

## HOW THEY HAPPENED

The guidelines were developed by a panel of 13 experts representing nine countries through a series of teleconferences, conference presentations and a 2-day workshop. The panel conducted an internet survey of 716 journal editors, scientists and others in the international publishing community and a literature search on sex and gender policies in scientific publishing.

## HOW THEY WORK

The resulting guidelines are a comprehensive procedure for reporting of sex and gender information in study design, data analyses, results and interpretation of findings.

13  
EXPERTS FROM  
9  
COUNTRIES

## AND WHO SHARES RESPONSIBILITY

The use of the guidelines by authors and reviewers, their adoption by editors as gatekeepers of science, and their respect by funders all contribute to integrating the assessment of sex and gender into manuscripts as an integral part of the editorial process.

716  
JOURNAL EDITORS,  
SCIENTISTS, AND  
PUBLISHERS  
SURVEYED

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If you are interested in the work of the EASE Gender Policy Committee or in joining it, or the presentation and adoption of the SAGER guidelines, please contact us through [secretary@ease.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ease.org.uk) and visit <http://www.ease.org.uk/about-us/organisation-and-administration/gender-policy-committee>.



SEPTEMBER 2016 • Content by GPC of EASE • Graphic Design: Marti Betz Design

# SAGER Guidelines

## SEX AND GENDER EQUITY IN RESEARCH



PREPARED BY  
THE GENDER POLICY COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION  
OF SCIENCE EDITORS

# The SAGER Guidelines: Sex and Gender Matter

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

• Authors should use the terms sex and gender carefully in order to avoid confusing both terms.

• Where the subjects of research comprise organisms capable of differentiation by sex, the research should be designed and conducted in a way that can reveal sex-related differences in the results, even if these were not initially expected.

• Where subjects can also be differentiated by gender (shaped by social and cultural circumstances), the research should be conducted similarly at this additional level of distinction.



## BACKGROUND

Sex and gender differences are often overlooked in research design, study implementation and scientific reporting, as well as in general science communication. This oversight limits the generalizability of research findings and their applicability to clinical practice, in particular for women but also for men.

“ use by authors and reviewers, adoption by editors, respect by funders ”

The EASE Gender Policy Committee (GPC) works to advance gender- and sex-sensitive reporting and communication in science. It was established in 2012 as a group of editors and researchers from various disciplines who aim to contribute to better science and improved transparency.

Its focus is wide and encompasses the life, natural or social sciences, but also enhanced evidence-based practices, interventions and opportunities, for both women and men.

The GPC drafted a set of guidelines to encourage a more systematic approach to the reporting of sex and gender in research across disciplines. The resulting SAGER guidelines were published in May 2016 in 'BMC Research and Integrity and Peer Review', an open access journal. This present document is derived from that article, which explains the rationale of the guidelines and their recommended use. It is available in full at: <https://researchintegrityjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s41073-016-0007-6>

<sup>1</sup> Heidari et al. Sex and Gender Equity in Research: rationale for the SAGER guidelines and recommended use. Research Integrity and Peer Review (2016) 1:2 DOI 10.1186/s41073-016-0007-6

# SAGER Guidelines

## SAGER GUIDELINES: RECOMMENDATIONS PER SECTION OF THE ARTICLE

### Title and abstract

If only one sex is included in the study, or if the results of the study are to be applied to only one sex or gender, the title and the abstract should specify the sex of animals or any cells, tissues and other material derived from these and the sex and gender of human participants.

### Introduction

Authors should report, where relevant, whether sex and/ or gender differences may be expected.

### Methods

Authors should report how sex and gender were taken into account in the design of the study, whether they ensured adequate representation of males and females, and justify the reasons for any exclusion of males or females.

### Results

Where appropriate, data should be routinely presented disaggregated by sex and gender. Sex- and gender-based analyses should be reported regardless of positive or negative outcome. In clinical trials, data on withdrawals and dropouts should also be reported disaggregated by sex.

### Discussion

The potential implications of sex and gender on the study results and analyses should be discussed. If a sex and gender analysis was not conducted, the rationale should be given. Authors should further discuss the implications of the lack of such analysis on the interpretation of the results.

