, and photo etc., need to be included in the manuscript.
- (2) A statement detailing the institutional review board (IRB), including the name of the ethics committee and the reference number, must be included in the title page of the manuscript.
- (3) When reporting experiments on animals, indicate whether institutional or national guidelines for the care and use of laboratory animals were followed.

6. Redundant or Duplicate Publication:

- (1) **Exclusive Submission:** Submission of a manuscript to *Circulation Reports* implies that the article is original and that no portion (including figures and tables) is under consideration elsewhere.
- (2) **Duplicate Submission:** *Circulation Reports* regards publication of a manuscript that overlaps substantially with another paper already published as a duplicate publication. Submission of a manuscript to *Circulation Reports* implies that the article is original and that no portion (including figures and tables) has been previously published in any form other than as an abstract. Previous publication includes publishing as a component of symposia, proceedings, transactions, books (or chapters), and articles published by invitation or reports of any kind, as well as in electronic databases of a public nature. Data presented as an oral presentation slide, poster or printed abstract at a scientific meeting or as an abstract on the web does not conflict with manuscript submission to the journal, provided that is referred to in the cover letter accompanying the manuscript. Manuscripts with data that has ever appeared on a preprint server are not acceptable in *Circulation Reports*.
- (3) **Plagiarism:** The journal uses “Crossref Similarity Check” to scan a manuscript for plagiarism. If this returns any doubtful results, the Editor-in-Chief re-reviews the manuscript and may conduct further investigations.

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7. Conflicts of Interest:

When submitting a manuscript for publication, all authors are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest (COIs) with a biotechnology manufacturer, a pharmaceutical company or any other commercial entity that has been involved in the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript. All declared COIs will appear in the published article.

The submitting author should complete the COI Disclosure form in the submission system and have the same information included in “Disclosures” on the title page. If there are no COIs, the authors should state, “The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest”. The matters required to be disclosed are as follows, but not necessarily limited to:

- (1) **Consultancy**; Annual income from a single company or organization, as an officer or consultant, which exceeds an annual total of 1,000,000 yen
- (2) **Stock/Stock Options**; Profit from stocks of one single company or organization which exceeds an annual total of 1,000,000 yen, or 5% or more of total shares of one company/organization
- (3) **Patent royalties/licensing fees**; Patent royalties/licensing fees which exceeds an annual total of 1,000,000 yen from a single company or organization
- (4) **Remuneration** (e.g. lecture fees); Remuneration for attending meetings (presentations), paid for the time and effort of the activity, which exceeds an annual total of 500,000 yen, per company or organization
- (5) **Manuscript fees**; Manuscript fees for writing of a leaflet etc. , which exceeds an annual total of 500,000 yen per company or organization annually from one commercial entity
- (6) **Research funding**; Research funds (trust research funds, joint research funds etc.) provided by a single company or organization which exceeds an annual total of 1,000,000 yen
- (7) **Scholarship funds or Donations**; Scholarship funds granted by a single company or organization which exceeds an annual amount of 1,000,000 yen to the affiliated department or field from one single company or organization
- (8) **Endowed departments by commercial entities**; (If the individuals disclosing COI is affiliated with an endowed department sponsored by a company or organization)
- (9) **Travel expenses, gifts, and others, which are unrelated to research**; Travel expenses, gifts and other contributions which exceed an annual total of 50,000 yen from one single company or organization
- (10) **Any other institutional or personal relationships**

Examples:

Disclosures

A (author name) serves as a consultant to Z (entity name); B’s spouse is chairman of Y; C received a research grant from X; D received lecture fees from V; E holds a patent on U; F has been reimbursed by T for attending several conferences; G received honoraria for writing promotional material for S; H is a member of *Circulation Reports*’ Editorial Team. J has no conflict of interest.

Funding:

Research funds provided by a non-profit organization or government must be indicated in the Acknowledgments section of the manuscript.

JCS has decided to follow recommendations of the World Medical Association and arrangements under the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), and JCS journals will not publish research papers submitted or funded by tobacco companies (including subsidiaries) and tobacco research organizations such as the Smoking Research Foundation, in Japan and overseas.

Editors and Editorial Staff as Authors:

When a member of *Circulation Reports*’ editorial team (http://www.j-circ.or.jp/journal/files/editorial_team_CR.pdf) or its Editorial Office is included in the author list, it must be stated in “Disclosures” on the title page. They are excluded from any

involvement in the editorial decision process.

