

## INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

### OVERVIEW

**The Annals of Tropical Research (Ann. Trop. Res. | ATR)** is a peer-reviewed, open-access journal established in 1979 by Visayas State University (VSU), Philippines. It is indexed in DOAJ, a signatory of BOAI, listed in the *Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)* journal list (Journal ID: 5237), and recognized by CHED. As of September 2025, ATR has been officially accepted for indexing in Scopus. Published semi-annually (June and December), ATR is fully funded by VSU and does not charge article processing or publication fees. The journal disseminates scientific findings on tropical upland, lowland, and marine ecosystems and their communities, providing a platform for local and international scholars to advance knowledge and sustainable development in the tropics.

### PEER-REVIEW PROCESS

All manuscripts submitted to the ATR undergo a rigorous peer-review process to ensure scientific quality, originality, and ethical integrity.

#### 1. Initial Editorial Assessment

Upon submission, the Editor-in-Chief evaluates the manuscript for its relevance to the scope of ATR, clarity of research objectives, and soundness of methodology. In rare cases, exceptional manuscripts or invited papers may be accepted at this stage, provided approval is obtained from the Editorial Board. Conversely, manuscripts may be rejected outright if:

- The topic does not fall under the scope of ATR,
- The study design is fundamentally flawed,
- The research does not adhere to ethical standards, or
- The paper lacks originality, novelty, or significance.

#### 2. Assignment to Associate Editor and Reviewers

If deemed suitable, the manuscript is assigned to an Associate Editor with subject expertise. The Associate Editor selects at least two independent reviewers with relevant specialization.

#### 3. Double-Blind Peer Review

ATR follows a double-blind peer-review system, ensuring that both authors and reviewers remain anonymous to one another. This confidentiality promotes impartial evaluation and constructive feedback.

#### 4. Review Timeline and Responsibilities

Reviewers are typically given two to three weeks to complete their evaluation. They assess the manuscript's methodology, analysis, results, and overall contribution to the field, and submit a detailed report with a recommendation:

- **Accept without revision:** The paper meets all criteria for publication.

- **Accept with minor revisions:** Small improvements are required before acceptance.
- **Revise and resubmit (major revisions):** Substantial changes are necessary; the revised manuscript undergoes further review.
- **Reject or Decline Submission:** The manuscript is unsuitable for publication in its current form.

#### 5. Author Revisions

Authors are given two to four weeks to revise their manuscripts, depending on the nature of the review feedback. Failure to submit a revision within the allotted time may result in rejection, subject to the author's reasons being properly communicated to the Editor-in-Chief.

#### 6. Final Decision

After satisfactory revisions, the Associate Editor endorses the manuscript to the Editor-in-Chief, who makes the final decision on acceptance for publication.

#### 7. Ethical Oversight

ATR follows the COPE Core Practices for peer review and publication ethics. Cases of suspected misconduct, such as plagiarism, data fabrication, and unethical research, are investigated promptly, and appropriate editorial action is taken when necessary.

#### 8. Publication

Accepted manuscripts undergo professional copyediting, proofreading, and layout before publication. All published articles are indexed, archived, and citable, in line with international best practices.

### SELECTED GUIDELINES FOR DIFFERENT STUDIES

ATR recommends that authors prepare their manuscripts following these guidelines, whenever applicable:

1. Materials Design Analysis Reporting Framework (**MDAR**)
2. Nature Reporting Life Sciences Research (**NPG Reporting Checklist**)
3. Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments (**ARRIVE**)
4. Minimum Information for Biological and Biomedical Investigations (**MIBBI**)
5. Strengthening the Reporting of Genetic Association Studies (**STREGA**)
6. Strengthening the reporting of observational studies in epidemiology (**STROBE**)
7. Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (**PRISMA**)
8. Case Reports Guidelines (**CARE**)
9. Standards for Reporting Qualitative Research (**SRQR**)
10. Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trails (**CONSORT**)

### MANUSCRIPT STRUCTURE

Manuscripts must be written in English and formatted double-spaced on one side of A4-sized paper (21 cm x 29.7 cm) with standard margins (2.54 cm). Use Arial font at 12 points and include continuous line numbering. All pages, including tables and figures, should have a page number in

the bottom center of the paper.

### 1. Original Research Article

This pertains to reports of new, unpublished results of original research that advance knowledge in tropical sciences. Includes experimental, field, or laboratory studies with clear methodology and analysis.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 7,000$  words (including abstract, references, tables, and figures).
- **Abstract:** Must include the Background, Objectives, Methods, Results, and Conclusion. Limit to  $\leq 300$  words.
- **Keywords:** 4–6.
- **Main sections:** Introduction; Materials and Methods; Results; Discussion; Conclusion.
- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 8.

