



1) Background

- a) The International Turfgrass Society (ITS) runs, through the efforts of the host country, an international conference every 4 years. The ITS is responsible for publishing the papers presented at each conference in a peer-reviewed format. Acceptable papers will be published in the International Turfgrass Society Research Journal (ITSRJ). Please note that the ITS has discontinued publishing an Annexe of non-refereed papers. Authors are reminded that the **criteria of originality remains paramount for any work described in the ITSRJ.**
- b) This standards document provides authors and Editorial Board members information on:
 - i) the types of papers that will be acceptable for submission to the ITSRJ;
 - ii) a set of instructions to authors, which are specific to the ITSRJ; and
 - iii) the system of refereeing used by the ITS Editorial Board for submitted manuscripts.

2) Types of Journal Articles

a) Scope

- i) ITSRJ is a quadrennial publication of papers in turfgrass science and management that may involve, but is not limited to, plant genetics; breeding; cytology; metabolism; physiology; ecology; weed science; entomology; pathology; genomics, molecular genetics, and biotechnology; plant genetic resources; soil science and management.
- ii) While the most common type of paper to appear in the ITSRJ is the standard research paper, the Journal has also published other sorts of papers. The following categories are acceptable formats for publishing in the ITSRJ. Descriptions of each category are summarized below.
 - (1) Research Papers (volunteered)
 - (2) Review Papers (invited but may also be volunteered)
 - (3) Issue Papers (invited but may also be volunteered)
 - (4) Case Studies (volunteered)
 - (5) Short Communications (volunteered)

b) Research Papers

- i) Articles reporting experimentation or research in turfgrass will be accepted for review as papers. These papers will be original works of research that describe the background and justification for the work, how the work was conducted, and its significant findings along with appropriate interpretations and conclusions.
- ii) Most guides to authors from scientific journals provide clear direction on article structure relative to the type of research: field, greenhouse, laboratory, etcetera. The general article structure describing experiments includes an Abstract, Introduction (including literature review), Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion (or Results and Discussion sections combined), and References. There may be cases where this structure should be altered based on article/research content and examples of this can be found in numerous journals. Any authors choosing to deviate from a traditional structure for a paper must be able to provide documentation of that structure being used elsewhere by a recognized scientific journal to the Editor, Technical Editor, and/or reviewers.
- iii) As a general rule, more repetition of experiments is required when there is less control over conditions. Field studies should be repeated in space or time to reflect appropriate or expected environmental (season, soil, etcetera) influences.

It is generally expected that field experiments will be repeated for more than one year. Exceptions to this general rule must be justified by the author(s). For example, some research questions may be more appropriately answered by repeating a trial in the same year under different temperature



conditions rather than repeating in different years under similar temperature conditions. Authors must provide a brief and clear rationale regarding decisions on the repetition of trial work that might be unusual to reviewers and many readers.

There is less need to repeat greenhouse/glasshouse experiments depending on how well the conditions have been controlled. A single run for experiments conducted in a fully controlled environment (e.g. flowering, temperature effects) should be adequate. For research involving controlled environments, see https://www.crops.org/publications/forms_resources/ for guidelines.

c) Review Papers

- i) Articles reporting reviews or interpretation of experimentation or research in turfgrass will be accepted for review as papers. Review papers are usually less formal than full-length articles and may be longer than a research paper but should generally not exceed 16 pages in the Journal including reference list. Plenary papers are often of this category. Such papers should provide a synthesis of existing knowledge and give new insights or concepts not previously presented in the literature, or at least not with the same level of detail. These articles should not be considered exhaustive reviews of the literature but should instead include enough literature review to provide a basis for understanding and interpretation of the topic under consideration.
- ii) A good review is often one of the most important ways to advance an area of science. Readers expect a review paper to:
 - (1) deal with an important subject that needs a scholarly review,
 - (2) cover the entire spectrum of the subject, not just the segment about which the author of the review paper has published articles,
 - (3) present a balanced coverage that is fair to all the work it reviews,
 - (4) add a perspective to the entire subject and contribute significantly to understanding, and
 - (5) identify knowledge gaps and needs for further research.

d) Issue Papers

- i) Intent of these papers is to stimulate discussion and possibly a rethinking of current views. They may be provocative and controversial. These papers may give a broader and often more personal perspective on a subject than a review paper. Papers discussing contemporary environmental issues may present a combination of scientific, political, legislative, and regulatory perspectives. These papers will often have more of a philosophical bent to them, but must still be based on a foundation of good science. Although most are invited by the Editor, volunteer submissions should be welcomed. Plenary paper may also be of this category. The length of these papers should be limited to 16 pages in the Journal including reference list.