8. Misconduct:

Circulation Reports considers the following as scientific misconduct, but is not necessarily limited to these:

- (1) **Duplicate Publication:** Publication of a paper that overlaps substantially with one already published.
- (2) **Salami Publishing:** Distinct form of duplicate publication that is usually characterized by dividing hypothesis, methodology or results of a single research into a multiple manuscripts.
- (3) **Fabrication of Data:** Reporting invented data or research findings intended to give a false impression.
- (4) **Falsification:** Manipulating research materials, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- (5) **Purposeful Failure to Disclose Conflicts of Interest:** Knowingly and willfully not disclosing the necessary COI in the manuscript.
- (6) **Plagiarism:** Unauthorized use or close imitation of texts, figures or tables of others and the representation of them as one's own original work without permission or acknowledgment by the author of the source of these materials.
- (7) **Copyright Infringement:** Use of texts, figures or tables from others without appropriate permission from the copyright holder.
- (8) **Inappropriate References:** Including materials in the Reference section that have nothing to do with the content of the manuscript.

As recommended by ICMJE, when scientific misconduct is alleged, or concerns are otherwise raised about the conduct or integrity of work described in submitted or published papers, *Circulation Reports* will initiate appropriate procedures detailed by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (<https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Flowcharts>).

9. Corrigendum, Expression of Concern and Retraction:

Circulation Reports handles corrigendum, expressions of concern, and retractions in accordance with the Retraction Guidelines provided by COPE to ensure industry best practice.

- (1) **Corrigendum:** When any correction of a published manuscript is needed, authors should send a request detailing the situation/reasons to the Editorial Office (cr@j-circ.or.jp) by email. A corrigendum is published with the approval of the Editor-in-Chief. When a correction is suggested or the content of a published manuscript is questioned by readers, the Editor-in-Chief shares that with the contact author first. The author is required to respond to the inquiry from the journal in a timely manner, and the corrigendum is published as deemed necessary by the Editor-in-Chief, based on the results of the discussion with the authors.
- (2) **Expression of Concern:** In the case of any suspected issue with a manuscript considered for publication or published in *Circulation Reports* being brought up, the Editor-in-Chief first asks the authors for an explanation. If the issue is not resolved and the Editor-in-Chief believes there are strong concerns even after checking with the authors and appropriate investigations, the journal may publish an Expression of Concern to notify readers of potentially misleading information in the article.
- (3) **Retraction:** If authors wish to retract their manuscript, they are to send a request detailing the situation/reasons to the Editorial Office (cr@j-circ.or.jp) by email. The Editor-in-Chief then evaluates the reasons and decides how to address the issue. If any doubts or allegations of misconduct are raised by readers about the contents of a published article, according to the retraction flowchart of COPE, *Circulation Reports* will handle the issue as follows: The Editor-in-Chief reports the doubt to the contact author first. The author is required to respond to the inquiry from the journal in a timely fashion. The Editor-in-Chief will discuss and evaluate the response, and may conduct further investigations. Based on the results of the discussion and further investigation, the Editor-in-Chief decides whether to alert readers about the presentation of seriously erroneous data that invalidate the conclusion of the study or of ethical misconduct. The final decision on whether to retract the article will be communicated to the contact author and, if necessary, any relevant bodies and institutions. The published retraction specifies the data of the manuscript concerned, a link to the manuscript, and the detailed reason for the retraction. *Circulation Reports* will not delete the original manuscript.

10. Use of Copyrighted Material:

Every reproduced figure or table used in manuscripts submitted to *Circulation Reports* must have permission for reuse from the original copyright holder. Authors should obtain permission prior to manuscript submission, and clearly state that in the figure/table legend.

Examples:

- (1) Adapted from reference no. xx with permission.
- (2) Reproduced with permission from xxxx, et al. *Circ J* 2013; 77: xx–xx.

11. Authorship:

As in the ICMJE recommendations, all those designated as authors in a manuscript submitted to *Circulation Reports* should meet **all** of the following 4 criteria for authorship, and all who meet those criteria should be identified as authors. Names of those who do not meet all 4 criteria, such as proofreader, authors' supervisors, fellows or junior staff, should be listed in "Acknowledgments" section of the manuscript:

- (1) Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data for the work
- (2) Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content
- (3) Final approval of the version to be published
- (4) Agreement 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.

Because adding or omitting co-author(s) cannot be approved after the manuscript has been accepted, ensure that all appropriate authors have been properly listed during the submission process. If additional authors are included in a revised manuscript, the contact author of the manuscript is required to provide the Editorial Office (cr@j-circ.or.jp) with another "Authorship Agreement" form signed by the additional authors as well as a detailed reason for their addition. Also, all authors should have agreed and fixed the order in which their names will be displayed in the manuscript prior to submission.

