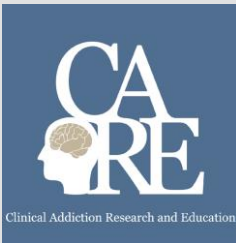


WRITING YOUR K AWARD

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Chobanian & Avedisian
School of Medicine

OVERVIEW

- GOALS
- KEY SECTIONS
- WRITING TIPS
- REVIEWS & EXPECTATIONS

The Goal of Mentored K Awards

- To provide support and protected time for an intensive, supervised career development experience leading to research independence
- At least 75% effort over 4-5 years
- Submissions due Feb 12/June 12/Oct 12

K Awards: Review by 5 Criteria

- Candidate
- Career Development Plan/Career Goals & Objectives
- Research Plan
- Mentor(s), Consultant(s), & Collaborator(s)
- Environment & Institutional Commitment to the Candidate

**K Awards
have
achievable
success rates**

Overall NIH	2021	2023
K01	31%	38%
K08	37%	33%
K23	38%	37%
K99	25%	26%

NIDA K Award Success Rates

NIDA	2021	2023
K01	36%	47%
K08	33%	33%
K23	36%	34%
K99	16%	23%

Key Sections

- Candidate + Research Strategy = 12 pages
- Specific Aims = 1 page
- Plans and Statement of Mentor and Co-mentor(s) = 6 pages
- Description of Institutional Environment = 1 page
- Institutional Commitment to Candidate's Research Career Development = 1 page

Candidate Info

- Background
 - Research, clinical training not in Biosketch
- Career Goals
 - Your scientific biography
 - How award will enhance career objective
 - Include changes in career direction
 - Share your narrative
- Plan for Instruction in Responsible Conduct of Research (follows NIH format)
- Career Development Plan

TIPS

- Be a real person!
 - Why topic excites you, how you found it
- Tell excellence of your previous training and accomplishments (publications, presentations, research clinical work)
- Brag a little, become a “good investment”
- You need to publish a minimum of 3 papers to successfully apply for a K award

Career Development Plan

- Goals: what you hope to achieve
- Activities designed to achieve goals
- Specific aspects of advanced research training and professional skills
- Match goals to training to timeline
- Specific publications you will produce
- How your institutional environment will help

TIPS

- Prior training/experience has prepared you for the next step
- BUT...you need this training grant to take that step
- Training plan and its activities meet specific objectives/goals and allow development of skills you will use in Research Strategy and beyond (table/figure)
- Be creative: devise your own courses, cite readings

Mentoring

- Specific expertise of mentors and how their guidance will help you achieve goals
- The schedule of mentoring (e.g., weekly)
- Advisory Committee to monitor progress every 6 months
- Mentor must have a strong record of research and mentoring (may be best served by mentoring team)

TIPS

- Create a mentoring team, each meeting a training need, related to goal
- How many (3-6)? On-site or off-site?
- Tell past and current work with mentors
- Specific plans about work and meetings with mentors
- Publish something with mentor if possible
- K award designed to turn you into your mentor(s) – a bit

Timeline for Career Goals & Objectives

- Your distribution of effort each year, matched to specific activities
- Specific objectives each year
- Plans for subsequent grant support

Research Strategy

- Hypothesis driven; Specific Aims (1 page)
- Neither too ambitious nor banal
- Research Plan
 - Significance (Impact)
 - Innovation
 - Approach (Methodology)

Statement by Mentor and Co- mentor(s)

- Plans for candidate's career development
- Source(s) for support for research project
- Supervision and mentoring of candidate
- Candidate's teaching/clinical load
- Plan for transition to independent investigator
- 6-page limit

Institutional Environment

- List names of key faculty
- Availability of necessary facilities and resources
- Opportunities for intellectual interaction (journal clubs, seminars, presentations, research centers)
- 1 page

Letter of Institutional Commitment

- By Chair or Dean on letterhead
- Commitment to candidate independent of award
- Agreement to provide committed research time
- Equipment, lab/office space, facilities, resources
- 1 page

Writing Tips

- Simple and convincing story
- Good formatting (e.g., not too dense), signposts, figures, bolding, underlining, and white space
- Redundancy is good (significance and innovation made clear)
- It takes longer than you expect (especially mentor letters)
- Get as many readers as you can, including the statistically savvy

How Long Does K Take to Write?

