

# Tips for reviewing

1. Ensure that the subject is within **your area of expertise** i.e, you know enough about the topic to make reasonable judgments.
2. **Read the abstract first** to see if what the authors are stating makes logical sense and if it is written in a way that is comprehensible. Some manuscripts involve excellent work and interesting observations, but they are so poorly written that it is difficult to understand what the author is saying. This is a relatively common problem with authors whose native language is not English. In this case recommend that the author gets appropriate help for the Publications team (who will have someone dealing with this).
3. Determine if the observation made and reported is something new or if it reproduces previously made observations? This is fine for this conference but needs to not breach previously published copyright.
4. **Examine tables and figures** to see if the legends are clear and if the tables and figures demonstrate the same thing that is stated in the text. Frequently, material placed in a table does not have to be reported in detail in the results section.
5. **Look to see if the statistical analysis makes sense.** Are the differences reported in the statistical analysis of sufficient magnitude to be of biological or clinical significance? Remember not all papers have this component.
6. **Examine the methods to make sure the authors knew what they were doing.** These may be described only briefly.
7. **Read the discussion and see if it makes sense** and if it reflects what the data in the article reports. Look for unnecessary conjecture or unfounded conclusions that are not based on the evidence presented.
8. Note whether the manuscript is **concise and well organized**. Many could be shortened with improvement.
9. Note whether the **quality of the figures or photos is adequate for accurate reproduction**. If not, you can recommend that the authors have better diagrams and higher resolution plates
10. Please take this job seriously, the Congress' reputation will depend in part on this peer review process.

## Five reasons to pause

Stop and contact the Publications group ([papers@speleo2017.com](mailto:papers@speleo2017.com)) if you can answer “yes” to any of these questions:

1. Has the author neglected to follow the instructions that were issued e.g. length of paper? Nevertheless layout will reduce the size of the paper slightly. There is **maximum** of 6 pages per paper.
2. Are there potential conflicts of interest either declared or not declared but known by the reviewer?
3. Was there appropriate informed consent (human experiments) with documentation that a human or animal protection committee reviewed the protocol prior to the initiation of the study?
4. Is the manuscript full of typographical errors or mistakes in references, implying a sloppy job of putting it together? Remember some will have English problems which can be fixed.
5. Is there a chance that there is scientific fraud or plagiarism involved in this manuscript?

**Nevertheless it is important that we do not allow our own biases to blind us to new work or someone else’s opinion and ideas. BE FAIR!**

If you have any questions contact Susan White at [papers@speleo2017.com](mailto:papers@speleo2017.com)