e) Case Studies Papers

- i) Case studies should provide thorough documentation of an activity or series of activities that involve turfgrass science or management. These papers should provide all the relevant information or material gathered about the activity. Arrangements of these papers will probably be varied because of the diverse and unique subject matter for papers in this category. The arrangements, however, should serve as an organized record and have analytical value for a scientist, educator, student, manager, etcetera. The length of these papers should be similar to that of research papers. The criteria for originality of work as well as the review process apply to papers in this category.

f) Short Communications

- i) Short Communications represents a category of scientific manuscripts that describe unique experimental techniques and apparatus, recent observations of unique phenomena, or other trial information. Observations usually are limited to studies and reports from not yet repeated



experiments, of unrepeatable phenomena, or other unique circumstances. Authors should note that this category provides authors the opportunity to submit papers addressing unique work that is in progress, exploratory, or hypothesis-testing. Examples would be the work of graduate students or newly hired scientists that have initiated their unique research in the 3rd year of the ITSRJ cycle. This category may also be useful to established authors that have recently initiated some unique and creative work that he/she wishes to present to ITS.

- ii) These articles will be shorter than research papers, normally occupying not more than four printed pages in the ITSRJ
- iii) Authors submitting papers to this category in ITSRJ must fully understand the consequences of publishing data in this category. All reputable scientific journals expect that any submitted work is original and unpublished or not being considered for publication elsewhere. If portions of a paper have been submitted or published elsewhere, the authors are required to disclose that fact at the time of submission and to provide copies of relevant prior publications. In general, publication in nontechnical media or as a short communication (e.g. in an issue of ITSRJ) will be considered prior publication only if substantially all of the data and conclusions have been published.
- iv) Occasionally, the Editor of ITSRJ may believe a paper submitted as a research paper will better fit this category, or vice versa. If the author agrees, the manuscript can be transferred to or from this category of papers.
- v) The **criteria for originality remains paramount for this category of article** and the review procedure for these papers should be similar to that for research papers. However, the process for short communications should be structured by the Editor to be more rapid to allow inclusion of more recent results.

3) Instructions to Authors

a) General Requirements

- i) Papers must be either reports of original research, critical reviews, issue/interpretive articles, case studies, or short communications. Submissions to ITSRJ must not be previously published in or simultaneously submitted to any other scientific or technical journal.

b) No Prior Publication, No Simultaneous Submission

- i) Except for reviews or issues papers, publications in the ITSRJ must be original reports of research or case studies. Submission of a manuscript for review is understood to imply that the work is original and unpublished and not being considered for publication elsewhere. If portions of the paper have been submitted or published elsewhere, the authors are required to disclose that fact at the time of submission and to provide copies of relevant prior publications. Whether publication in nontechnical outlets constitutes prior publication is decided on a case-by-case basis. In general, publication in nontechnical media or as a short communication (e.g. in a previous issue of ITSRJ) will be considered prior publication only if substantially all of the data and conclusions have been published.

c) Eligibility of Authors

- i) Papers are published on the condition that at least one of the authors will attend the ITRC with an oral or poster presentation of the paper.
- ii) At least one author of each paper presented to the ITSRJ must be a member in good standing of the International Turfgrass Society. For full members, an author cannot be the sole member on more than two paper submissions. Student members cannot be the senior or first author or sole member on more than one paper submission. Authors presenting plenary papers may be the sole member on



two paper submissions in addition to the plenary paper. For information on ITS membership, visit <http://www.turfsociety.com>

d) Length of the Printed Paper

- i) Manuscripts should be as concise as possible to reduce to a minimum the number of pages of the ITSRJ. As a general rule the maximum recommended length of an invited paper is 16 pages and of a submitted oral paper or poster is 8 pages, including figures and tables, except for short communications which should be no more than 4 pages. An average page of text will contain about 800 words. Manuscript reviewers may recommend eliminating unnecessary information and will advise on the number of pages each manuscript should have taking into account its content and characteristics. For any length over the recommended number of pages the ITS will have the right to charge \$\$\$ per additional page.

e) Language

- i) English is the official language for the Journal. The ITSRJ has no preference whether English or American spelling (fertilizer-fertiliser, center-centre, etc.) is used although uniformity within each paper is required. Latin words or phrases are in italics, with the exception of very common expressions such as "i.e.," "e.g.," "et al.," "in vitro," "ex vitro" and "etc." The expression "etc." for "and so forth" should be used only with series, such as 1, 2, 3, etc. The authors' instructions used by the International Society of Horticultural Science (ISHS) contain useful suggestions for preparing a manuscript for an international audience; see <http://www.ishs.org/wri/pap1.htm>.