- Aims & Training Aims due January 3
- Background & Significance plan due January 24
- Design & Methods due February 7
- Candidate Background & Training due February 21
- Entire Research Plan due March 14
- Human Subjects, Abstract, Biosketch due March 28
- Entire Grant due April 18
- Internal Review May 9
- Submit June 12
- ALL OF THIS AFTER YOU HAVE AN IDEA AND HAVE DONE YOUR READING

SUMMARY

- Need to find a technology (genetic, fMRI, Twitter) or population of interest (Latino light smokers)
- Your K research will examine an interesting question AND will provide needed data for your RO1
- Expect Rejection and Resubmission

Publishing Addiction Medicine*

Fellows Immersion Training (FIT) Program

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*Slides adapted with permission from *Publishing Addiction Science: A Guide for the Perplexed*, developed by the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors.
Available online at www.isaje.net

Publishing Addiction Medicine

- I. Choosing a Journal
- II. Submission and Peer Review
- III. Authorship

Publishing Addiction Medicine

- I. Choosing a Journal**
- II. Submission and Peer Review
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The Plethora of Journals

- Over 100 peer-reviewed addiction journals
- Journals from other disciplines also publish addiction articles
- How does one make an informed choice?

Questions to Ask when Choosing a Journal

- National or international audience?
- Addiction specialty journal or a journal from another discipline?
- The journal's content area/culture?
- Exposure opportunities?
- Chances of acceptance?
- Impact factor?
- Time to publication?
- Open access?

Addiction Specialty Journal or a Journal from Another Discipline

- Sometimes it is easier to get an addiction article published in an addiction journal
- Addiction scientists benefit from contact with scientists from other disciplines
- Journals from other disciplines sometimes have more prestige than addiction specialty journals

Consider Your Chances of Being Accepted

- Acceptance rates: <5-95%
- Many journals do not want to state acceptance rates
- Seek guidance from mentor regarding the likelihood of acceptance

Impact Factor - Definition

- Average recent citation frequency for articles published in a journal

$$\text{2024 Impact Factor} = \frac{\text{2024 citations of articles published from 2022-2023}}{\text{Number of articles published from 2022-2023}}$$

Impact Factors for Selected Addiction Journals

Journal Title	2023* Impact Factor
ADDICTION	5.2
JOURNAL OF ADDICTION MEDICINE	4.2
DRUG & ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE	3.9
ADDICTION SCIENCE & CLINICAL PRACTICE	3.7
ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS	3.7
SUBSTANCE USE & ADDICTION JOURNAL (Previously SUBSTANCE ABUSE)	2.8
AMERICAN JOURNAL OF DRUG & ALCOHOL ABUSE	2.7
JOURNAL OF STUDIES ON ALCOHOL & DRUGS	2.4

*Year for which most current data are available at Web of Science from Clarivate Analytics.

Impact Factors for Other Journals (for reference)

Journal Title	2023 Impact Factor
THE LANCET	98.4
NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE	96.2
NATURE	50.5
JAMA PSYCHIATRY	22.5
JAMA INTERNAL MEDICINE	22.3
ANNALS OF INTERNAL MEDICINE	19.6
JOURNAL OF GENERAL INTERNAL MEDICINE	4.3
PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES	3.3

Consider these Practical Aspects

- How long to get the article peer reviewed?
- How much editorial support does the journal give?
- Cost of publication?

Publishing Addiction Medicine

I. Choosing a Journal

II. Submission and Peer Review

III. Authorship

Submitting Manuscripts

- Check author guidelines and select article type.
- Obtain approval from all authors to submit
- Write a letter to the editor (optional)

Examples of Article Types

- Research articles
- Book Reviews
- Case Reports
- Case Series
- Commentaries
- Letters to the Editor
- Meeting Reports and Supplements
- Methodologies
- Reviews
- Study Protocols

Steps in the Review Process

- Editor* initial assessment
- Editor selects reviewers
- Editor monitors review process
- Reviewers review paper
- Reviewers make recommendation
- Editor makes decision: revise, reject, or accept
- Author revision
- Editor decides if further review is needed

* “Editor” refers to Editor or Associate Editor

Why have peer review?