III. Copyright / Permissions:

Submission of a manuscript to *Circulation Reports* implies that, when the manuscript is accepted for publication, the authors agree to automatic transfer of the copyright to the Japanese Circulation Society. *Circulation Reports* is an open-access journal under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives (CC BY-NC-ND) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). Anyone may download, reuse, copy, reprint, and distribute articles published in the journal for not-for-profit purposes if the original authors and source are properly credited. Remixing, transforming or building upon the material is not allowed, and any modified material is prohibited from distribution. For profit or commercial use, appropriate permission by the Japanese Circulation Society is mandatory. If authors would like to post their accepted manuscript on an online repository of an affiliated institution, they can do so as long as they use the accepted version of their manuscript, downloaded from the journal's online submission system. In such instances, the authors are responsible for indicating the article's citation and the link to the published article on *Circulation Reports'* online journal website (<https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/circrep/-char/en>).

IV. Submission of Manuscripts:

All manuscripts must be submitted electronically through *Circulation Reports'* online submission system (<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/circrep>). The submitting author should upload the manuscript files in appropriate file formats according to the instructions provided. After manuscript files are uploaded, the manuscript will undergo a conversion process.

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Before completing submission, the submitting author is required to thoroughly check the converted PDF file.

V. Authorship Agreement Form:

Soon after submission through the online submission system, the contact/submitting author should complete the “Authorship Agreement” form (http://www.j-circ.or.jp/journal/files/Agreement_CR.doc) with all co-authors’ signatures, and email/fax it to the Editorial Office (cr@j-circ.or.jp). If additional authors are included in a revised manuscript, the contact author of the manuscript is required to provide another “Authorship Agreement” form signed by the additional authors as well as a detailed reason for their addition.

VI. Manuscript Format:

All manuscripts should be written in English (US spelling) and prepared according to the following specifications. Refer to the ICMJE Recommendations (<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/>) for things not indicated below or further questions/concerns.

1. The main document should be typewritten with double spacing, and include the following in general:

- (1) Title page
- (2) Abstract
- (3) Key Words
- (4) Text
- (5) Acknowledgments
- (6) Data Availability
- (7) References
- (8) Legends for Tables and/or Figures

2. Pages should be numbered consecutively in this sequence, beginning with the title page.

3. The title page must have the following contents:

- (1) Complete title of the paper; Abbreviations are not acceptable in the title.
- (2) Name(s) of author(s) with highest academic degree(s); Only MD, PhD, or BSc should be included.
- (3) Affiliations of all authors at the time of the study (i.e. department and institution).
- (4) Short title; Up to 50 characters, including spaces, can be used.
- (5) Disclosures; Information on all COI, grants, and sources of funding related to the manuscript should be declared.
- (6) IRB information; Name of the ethics committee and the reference number.
- (7) Name and address of the author responsible for correspondence.

4. Abstracts in manuscript types “Clinical Investigation”, “Experimental Investigation” and “Rapid Communication” should be structured, and have the following 3 headings:

| Headings | What to indicate under the heading |
|--------------------|--|
| Background | Rationale for study |
| Method and Results | Brief presentation of methods and presentation of significant results; Note that both categories should be included under the one heading. |
| Conclusions | Succinct statement of data interpretation |

Some manuscript types do not require an abstract. Refer to **VII. Manuscript Types** for details.

5. Units of measurement should be SI units, except for blood pressure, which should be expressed in mmHg. Do not spell out numbers and standard units of measurement except at the beginning of sentences. Use Arabic numerals and standard

abbreviations to indicate numbers and units.

6. References must be numbered consecutively as they appear in the text, and be listed in the same numerical order at the end of the article. They should accord with the system used in the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*. Only published manuscripts are acceptable as references. If a reference is from a yet-to-be-published book, include ‘In Press’ as well as the anticipated year of publication. If a reference is published online only, the “DOI” or “URL, as well as the last available date of access” should be provided. The titles of referenced journals should be abbreviated to the style used in Index Medicus (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/tsd/serials/lji.html>). All author names should be listed when referenced material has 6 or less authors; when it has 7 or more, only the first 6 authors’ names should be listed, with “et al.” at the end.