### 2. Systematic Review or Meta-Analysis

This synthesizes all available evidence addressing a specific research question using systematic methods, which may include meta-analysis. The manuscript must clearly describe the search strategy, including the criteria for inclusion and exclusion, as well as the quality assessment.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 8,000$  words (including abstract, references, tables, and figures).
- **Abstract:** Must include the Background, Objectives, Methods (including search strategy), Results, and Conclusion. Limit to  $\leq 300$  words.
- **Keywords:** 4–6.
- **Main sections:** Introduction; Methods (search strategy, inclusion/exclusion criteria, quality assessment); Results; Discussion; Conclusion.
- **Registration:** Authors are encouraged to register protocols in [PROSPERO](#) or similar registries.
- **Figures/Tables:** Flow diagram of study selection (PRISMA) is mandatory; a maximum of 10 tables/figures.

### 3. Review Article (Narrative or Scoping Review)

This provides a broad overview, synthesis, and critical analysis of literature on a topical issue, concept, or emerging field. Unlike systematic reviews, narrative/scoping reviews are interpretive and do not require exhaustive methods.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 7,000$  words (including abstract, references, tables, and figures).
- **Abstract:** Unstructured,  $\leq 250$  words.
- **Main sections:** Introduction; Thematic/Chronological Review of Literature; Critical Analysis; Knowledge Gaps; Conclusion and Future Directions.
- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 8.

### 4. Methods or Technical Note

This presents new methods, techniques, tools, or modifications of existing methods with potential broad applicability. Focus is on reproducibility, innovation, and validation.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 4,000$  words (including abstract, references, tables, and figures).
- **Abstract:** Unstructured,  $\leq 250$  words.
- **Main sections:** Introduction; Detailed Method/Technique; Applications; Limitations; Conclusion.
- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 5.

## 5. Case Report

This describes unique or rare cases in tropical research, including unusual diseases, novel management approaches, or unexpected outcomes. It must highlight its educational or scientific value.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 4,000$  words (including abstract, references, tables, and figures).
- **Abstract:** Must include the Background, Case Presentation, Outcome, and Conclusion. Limit to  $\leq 250$  words.
- **Main sections:** Introduction; Case Presentation; Discussion; Conclusion.
- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 4 (e.g., clinical images, histology, diagnostic results).
- **Patient/Animal Ethics:** Must include ethical approval or informed consent statement where

## 6. Perspective

This pertains to concise, thought-provoking contributions that offer fresh insights, conceptual advances, or forward-looking perspectives on emerging trends or debates. This is less formal than a review, but evidence-based.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 4,000$  words.
- **Abstract:** Not required, but may include  $\leq 250$  words abstract.
- **Main sections:** Brief Introduction; Argument/Insight; Conclusion.
- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 2.
- **References:** Limited to 15.

## 7. Opinion or Viewpoint

This is an authoritative, evidence-informed commentary on current issues, policies, or controversies in tropical research. Unlike perspectives, opinions prioritize advocacy or argumentation.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 4,000$  words.
- **Abstract:** Not required, but may include  $\leq 250$  words abstract.
- **Main sections:** Flexible (author's argument supported by evidence).

- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 2.
- **References:** Limited to 20.

## 8. Editorial

This is written by the Editorial Board or invited experts. It provides context to current issues, introduces a special issue, or comments on emerging challenges in tropical sciences.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 2,000$  words.
- **Abstract:** Not required.
- **Main sections:** Flexible, typically include Introduction, Key Message, and Closing Remarks.
- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 2.
- **References:** Limited to 15.

## 9. Correction / Erratum

This addresses errors in a published article that affect clarity, but do not invalidate the findings. It includes author name corrections, data clarifications, or minor factual adjustments.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 500$  words.
- **Abstract:** Not required.
- **Main sections:** Clear reference to the original article (with DOI), description of the correction.
- **Figures/Tables:** Only if necessary to clarify correction.

## 10. Addendum

This provides important additional information, clarifications, or updates to a previously published article. It must be directly linked to the original publication.

- **Word limit:**  $\leq 1,000$  words.
- **Abstract:** Not required.
- **Main sections:** Context of original publication; Additional data/analysis/clarification; Conclusion.
- **Figures/Tables:** Maximum of 2.

References must conform to ATR's reference style. Figures and tables should be positioned after the reference list, each on its own page and accompanied by appropriate captions. Supplementary materials may be submitted separately in electronic format. Furthermore, ethical considerations must be clearly articulated for any research involving humans, animals, or sensitive data.

The submitted draft must include sections for Acknowledgment, Author Contributions, Funding Sources, Availability of Data and Materials, Ethical Considerations, Competing Interests, and References.

## REFERENCES

All references mentioned in the manuscript should be listed in the reference section of the manuscript. Authors are encouraged to use reference manager software such as Zotero, Endnote, or Mendeley and conform with the **APA 7th edition citation and referencing style**, with **published articles starting Volume 47, Year 2025**. Authors are likewise encouraged to use current literature (not more than 10 years) unless these are vital to the study. The authors may refer to the examples below (lifted from the APA 7<sup>th</sup> Common Reference Example Guide) <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/reference-examples.pdf>. For more information and guidance, please refer to this link: <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples>

### **Journal Article (Section 10.1)**

Edwards, A. A., Steacy, L. M., Siegelman, N., Rigobon, V. M., Kearns, D. M., Rueckl, J. G., & Compton, D. L. (2022). Unpacking the unique relationship between set for variability and word reading development: Examining word- and child-level predictors of performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 114(6), 1242–. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000696>