f) Units

- i) Use the metric system exclusively. Use abbreviation L for liter, mg/L for milligram per liter, ml for milliliter, and t for tonne (metric ton). SI units can be used where appropriate.

g) Arrangement of Manuscripts

- i) Manuscripts of research papers prepared for ITSRJ are normally arranged in the following order:
 - (1) Title and byline.
 - (2) Author–paper documentation (addresses/affiliations, e-mail of the corresponding author, etc.).
 - (3) Abstract.
 - (4) Introduction (including literature review).
 - (5) Materials and Methods.
 - (6) Results. This section is sometimes combined with the discussion.
 - (7) Discussion. This may include a subsection for conclusions. No separate summary section is used, because it would duplicate the function of the abstract; a summary statement may, however, be given as a closing paragraph.
 - (8) Acknowledgments (optional).
 - (9) References. (The reference format used by Crop Science is recommended; it provides a comprehensive list of journal name abbreviations to use).
 - (10) Figure captions, then tables, then the figures themselves.
- ii) Authors are encouraged to review the ISHS Authors Guide at <http://www.ishs.org/wri/pap1.htm> for details on arrangement of papers. Deviations from this order are acceptable if based on a structure that is consistent with the subject matter content; it is preferred that the arrangement be based on one used by a recognized scientific journal. For the cases where the arrangement of a manuscript is highly unusual, the corresponding author should consider providing an example paper using such an arrangement along with the submission or the Editor and Technical Editor may request this from the corresponding author.



h) Statistical Design and Analysis

- i) A description of the statistical design and analysis is expected so that readers can judge the results for validity. The particular statistical method used and its appropriateness depend upon the type of research, theoretical assumptions, sampling design, and type of observations. The reporting of the results from each analysis should include a brief description of the statistical method and a literature citation providing its full detail, and descriptions of sampling design and experimental observations in relation to the statistical analysis. In all cases, a measure of the statistical confidence used to interpret the data in relation to the research question(s) should be reported by the authors.
- ii) More details on reporting of statistical design and analysis can be found in the guidelines for authors of many scientific journals; for example, see <https://www.crops.org/files/publications/style/chapter-04.pdf> Additionally, the following textbooks provide detailed discussions of the principles and procedures of statistics for research.
 - (1) Little, T.M., and F.J. Hills. 1980. Statistical methods in agricultural research. John Wiley & Sons, New York.
 - (2) Steel, R.G.D., and J.H. Torrie. 1980. Principles and procedures of statistics: A biometrical approach. 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill, New York.
 - (3) Steel, R.G.D., J.H. Torrie, and D.A. Dickey. 1997. Principles and procedures of statistics: A biometrical approach. 3rd ed. McGraw-Hill, New York.

i) Description of Soil

- i) Authors should use the system that applies in their country for describing the soil used in an experiment that will be published in ITRSJ. If feasible, authors are also encouraged to provide the equivalent description in the US soil classification, at least at the broader level. Listing the soil type used by the author's national system could be useful to readers should the translation to the US system prove to be inaccurate.
- ii) In the cases where turfgrass will be grown on a man-made profile, the profile should be properly described and a soil type will not be stated. Some countries have terms for such soils; for example, anthroposols in The Australian Soil Classification (Isbell, 2003) and there is similar terminology in other systems around the world, which authors should use.

j) Chemical Names

- i) Authors should use the simplified common name of chemicals based on standard on-line databases.

k) Plant Species and Cultivar Names

- i) The scientific and common names of plant species and cultivars should be stated at first appearance in the paper, and then scientific names thereafter. This is the preference for an international audience given the often parochial nature and use of common names. The botanical authority should be stated the first time only or in a list in a table.
- ii) There is often confusion about names of plant varieties. Full and correct names should always be used. For example, the registered name of the hybrid bermudagrass is 'Champion Dwarf' (PP9888) not 'Champion' as is often stated. Moreover, plant varieties are sold with formal cultivar names or under a trademark, either registered or unregistered. These need to be differentiated clearly and used accurately. For species names, use single quotation marks around the cultivar name only; TM or ® should be used with a varietal name at first use only, and simply the name thereafter. FloraDwarf is a trademark used with 'FHB-135' (PP9030), and TifSport is the trademark use to market 'Tift 94' (PP10079). If these names are unregistered in the country of the research, these names should be



referred to with a trademark: as FloraDwarf™ and TifSport™. If the name is a registered trademark, a superscript ® should be substituted for ™: for example, *Paspalum vaginatum* SeaDwarf®.

l) Ethical Responsibilities

- i) Issues such as plagiarism and not giving proper credit to others will not be tolerated in ITSRJ. **Evidence of plagiarism and similar misconduct are immediate grounds for rejection of a manuscript and loss of membership in ITS.**
- ii) The ITSRJ is pursuing access to suitable software (e.g., iThenticate) that will process all submitted manuscripts to identify plagiarism and duplication.

