

PHILOSOPHY

# SHOW OFF – THE MOST IMPORTANT BIAS IN RESEARCH

24.02.2009

A new [editorial in PLoS medicine](#) suggests five ways how trust in publications can be reestablished:

First, editors themselves should recognize and declare their own competing interests.

Second, noncommercial interests held by editors, reviewers, and authors (such as personal relationships, rivalries, lobbyist activities) must be acknowledged and declared [...]

Third, the issue of ghostwriting of scientific papers must be tackled, particularly when it involves studies on drugs and devices – the editors propose that journals develop detailed authorship policies in order to combat ghostwriting .

Fourth, mechanisms to control outcome reporting bias should be developed, including requiring copies of study protocols and comparing them against submitted papers.

Finally, editors should “...base their decisions on the importance of the underlying research question, and not on the headline potential of actual results” in order to prevent reporting bias. in order to prevent reporting bias.

So, that’s a good starting point for editors – but what are the five ways to five ways for authors to reestablish trust in publication?