### **Authored Book (Section 10.2)**

Kaufman, K. A., Glass, C. R., & Pineau, T. R. (2018). Mindful sport performance enhancement: Mental training for athletes and coaches. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000048-000>

### **Edited Book Chapter (Section 10.3)**

Zelege, W. A., Hughes, T. L., & Drozda, N. (2020). Homecollaboration to promote mind–body health. In C. Maykel & M. A. Bray (Eds.), *Promoting mindhealth in schools: Interventions for mental health professionals* (pp. 11–). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000157-002>

### **Dissertation From a Database (Section 10.6)**

Horvath-Plyman, M. (2018). Social media and the college student journey: An examination of how social media use impacts social capital and affects college choice, access, and transition (Publication No. 10937367) [Doctoral dissertation, New York University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

### **Preprint Article (Section 10.8)**

Latimier, A., Peyre, H., & Ramus, F. (2020). A meta-analytic review of the benefit of spacing out retrieval practice episodes on retention. PsyArXiv. <https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/kzy7u/>

### **Data Set (Section 10.9)**

O'Donohue, W. (2017). *Content analysis of undergraduate psychology textbooks* (ICPSR 21600; Version V1) [Data set]. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research <https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR36966.v1>

### **Open Educational Resource (Section 10.16)**

Fagan, J. (2024, February 7). *Nursing clinical brain*. OER Commons. Retrieved June 2, 2024, from <https://oercommons.org/authoring/53029-nursing-clinical-brain/view>

## **ILLUSTRATIONS, FIGURES, AND TABLES**

Figures must be of high quality, with lines, lettering, and symbols large enough to remain clear after reduction to as much as 50% of their original size. They should not exceed A4 or letter-size dimensions. Tables and figures must be placed on separate pages after the references and should not be embedded within the main text.

Each table and figure must include a concise, self-explanatory caption (placed above tables and below figures). Explanatory notes to tables should be indicated using superscript lowercase letters.

Photographs should be submitted as high-resolution images with sufficient contrast and detail. Color figures may be included when essential for clarity.

If figures, tables, photographs, or text passages have been previously published, authors must obtain written permission from the copyright holder(s) and provide this documentation upon submission. Any material submitted without evidence of permission will be assumed to be original work by the author(s).

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND UNITS**

Only SI units and abbreviations should be used. Normal and molar concentrations should be written in italics N and M, respectively. The following standard abbreviations should also be used: mg, g, kg, km, mm, cm, m, rpm, s (second), h (hour), min (minute), L (liter), mL, m<sup>3</sup>, kg per ha or kg ha<sup>-1</sup> (the minus index should always be used in tables and figures). Latin biological names should be italicized. These commonly used Latin words are not italicized: *a priori*, *a posteriori*, *in vitro*, *in utero*, *in situ*, *ad libitum*, *per se*, and *viz*.

## **SCIENTIFIC NAME**

The common name of a species should be followed by the scientific name upon its first use in the abstract and text. The scientific name must be composed of genus, species, and authority only and enclosed in parentheses. For well-known species, however, scientific names may be omitted from article titles. The scientific name should be used only if no common name exists in English.

## **STATEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS**

1. **Acknowledgment:** Provide any acknowledgments you would like to include in your manuscript. This may include individuals, institutions, or organizations that contributed to your research but are not listed as co-authors.

2. **Author Contributions:** Refer to ICMJE. Indicate the initials of the author's name, and his/her contribution, eg, JDC designed the study and wrote the paper.

3. **Funding Source:** List all funding sources supporting your manuscript's work. This information is essential for transparency and compliance with publication standards.

4. **Availability of Data and Materials:** Indicate if data and materials generated or analyzed during this study are included in this article and its supplementary files and/or available from the corresponding author upon request.

5. **Ethical Consideration:** Please indicate approval from the ethics committee whenever applicable. Human research involving participants, materials, or data must adhere to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and receive approval from an ethics committee. Research experiments involving vertebrates or regulated invertebrates must adhere to institutional, national, or international regulations and, where applicable, should be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

6. **Competing Interest:** Disclose any potential conflicts of interest related to the research, authorship, or publication of the manuscript. Even if there are no conflicts, please indicate that the authors declare no competing interests.

**Address:**

Office of the Vice President for  
Research, Extension, and Innovation  
(OVPREI). Visayas State University (VSU),  
Visca, Baybay City, Leyte. PHILIPPINES  
6521-A.

**Principal Contact :**

Dr. Harvie P. Portugaliza (Editor-in-  
Chief)  
[atr.eic@vsu.edu.ph](mailto:atr.eic@vsu.edu.ph)  
Dr. Janet Alexis A. de los Santos  
(Managing Editor)  
[atr.me@vsu.edu.ph](mailto:atr.me@vsu.edu.ph)

**Support Contact :**

**Annals of Tropical Research**  
Scientific Publications Unit, OVPREI,  
VSU, Visca, Baybay City, Leyte.  
PHILIPPINES 6521-A.  
[spunit.ovprei@vsu.edu.ph](mailto:spunit.ovprei@vsu.edu.ph)