4) System for Refereeing Manuscripts Submitted to ITSRJ

a) Editorial Board

- i) The ITSRJ will have both an Editor (for the current Conference) and an Assistant Editor (the designated Editor for the next Conference) that are selected by the ITS Board. The Editor and Assistant Editor will propose a broad international group of Associate Editors reflecting the diversity of the ITS membership for approval by the ITS Board.
- ii) The selection of Associate Editors must also be matched the wide range of topics in the ITSRJ including, but not limited to, soils, nutrition, breeding and molecular studies, plant physiology, ecology, weeds, pests, diseases, economics and education.
- iii) Manuscripts should be assigned to Associated Editors with appropriate expertise.

b) Review Process

- i) The editorial process for ITSRJ is described for the benefit of improving consistency in refereeing standards for all submitted manuscripts. The review process is provided to all Editorial Board members (Editor, Assistant Editor, Associate Editors, and reviewers). It also available through the ITS website and is included in all calls for papers.
- ii) All manuscripts are to be submitted electronically to the Editor. The Editor will provide a copy of all submitted manuscripts to the Assistant Editor as backup (This will not be necessary if Manuscript Tracker or manuscript submission and review software is used). All manuscripts will be processed through iThenticate software (or similar) to identify plagiarism and duplication. The Editor will make an immediate determination of each manuscript as it is submitted regarding its readiness for review. The Editor may ask the Assistant Editor for a second opinion regarding the readiness of a manuscript but this action should not substantially delay the decision. If the manuscript is ready, it is immediately assigned to an Associate Editor with the appropriate expertise. If the manuscript is not ready, the Editor must immediately contact the author to determine the proper course of action for the manuscript rather than passing that decision along to Associate Editors and reviewers. The Editor has the authority to may make suggestions and provide the authors an opportunity to revise the manuscript accordingly and, should time allow, resubmit the manuscript for review.
- iii) The Editor along with the Assistant Editor will assemble an appropriate number of Associate Editors that will be representative of the membership of ITS. Once assembled, a listing of Associate Editors will be reported to the ITS Board for approval. The ITS Board has authority to request modifications in composition of the Associate Editors. The assembly of Associate Editors should be completed and published on the ITS website before the call for papers.



- iv) The Editor will be responsible for monitoring all Associate Editors and assuring an expedient and fair review process. The Assistant Editor may assist the Editor with this duty but this should be limited and full responsibility for all manuscripts lies with the Editor.
 - v) The Editor is responsible for handling all appeals. The Editor may assign an appeal(s) to the Assistant Editor in the case of conflict of interest or an extraordinary number of appeal cases.
 - vi) Plenary and invited papers should be refereed by the Editor and the Assistant Editor or an Associate Editor qualified to review the subject matter. The Editor may select a reviewer other than the Assistant Editor or an Associate Editor if expertise outside the Editorial Board is required.
 - vii) Each Associate Editor will handle no more than five manuscripts. Associate Editors will solicit two additional reviews for each manuscript. All reviewers agreeing to review for ITSRJ will be sent the Standards for ITSRJ by the Associate Editor.
 - viii) Any recommendations from the Associate Editor for each manuscript to the Editor should be based on a minimum of two reviews.
 - ix) See the document – *Guidelines for ITSRJ Reviews* – for more information on review criteria and recommendations of reviewers, Associate Editors, and the Editor.
- c) **Appeal Process**
- i) Authors will have the option to appeal any result of the review of a submitted manuscript.
 - ii) Authors and the Editorial Board must adhere to all submission and review deadlines for the appeal process to be effective. If timelines are not met, there may not be sufficient time to process appeals.
 - iii) All appeals are made to the Editor. Immediately upon appeal, the Editor and/or Assistant Editor will identify at least one representative from the author's region or country to assist with the appeal. The country/regional representative does not need to, but may, be an Associate Editor or ITS Board member. The appeals board will be a three person including the Editor, Assistant Editor, and country/regional review representative. A majority vote by the appeals board constitutes a valid decision on the appeal.
 - iv) The Associate Editor that handled the appealed manuscript may be queried for information about the appealed manuscript but will not deliberate or have a vote on the decision of the appeal.
 - v) The Editor and Associate Editor should be prepared to report on any appeal to the ITS Board for the purpose of monitoring the integrity of the process with the expectation that this would be rarely done, if at all.