



## Journals

Updated: March 18, 2022.

The American Library Association Glossary of Library and Information Science (2013) defines journal as "a periodical, especially one containing scholarly articles and/or disseminating current information on research and development in a particular subject."

NLM uses the following guidelines to determine whether a publication is a journal eligible for the collection:

- Publication must have an ISSN;
- Publication content is issued over time under a common title;
- Publication is a collection of articles by different authors;
- Publication is intended to be published indefinitely; and
- Publication shows evidence of a regular publication schedule.

In addition, structure, such as presence of volumes, issues, and citable pagination or unique article identifiers, is taken into consideration.

### Journal Type and Scope Considerations

The Library's objective is to support important discoveries in health, medicine and the life sciences by assembling a comprehensive collection of the world's most significant research journals, in all subjects collected by NLM and without regard to country of origin or language of publication. Therefore, NLM's first collecting priority is the original research journal, containing papers by credentialed researchers who possess expertise in the subject which they investigate.

NLM also collects a variety of other types of journals with an emphasis on those of interest to U.S. health professionals, though NLM selectively collects journals from other countries to document diverse approaches. These types include:

- Clinical practice journals, which describe practical approaches, tools and techniques for practitioners.
- Review journals, which consist of substantive summaries and analysis of recent research in a field.
- Clinical case reports, which describe a patient's medical symptoms, diagnosis and treatment for scientific or educational purposes. To be considered for the collection, reports should include substantial discussion about relevance to clinical practice and research. Journals that cover clinical and surgical procedures should provide a detailed explanation of the procedure and its impact on patient care.
- Data journals, which provide descriptions of biomedical research datasets, including genome sequences. These journals should detail the methods used to create or collect the data, describe validation of the data and facilitate the sharing and reuse of the data by other researchers. Datasets should be in publicly accessible repositories and fully referenced in the articles.

NLM collects more selectively:

- "Current awareness" periodicals, which provide cursory summaries of a topic.

- Journals whose aims and scope are local, regional, or institutional in nature. Such journals may have local significance, but usually do not have broader applicability to the international research or clinical community. NLM may select a local, regional, or institutional journal that contributes noteworthy, specialized scientific knowledge.

Generally, NLM does not collect periodicals that duplicate journal literature already in the collection.

When selecting scholarly and scientific journals, NLM expects, as a benchmark, at least 20% of the articles to be "in scope" - i.e., to fall within the subject collection parameters outlined in the Collection Development Guidelines. The Library may make exceptions to this rule to ensure that the collection provides sufficient geographic heterogeneity. For example, NLM may select basic science or social science journals from [developing countries](#), which often have little or no medical publishing per se.

### **Additional Considerations**

To be considered for the collection, a journal should demonstrate:

- good editorial quality;
- evidence of scientific rigor;
- elements that contribute to the objectivity, credibility, and scientific quality of its content, such as transparent information about
  - the methods for selecting articles,
  - the peer review process,
  - author and editor conflicts of interest, and
  - ethical policies, as well as article-level statements indicating adherence to these policies;
- editorial independence from the sponsor when commercial funding is received; and
- diversity in the authorship of articles including a low proportion of articles authored by editors and editorial board members. Exceptions may be made for more unique fields of study.

NLM expects journals to demonstrate conformance with established industry guidelines and best practices promoted by professional scholarly publishing organizations such as:

- [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\)](#)
  - [Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#) (joint statement by COPE, DOAJ, WAME, and OASPA)
- [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\)](#)
  - [Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#)
- [Council of Science Editors \(CSE\)](#)
- [National Information Standards Organization \(NISO\)](#)
  - [Recommended Practices for the Presentation and Identification of E-Journals \(PIE-J\)](#)

NLM also considers the publisher's and/or sponsoring organization's longevity, business practices, corporate structure, and record of performance regarding such issues as:

- quality of publications,
- experience in scholarly publishing,
- involvement with the scientific community,
- disclosure of and adherence to print and online publication standards, and
- promotion of editorial integrity and independence.

Selection of journals for specific NLM resources are dependent on the above, but may have other resource-level considerations, as outlined on their respective pages:

- Journal Selection for MEDLINE
- Journal Selection for PMC