The Philosophical Review Editorial Policies for Authors

The Philosophical Review practices a system of triple-blind review. The identity of a manuscript's author is never revealed to referees; nor is the identity of referees ever revealed to authors; and the author's identity is not revealed to editors until after they have reached a final (accept/reject) decision on the manuscript.

Our editorial board is composed of the faculty members of the Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell University, of whom two or three serve as active editors at any point in time, along with two external editors. Two editors typically evaluate each submission, though a few manuscripts are rejected after having been read by only one editor, and some submissions are read by as many as four. Our current goal is to complete the initial editorial review within two weeks of submission. At the time of writing, we are largely meeting that goal; however, we can make no guarantees, as many things can lengthen the process.

If a manuscript passes the initial editorial review, it is usually sent to an expert referee for further evaluation. Sometimes papers are refereed by other members of the Sage School or by editors themselves; most often, they are refereed by philosophers not at Cornell. To preserve anonymity, we do not distinguish in-house from external referee reports. Some manuscripts are read by only one external referee, but we often use more than one for a given manuscript.

Once reviewed, manuscripts are either rejected without comments, rejected with comments (from editor(s) and/or from an outside referee), conditionally accepted, accepted, or receive a verdict of revise and resubmit.

Editors typically aim to send a resubmitted manuscript to the same referee(s) who originally read the paper, but there are exceptions to this general rule. The original referee(s) may be unavailable, or the editors may decide to have a referee whose expertise is somewhat different read the resubmitted version. If enough time elapses between initial and revised submission, the editors who read the revised manuscript may be different from the editors who read the original submission.

The Philosophical Review now receives more than 600 submissions per year, and publishes about 12. It is very rare for a manuscript to be accepted outright. Most published papers have undergone at least one round of revision, and many have undergone three or four rounds. Most submissions that are rejected are rejected without comments. There are a number of reasons submissions do not pass initial review. The manuscript may be (a) not sufficiently original, (b) not sufficiently grounded in the relevant literature, (c) too specialized to be of interest to a general readership, or (d) too heavily weighted to history or exegesis with not enough philosophical content. We hope authors will understand that we reject many good papers, and that providing editorial comments on all manuscripts is simply not feasible.

Up-to-date statistics on acceptance rates and time to decision are available here: https://philreview.gorgesapps.us/statistics

These statistics do not reflect author gender, because we do not request that information on submission. We do, however, occasionally compile such statistics. In 2016 editors saw 571 new submissions, of which 480 were by men, 87 were by women, and four were by authors whose gender we could not determine on the basis
of information available on the internet. The rate of submissions by women was 15%. (These numbers exclude resubmissions and papers withdrawn, or desk-rejected by our editorial assistant, before they were sent to editors. The count is of first authors only; if co-authors were counted the percentage of women authors would be very slightly lower.) In 2016 we published 12 papers (most first submitted before 2016). Of those, nine were by men and three by women. So the rate of published papers by women was 25%. (One of these papers was co-authored by two men. Counting second authors, the percentage of women authors was 23%.)