

REVIEWER GUIDELINES FOR ACTOR TIMBRE AND ORCHESTRATION RESOURCE (TOR) SUBMISSIONS*

* This document has been adapted from the [Reviewer guidelines for MTO submissions](#).

Revised May 2022

We are extremely grateful for the uncompensated and under-recognized labor of reviewers. We encourage reviewers to think of their task as much about mentoring and collaborating with authors as it is about evaluation.

Content of a review:

Please send these documents to the TOR editor or ACTOR Project Coordinator

- Submission: A .docx file with Track Changes on, with edits and comments
 - You can choose to be anonymous or leave your name on the Track Changes. Most TOR reviewers leave their names visible
 - You may have received the submission as a Google Doc; please download it and save as .docx
- Review Summary: A .docx file summarizing your review. See below for sample structure
- Optional: If there are supplementary materials that have been reviewed, please include them here

Sample structure of a Review Summary:

The structure below is offered as an optional template; it may be changed according to the format of the submission under review (article, web essay, interview, project report, webpage, etc.). At minimum, we need a recommendation and a list of major concerns. You may also add comments for the editors not to be shared with the author(s).

1. Summary
2. Main strengths of the submission
3. Major concerns
4. Minor issues (small errors and proofreading corrections; give par. #s or page #s)
5. Recommendation:
 1. accept outright.
 2. accept contingent on minor revisions
 3. revise and resubmit (submission is promising but significant revisions are needed; you will be asked to review the revised version, although this review can be briefer than the initial review)
 4. decline (unpromising or unsuitable; please identify the problems that led to your recommendation)

Definitions of recommendations:

Accept.

A submission receiving an “accept” decision moves immediately to copyediting.

Accept pending revisions.

A submission receiving an “accept pending revisions” decision requires the author to respond to reviewers’ reports, and the revisions and response are evaluated by the editorial team. In general, if the requested revisions require technical expertise to evaluate or pertain to issues that cannot be addressed at the level of the sentence or paragraph, “accept pending revisions” is not the appropriate recommendation.

Revise and resubmit.

A submission receiving a “revise and resubmit” decision invites the author to address significant issues in the original submission. Implicit is an understanding that if an author addresses each issue, then the submission will be publishable. If a reviewer cannot exhaustively state the issues that stand in the way of acceptance, then “revise and resubmit” is not the appropriate recommendation. Framed differently, if the requested revisions would result in a considerably different submission, “revise and resubmit” is not the appropriate recommendation.

Decline.

A submission receiving a “decline” decision is rejected from TOR.

General issues:

Timeliness: Please submit the review on time. A quick turnaround is important for authors. If you need more time to complete your review, you may ask for 1 or 2 more weeks, but if you cannot do the review within that timeframe, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can reassign the submission without further delays.

Tone: In your report, please be constructive, kind, and mentoring. Be specific and detailed about your recommendations, and give examples illustrating your comments. Whenever you can, identify possible ways to fix problems, not just the problems themselves. Avoid addressing authors directly as “you;” instead address your comments to “the submission.” The editorial team at *ACTOR* silently edits reviews so that they remain constructive for authors and avoid bullying language.

Length: We want authors to feel that their submitted manuscript was carefully examined and considered, even if the decision is to decline to publish the submission. There is no set length for reviews, but around 250–750 words is ideal.

Questions you may wish to consider:

(This list is optional and not exhaustive.)

Topic and introduction: Is the submission appropriate for the TOR? Is the submission's thesis clearly stated? Does this research make a new contribution to the field? Does the author make a convincing case for the usefulness, importance, and interest of this research? Do the title, abstract and introduction accurately reflect the submission's contents?

Scholarly context: Does the submission engage with current research on the topic? Does the author clearly identify the submission's new contribution in light of this research? Are there any conspicuous omissions of important and relevant works? We especially encourage reviewers to make suggestions on citing and engaging with publications by scholars of groups historically underrepresented in our field.

Body of the article: Does the submission's text bear out its thesis? Are the claims overstated or understated, and are they convincingly supported with evidence? Is the methodology appropriate? Are the analyses or other interpretations correct or at least potentially convincing? Are the conclusions justified? Does the author demonstrate the article's claims or merely assert them?

Supporting materials: Are there examples where needed? Are there superfluous examples? Are the citations adequate and appropriate? Are direct quotations or other specific information left uncited? Are the footnotes excessive or overly tangential?

Organization and length: Is the submission clearly organized? Does the order of topics make sense, or should anything be reordered? Is there a logical flow of topics, or are there large digressions that should be omitted? Is the submission of sufficient length to treat its topic adequately? Should it be expanded or cut down?

Writing: Accepted submissions receive two rounds of copyediting as well as proofreading. As grammar criticism can be a racialized practice, we discourage reviewers from basing their final recommendation on matters of grammar and tone. This, of course, presumes that the writing sufficiently enables the ideas, claims, and argumentation to be understood.