



**Science
Societies**

Coming full circle: Learn, grow by reviewing

By Marilyn L. Warburton, David Clay, Ron Turco

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Graduating with a degree, receiving scientific awards, or being granted tenure are generally not the result of an individual's effort alone but those of a community that has helped that person solve problems and overcome barriers to success. Our professional Societies publish timely and relevant scientific journals to advance our understanding of numerous topics. At the same time, these journals help you reach your goals by providing constructive feedback, developing professional contacts for collaboration, and providing a structure for empowering individuals to be fully engaged in the scientific process. However, the publication process does not happen by magic. It involves hard work by the 13 ASA, CSSA, and SSSA journal editorial boards in cooperation with volunteers who peer-review manuscripts submitted for publication.

Our nonprofit member Society journals need your expertise in reviewing research manuscripts submitted for publication for this process to function. Unfortunately, our editors have difficulty finding reviewers and need to repeat the peer-review request process multiple times to gather the two reviews required for a single manuscript. A

typical response to a request is, “Sorry. I am too busy.” Editors often leverage personal contacts and professional colleagues to find committed peer reviewers.

If You Publish One Paper, You Should Review Two

If you have published in any quality journal, subject matter experts have lent their time and expertise to peer review your work. We ask you to return the favor and volunteer your time to review a manuscript. Visit our peer review web page at

www.agronomy.org/publications/journals/peer-review for testimonial videos and registration instructions. There’s no commitment, and we will only contact you with a request to review a manuscript in your area of study. Society leaders have suggested an informal policy of “if you publish one paper, you should review two.” Our Societies can only continue producing high quality, well-respected journals desired by researchers if we have impactful articles facilitated by qualified reviewers. In all, the review process helps our Societies reach their mission and scientific program goals.

Participation in the peer-review process can improve writing skills, help educate students, promote awareness of other research, and provide insight into new discoveries and solutions. Plus, it just feels good to help others. The bottom line is peer reviewers are volunteers that complete the scientific process. With peer review, the journals and our Societies benefit from a diverse scientific community that brings a variety of ideas to the table.



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While the art of providing constructive review is a learned process, our Societies can help you develop your skills. Our publishing partner, Wiley, offers online guidance on

becoming a peer reviewer at <https://bit.ly/3ubVNz8>. Our journal editors also work closely with less experienced but motivated individuals to develop peer-review skills. Lastly, the journals provide multiple recognition programs, such as our annual Outstanding Reviewer Awards program and Publons to track peer-review activity.

If you are interested in more peer-review information, please email Rebecca Funck, Senior Editorial Manager, at [Send Message](#).

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