

Guidelines on Authorship

Approved by the council of the Center for Junior Scholars (CJS) on 26.07.2023 and the Academic Senate on 15.11.2023 (resolution AS 5/853-15.11.2023)

I. Introduction

The Academic Senate at TU Berlin approved the *Principles for Ensuring Good Research practice at TU Berlin (GWP)* on 15.02.2023. These were published together with the *Implementation Regulations for Good Research Practice* in the Official Gazette of TU Berlin (AMBI) 16/2023. By taking these steps, TU Berlin adopted the German Research Foundation's (DFG) Code of Conduct *Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice*¹.

Taking guideline 14 of the DFG Code of Conduct² and Section 9 of *Principles for Ensuring Good Research practice at TU Berlin*³ as their starting point, the **Guidelines on Authorship** are intended to initiate a discussion regarding authorship at an early stage of a research project, and thus assist the process of deciding who should be included as co-authors of a publication.

The criteria for determining which contributions qualify for co-authorship in connection with a research paper are difficult or even impossible to define precisely. To help with this, a list has been devised as a guide, detailing various contributions that do not in themselves constitute co-authorship.

The preparation of a publication goes through a number of stages where authors (can) contribute to the publication in different ways.

The DFG⁴ identifies four different stages:

- Development and conceptual design of the research project
- Gathering, collection, acquisition or provision of data, software or sources
- Analysis/evaluation or interpretation of data, sources and conclusions drawn from them
- Drafting of the manuscript

¹ All universities in Germany were legally required to implement the [DFG Code of Conduct Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice](#) by 31.07.2023 at the latest.

² DFG Code of Conduct Guideline 14 - Authorship: "An author is an individual who has made a genuine, identifiable contribution to the content of a research publication of text, data or software. [...]"

³ Section 9(1) of *Principles for Ensuring Good Research practice at TU Berlin*: "An author is an individual who has made a significant contribution to a publication. This is the case in particular if the researcher was involved in a scientific capacity in the development and conception of the research project, or the preparation, collection, acquisition, provision of the data, software, sources, or the analysis/evaluation or interpretation of the data, sources and the conclusions drawn from these, or in the writing of the manuscript. Honorary authorship, where no such contribution has been made, is excluded. A management or supervisory function does not qualify for co-authorship."

⁴ In addition to the DFG, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) also adopted a [Statute for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice and Dealing with Suspected Cases of Scientific Misconduct \(Section 15\)](#) as a resolution at its 33rd general assembly on 10.5.2022. In 2014, the German Academic Association for Business Research (VHB) discussed authorship on the basis of a stage model for the publication process, and drafted criteria that do not qualify for inclusion as author. Both publications were taken into account when drafting these guidelines.

II. Guidelines on Authorship

TU Berlin strongly encourages researchers to agree on who should be included as the authors of research results. *The decision as to the order in which authors are named is made in good time, normally no later than when the manuscript is drafted, and in accordance with clear criteria that reflect the practices within the relevant subject areas. Researchers may not refuse to give their consent to publication of the results without sufficient grounds.*⁵

Each of the four stages has been assigned a list of criteria, **any of which viewed in isolation is not sufficient for inclusion as author**. The use of colored text is to highlight the different roles of those involved, e.g. supervisors, staff members, or students.

The following are not sufficient for inclusion as author:

1. Development and conceptual design of the research project
 - organizational responsibility for the acquisition of funding
 - managing an institution or organizational unit, such as a research group or institute (similar to phase 4)
 - formal supervisory function

2. Gathering, collection, acquisition or provision of data, software or sources
 - providing funding for the project and publication
 - providing existing research materials, such as data sets or data access, without any further specific contribution
 - providing sources
 - instructing staff in standard methods
 - providing equipment, software, experimental laboratories, test persons, etc. - unless their development/modification/selection is a relevant part of the scientific work
 - providing technical support during data collection
 - conducting purely practical data collection for a previously defined study/experiment

 - obtaining and organizing literature and sources according to detailed specifications

3. Analysis/evaluation or interpretation of data, sources and conclusions drawn from them
 - providing information or advice on the analysis/interpretation of specific data on request, e.g. in consultation with colleagues
 - conducting data evaluations and analyses according to detailed specifications

⁵ Here, TU Berlin adopts the wording of Guideline 14 of the [DFG Code of Conduct Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice](#).

4. Drafting of the manuscript

- proofreading and/or editing a largely completed version of the manuscript or the final manuscript without substantially influencing the content
- assuming responsibility for the quality of the content
- occasionally answering questions about the publication project
- managing an institution or organizational unit, such as an academic chair or institute, in which the publication was produced
- reviewing a preliminary version of the publication or commenting on it at conferences and workshops
- being invited to contribute to a conference, anthology, or journal

III. Further information / strong recommendations

1. Contributing more than one of the criteria listed above in one or more stages does not entitle a person to authorship.
2. Unless otherwise agreed in advance, all authors must contribute to the reviewing, checking, and approval of the manuscript at the end of the writing process.
3. Contributions from student theses that do not constitute authorship must be disclosed.
4. Honorary authorships are not permitted.
5. "Acknowledgment": Acknowledgments can be included in prefaces or footnotes. This also applies to significant contributions, such as funding, which do not (or cannot) constitute authorship.