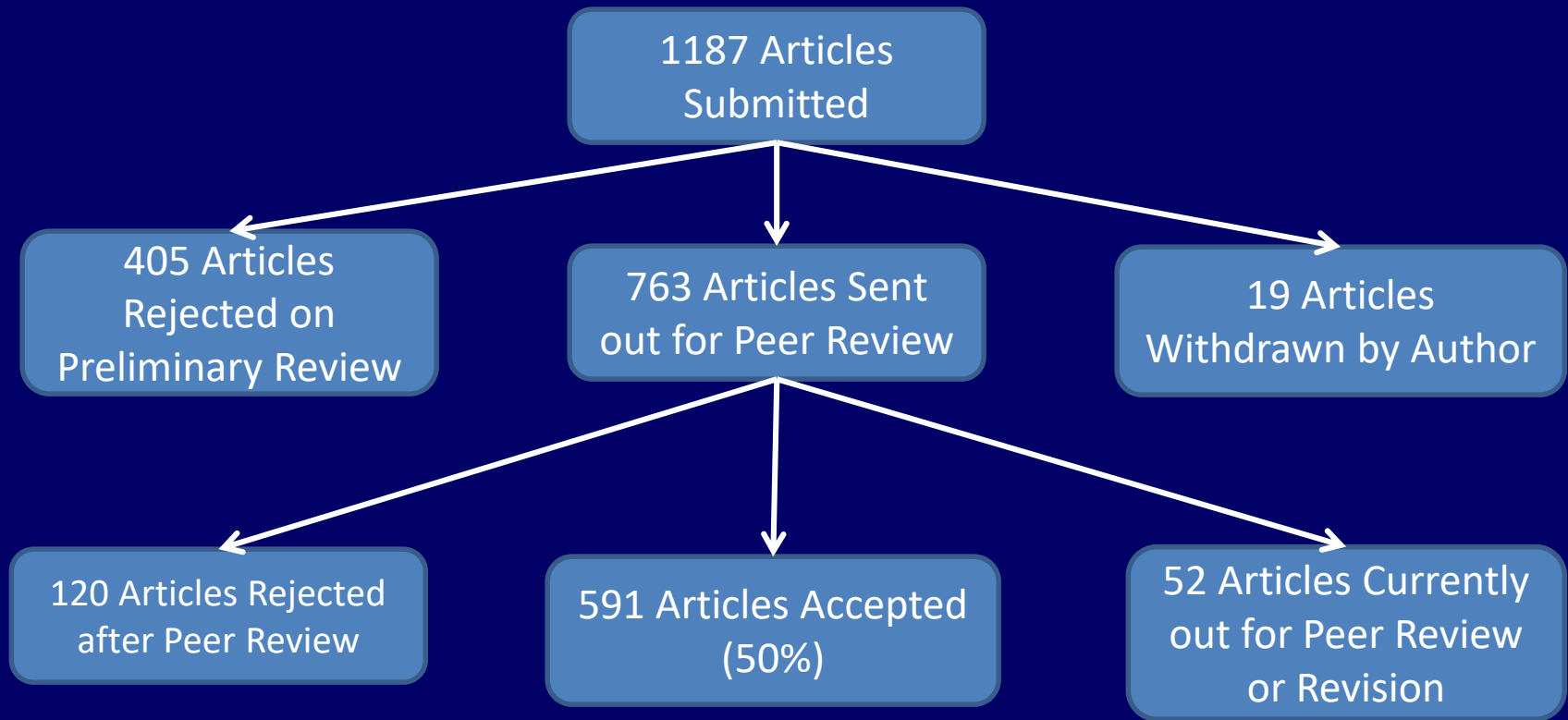
- Advise the editorial decision making process
- Justify rejections
- Improve the quality of acceptable manuscripts
- Identify instances of ethical or scientific misconduct

Possible Reviewer Recommendations

- Accept as-is (usually only used for revisions)
- Minor revision (usually does not need to be peer reviewed again)
- Major revision (revised paper may still not be acceptable and may need to be revised again)
- Reject



ADDICTION SCIENCE & CLINICAL PRACTICE



Data from 2011 to present (April 2025)

Editorial Decision Making

- Reviewers make recommendations, but editors make final decisions
- Editors may disagree with recommendations of the reviewers

The Peer Review Process – Revise and Resubmit

Your paper was accepted for peer review, you have the reviewers' and editor's critiques in hand.