Examples:

- (1) Tanaka S, Yokoyama C, Kawamura I, Takasugi N, Kubota T, Ushikoshi H, et al. Conservative medication follow-up for over 20 years of a patient with ischemic heart disease after diagnosis of chronic total occlusion of the 3 main coronary arteries. *Circ J* 2008; **72**: 1205–1209.
- (2) Opie LH. Mechanism of cardiac contraction and relaxation. In: Braunwald E, editor. Heart disease, 5th edn. Philadelphia: Saunders, 1997; 360–393.
- (3) Hunt SA, Abraham WT, Chin MH, Feldman AM, Francis GS, Ganiats TG, et al. 2009 Focused update incorporated into the ACC/AHA 2005 Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Heart Failure in Adults A Report of the ACC/AHA Task Force on Practice Guidelines Developed in Collaboration With the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation. *J Am Coll Cardiol* 2009; **53**: e1–e90, doi:10.1016/j.jacc.2008.11.013.

7. All figures in a manuscript are highly recommended to be in full color; publication in color is cost-free. Letters and symbols in figures should be clear and of sufficient size to be legible after reduction to the width of one column. Specify the size to be printed, if necessary.

8. Contents of supplementary files will be published in the online journal only. Therefore, if a supplementary file contains References, they should be separate from those in the main document, and only refer to the content in the supplementary file(s). There is a size limit of 5 MB for uploaded supplementary file(s) per manuscript.

VII. Manuscript Types:

| Manuscript Types | Total word count | Abstract word count | No. of Tables (T) Figures (F) Supplementary Files (S) | No. of References | Other requirements |
|--|------------------|---------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| Specific content for the manuscript type / Specific policies | | | | | |
| Clinical Investigation | ≤ 6000 | ≤ 220 | T / F: ≤ 8 in total S: ≤ 3 | No limitation | 3–5 Keywords Structured Abstract with 3 headings |
| Experimental Investigation | ≤ 6000 | ≤ 220 | T / F: ≤ 8 in total S: ≤ 3 | No limitation | 3–5 Keywords Structured Abstract with 3 headings |
| Rapid Communication | ≤ 3000 | ≤ 100 | T / F: ≤ 4 in total | ≤ 20 | 3 Keywords Structured Abstract with 3 headings |

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| | “Rapid Communication” is a report of novel findings of particular importance and/or current interest and will be accepted if these merit immediate publication. The manuscripts will normally be published within 2 months of acceptance. | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| Manuscript Types | Total word count | Abstract word count | No. of Tables (T) Figures (F) Supplementary Files (S) | No. of References | Other requirements |
| | Specific content for the manuscript type / Specific policies | | | | |
| Brief Report | ≤ 4000 | ≤ 220 | T / F: ≤ 4 in total S: ≤ 3 | No limitation | 3–5 Keywords Structured Abstract with 3 headings |
| | “Brief Report” presents complete highly significant findings reported in a shorter format | | | | |
| Statement / Opinion | ≤ 3000 | ≤ 220 | T / F: ≤ 4 in total S: ≤ 3 | No limitation | 3–5 Keywords Structured Abstract with 3 headings |
| | “Statement / Opinion” focuses on a topic about which the authors have personal thoughts, beliefs, or feelings. | | | | |
| Protocol Paper | ≤ 3000 | ≤ 220 | T / F: ≤ 4 in total S: ≤ 3 | No limitation | 3–5 Keywords Structured Abstract with 3 headings |
| | “Protocol Paper” reports planned or ongoing studies. Reports of work already carried out will not be considered as a Protocol Paper. | | | | |
| Images in Cardiovascular Medicine | ≤ 400 | N/A | T: N/A F: ≤ 1 S: ≤ 2 | ≤ 3 | |
| | “Images in Cardiovascular Medicine” should contain a novel color image with scientific impact. Note that we do not accept any case reports. The manuscript normally occupies 1 journal page. | | | | |
| Review Article (Invited) | ≤ 6000 | ≤ 220 | T / F: ≤ 8 in total S: ≤ 3 | No limitation | Upon request from the Editor-in-Chief Unstructured Abstract |
| | “Review Article” is usually invited one, but we will also consider limited number of non-invited submissions. | | | | |
| Editorial (Invited) | ≤ 1500 | N/A | T / F: ≤ 2 | ≤ 15 | Upon request from the Editor-in-Chief Subject manuscript should be cited. |
| | “Editorial” normally occupies no more than 2 journal pages. | | | | |
| Case Report | <i>Circulation Reports</i> does not accept any Case Reports. | | | | |

(1) *Circulation Reports* considers publication of the following manuscript types: original articles on “Clinical Investigation” and “Experimental Investigation”, “Rapid Communication”, “Brief Report”, “Statement/Opinion”, “Protocol Paper”, “Images in Cardiovascular Medicine”, “Review Article”, “Editorial”, “Letter to the Editor” and “Author’s Reply”.