- If their critiques are so severe that you feel you cannot respond to them, then inform the editor.
- If you decide to answer their critiques you may rewrite your paper to respond to their criticisms, and/or debate and refute their criticisms.
- Communicate in writing your response to each specific criticism (e.g. reviewer's critique, *your response*, **edited manuscript**).

Example: Response to Reviewer Comments

Reviewer: The authors used multiple logistical regression models, Chi Square and T-tests to run their analyses. It would also be interesting to see if there were any differences among gender in the outcomes.

Response: *We appreciate the reviewer's suggestion to assess whether differential effects exist by gender. To minimize multiple testing our approach was to first test for gender by pain interactions for each of the two primary outcomes and subsequently stratify analyses by gender only if the interactions were significant at an alpha level of 0.10. The resulting interaction p-values were >0.10 in all cases; therefore, we did not perform additional analyses stratified by gender.*

Manuscript [changes in response to reviewer in **bold**]:

The main analyses were adjusted for age, marital status, gender, education, heavy drinking, cannabis use, and depression. Models of sex outcomes were additionally adjusted for opioid use. Two-tailed tests and a significance level of 0.05 were used for all hypothesis testing. **Post hoc exploratory analyses assessed gender interaction; they were not significant at alpha of 0.10 and are not reported here.**

The Peer Review Process – Rejection

- If your paper was rejected, consider all of the critiques and maybe incorporate feedback.
- Rejection is part of the process...
- Try, try again!

Reading Proofs

Once accepted, you may have little to do with your paper until you receive the proofs.

- Sometimes your careful prose is rewritten and this can translate into feeling unappreciated.
- Ask yourself, “has my meaning been respected or has it been changed?” If the meaning is unchanged, trust the editor’s judgment and let it be.

Publishing Addiction Medicine

- I. Choosing a Journal
- II. Submission and Peer Review
- III. Authorship**

Why Authorship is Important

- Certification of public responsibility for truth of a publication
- Equitable assignment of credit
- Productivity, promotion and prestige

Authorship – Abridged ICMJE* Consensus Statement

- Only those in a position to take public responsibility for the work
- All authors should make substantive contributions to each of the following:
 - Conception and design OR acquisition of data OR interpretation
 - Drafting of article
 - Final approval of published version

*International Committee of Medical Journal Editors

Original slide by Tom Babor

Prevention of Authorship Problems

- Early agreement on the precise roles of the contributors and on matters of authorship and publication.
- The lead author should periodically review the status of authorship credits within a designated working group by having open discussions of substantive contributions with all prospective collaborators.
- Authorship guidelines should be distributed to and discussed with all potential collaborators.

Ethical Issues: Authors' Seven Deadly Sins

Sin	Example
Carelessness	Citation bias, understatement, negligence
Redundant publication	Same tables or literature review reported without noting prior source
Unfair authorship	Failure to include eligible authors, Honorary authors
Undeclared conflict of interest	Failure to cite funding source
Human subjects violations	No approval from Review Board or Ethics Committee
Plagiarism	Reproducing others' work or ideas
Other fraud	Fabrication or falsification of data, misappropriation of others' ideas or plans given in confidence

Plagiarism

- Plagiarism ranges from the unreferenced use of others' published and unpublished ideas to submission under “new” authorship of a complete paper, sometimes in a different language
 - May occur at any stage of planning, research, writing, or publication
 - Applies to print and electronic versions
- All sources should be disclosed through appropriate citation or quotation conventions
- If a large amount of other people's written or illustrative material is to be used, permission must be sought (COPE 2001)

Self-Plagiarism

- Author is not allowed to re-use previously published material when rights have been assigned to the publisher
- Many journals are not interested in reproducing published material because it consumes valuable space

How to avoid self-plagiarism

- Short quotes from a previously published article should be used in quotation marks and original version cited
- Permission must be requested when large sections are reproduced
- Methods and literature reviews should be paraphrased

Publishing Addiction Medicine

Any questions?

Resources:

- International Society of Addiction Journal Editors: www.isaje.net (see Authors' Resources)
- *JAMA Users' Guide to the Medical Literature* (individual articles online & collected in a textbook)