(2) Authors who submit or resubmit manuscripts to the journal are required to have all of their manuscript files strictly reflect the requirements outlined here. When any part does not, we cannot start either the initial or revision review process.

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- (3) “Total word count” is the total number of all words appearing in the manuscript files, except for the text in Table(s) and Figure(s). Note that legends for these are included in the “Total word count”.

VIII. Peer Review Processes:

1. General:

Circulation Reports uses a single blind peer-review process, where the reviewers’ identities remain anonymous to the authors. Every manuscript submitted to the journal will be peer reviewed.

2. Initial Submission:

Peer review process for initial submission is as follows:

- (1) Manuscripts submitted to *Circulation Reports* go through technical evaluation by the Editorial Office. Manuscripts that are not in accordance with the journal's policy and/or Instructions to Authors will be returned to the contact author for necessary modifications.
- (2) After the completion of the technical evaluation, the Editor-in-Chief reviews the manuscript to determine whether it meets essential criteria and readership of *Circulation Reports* to warrant further consideration for peer review.
- (3) If the paper satisfies the journal’s screening criteria, the Editor-in-Chief assigns an Associate Editor who is an expert in the paper’s research area from the journal’s Associate Editors list.
- (4) The Associate Editor evaluates eligibility for publication and sends the manuscript to peer reviewer(s). All original manuscripts are usually evaluated by 2 reviewers who are experts in the paper’s research area. Invited reviewers are required to report immediately any potential personal, professional or financial conflicts of interest with authors or related to a manuscript’s theme and/or topic when receiving a review invitation. In such cases, the Associate Editor invites another reviewer.
- (5) Reviewers who agree to review the manuscript are asked to complete a score sheet and submit it to the Associate Editor in 2 weeks. Once all reviews are complete, reviewers are required to destroy manuscript copies.
- (6) The Associate Editor will then review the paper and submit a recommendation based on the reviewer(s)’ score sheet(s) to the Editor-in-Chief within 5 days.
- (7) Based on the opinions of the Associate Editor and the reviewer(s), the Editor-in-Chief makes a final decision and sends a decision letter to all authors of the manuscript via email. Final decisions include: Accept, Minor Revision, Moderate, Major Revision, and Reject. The Editor-in-Chief is the only person who can officially accept a paper for publication.
- (8) Following the formal acceptance of manuscript for publication, the paper will then proceed to English-language editing, production for online publishing, proofing, and to the online publication in sequence.

3. Revisions:

A decision letter provides questions that were raised during the review process, and/or manuscript status information. It may also recommend revision (Minor Revision, Moderate or Major Revision) when applicable. In that case, authors are required to respond to each and every review comment in a response letter and their manuscript accordingly within 3 months from receipt of the decision letter. In revised manuscript files, all texts/areas updated for that resubmission should be highlighted in yellow.

Peer-review process for revisions is as follows:

- (1) Revised manuscripts undergo a technical evaluation by the Editorial Office. Revision Submission must include a detailed point-by-point response to the reviewers’ and editors’ comments and any revision in the manuscript must be highlighted in yellow.
- (2) Once the technical evaluation is completed, the paper proceeds to peer-review. Reviewer(s), who are usually the same as for the initial review, evaluate whether or not all their suggestions and/or questions have been adequately addressed in the revised manuscript as well as the authors’ response letter. They are asked to complete a score sheet and submit it to the Associate Editor in 2 weeks.

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- (3) The Associate Editor will then submit a recommendation determined by reference to the reviewer(s)' score sheet(s) in 5 days. Further peer or statistical review may be added at this time.
- (4) Based on the opinions of the Associate Editor and reviewer(s), the final decision is made by the Editor-in-Chief.

IX. Proofs:

Galley proofs of accepted manuscripts will be sent to the authors for their correction. Changes should be limited to typographical errors or errors in the presentation of data. Excessive corrections may be rejected by the editors.

X. Publication Charges:

Circulation Reports will issue an invoice of JPY150,000 per manuscript. If payment of any previously accepted manuscript cannot be confirmed by the Editorial Office, all authors of the manuscript will no longer be able to submit a new manuscript to *Circulation Reports*.

XI. Offprints:

Offprints are available in a multiple of 100 copies when ordered with the return of the proofs. We may ask you for an application for our secondary use permission if you order more than 300 offprints. Contact the Editorial Office (cr@j-circ.or.jp) for further details.

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