Thank you for joining and welcome to the Frontiers for Young Minds community of editors.
Please, take 15 minutes to learn about Frontiers for Young Minds and your role by reading these guidelines.

You are always welcome to contact our Editorial Office at kids@frontiersin.org – we are here to help you to make this journal a success. We would also be happy to arrange a phone call with you to go through these guidelines.
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1. ABOUT FRONTIERS FOR YOUNG MINDS

Frontiers for Young Minds is a non-profit scientific journal for which young people serve not only as the target audience, but also as critical participants in the review of manuscripts written by expert researchers. We connect 8-15 year olds directly with leading scientists to provide feedback on articles about cutting-edge discoveries. The end result is a journal of freely available scientific articles that are written by leading scientists and shaped for younger audiences by the input of their own peers. As of the end of 2014, some of the best articles are highlighted in a co-branded blog that we are running with Scientific American. The quality of Frontiers for Young Minds was recognized as one of the American Library Association’s 2014 ‘Great Websites for Kids.’

How does it work?

- **Our Editorial board identifies** recent discoveries that are of potential interest to a younger audience. These can be articles published by Frontiers or other publishers.
- **The scientists behind the original research** write an article that puts the work in a broader context and is targeted to a younger audience. This new article is then submitted to Frontiers for Young Minds - free of charge. (Scientists also have the option of providing a review article of a fundamental concept in their discipline targeted for a younger audience.)
- **A Frontiers Associate Editor** then manages the peer review process and matches the article with one of our Young Minds - or a classroom of Young Minds - and a Science Mentor who review the article together to suggest relevant revisions.
- **Once the review process is completed**, the article is then validated by the Associate Editor and forwarded to the Frontiers’ office for production where it is typeset for online and printable versions.
- **The finished article** is published and made freely available on our website alongside the reviewers’ names.

We guarantee the protection of the identities of our young reviewers and only publish their first names.

2. YOUR ROLE AS ASSOCIATE EDITOR

As an Associate Editor you play a key role in establishing and growing your Specialty. Your primary roles will be to assemble a pool of Science Mentors who have Young Reviewers (section 2 of these guidelines), supervise the peer review process of manuscripts (section 3 of these guidelines), and to recruit submissions for the section.

As board members, you will also receive the editorial board discounts on publication fees with all Frontiers journals. Additionally, Science Mentors will receive the editorial board member discounts for a period of 3 months after joining the editorial board and 3 months each time they complete a review with a Young Reviewer. Please note that the costs associated with publishing each Frontiers for Young Minds article as open access are not charged to the authors, but rather are covered through the charitable support of our sponsors. As Frontiers for Young Minds utilizes the Frontiers review platform, some of the current materials available through the website may be those for the role of Associate Editors with one of our academic titles. We are working to replace these as quickly as possible, but if you have any questions.
regarding these materials in the meantime (such as the Terms & Conditions, Tasks & Strategies, or role Guidelines, etc) please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

For any questions, please refer to these guidelines or contact the Editorial Office at kids@frontiersin.org.

### 2.1 WHAT IS REQUIRED FROM THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR?

- **Assessing submitted manuscripts** for suitability both of content and language level for younger audiences.
- **Assembling and maintaining a pool of Science Mentors** (young researchers or more senior scientists) interested in working with Young Reviewers (individuals or classrooms).
- **Assigning the manuscript** to available reviewer-mentor pairs and overseeing the review process.
- **Validating that all concerns** brought up by the Young Reviewers have been addressed in author resubmissions.
- **Recommending recent academic articles** that you believe would be valuable to reframe for a broader audience in a Young Minds version.
- **Consider submitting a Young Minds article** of your own.

### 2.2 COMPLETE FRONTIERS PROFILE ON THE LOOP NETWORK

The information you provide here will not only be important for your presence on the Frontiers for Young Minds website, but also serve as an important tool for ensuring that manuscripts are passed on to the editors with the most relevant expertise. Complete profiles should include keywords, a photo, and a brief bio. Complete your profile here.

### 2.3 BUILDING A POOL OF SCIENCE MENTORS

As an Associate Editor you are expected to maintain a pool of ~5-8 Science Mentors. The success of our journal depends heavily on the active involvement of our Science Mentors - not only on the day of the review, but also in their planning to make sure that the kid or kids involved get the most out of the experience. While the kids are the primary sources of feedback for the manuscript itself, the Science Mentors play a key role in helping the kids to understand the scientific process, peer review, and how to approach an article with a critical eye for feedback. It is often an extremely rewarding experience both for the kid reviewers and for the Science Mentors themselves.

Science Mentors can be researchers, postdocs, or even late career PhD students who already have experience with the peer review process. They should have expertise relevant the specialty section for which you are an Associate Editor, but cannot be expected to be more specifically suited for the content of the articles than this general expertise. Science Mentors should have strong written and spoken English.

Please note that your pool of Science Mentors do not need to be located close to you geographically, as the review process is facilitated online. Some Science Mentors have even participated with their classrooms remotely via video for participating classrooms that were in isolated locations.

When you are given an editing assignment, you will be asked to invite a Science Mentor from your pool to handle the review.
How do I invite Science Mentors to join my board?

Please log into your Frontiers account. Navigate through **My Frontiers > Associate Editor > Editorial Board > Invite New Editor** and enter the invitee’s name, email, and affiliation. Note that within the Frontiers platform Science Mentors use the access rights and role of a Review Editor, and will need to be invited through that role and with that title. An official invitation email (with links for the invitee to accept or decline) will be automatically generated, but we ask that you also include a personal message. **Because this system invitation will invite them for the role of “Review Editor” the personalized message will need to explain that they are in fact being invited as a Science Mentor and what that role entails.** You can also send personal emails to initially explain this distinction to candidates and follow up with the system email.

**We are working to customize this message to be specifically for Science Mentors, and will keep you informed as soon as this development has been completed**

You can see the status of invitations under **My Frontiers > Associate Editor > Editorial Board > Review Editors.**

### 2.4 Science Mentors who apply to join the board

Potential Science Mentors sometimes apply directly to the Young Minds Editorial Office. The FYM staff will ask applicants for CVs and for the name of the Associate Editor most relevant to their area of expertise before we pass on the application to that editor.

**RECRUITING ARTICLES**

As a member of the research community, you are at the front of new developments in your field. When you encounter a new publication that you think would be interesting to younger audiences – or important for them to learn about – recommend it as a potential **New Discovery article.** These recommendations are what make it possible for Frontiers for Young Minds to consistently provide a flow of high-quality and cutting-edge research. In addition to the most recent advances, Frontiers for Young Minds also seeks to provide clear explanations of the fundamental ideas within each discipline through our **Core Concept articles.** If there are areas that you feel would benefit from this kind of focus, please let us know. Also, please remember that you are most welcome to write Young Minds versions of your own work.
For any recommendations, simply write to kids@frontiersin.org with the following information:

- **Article Title (if a New Discovery article):**
- **DOI (if a New Discovery article):**
- **Link to article (if a New Discovery article):**
- **Brief description of Core Concept (if Core Concept article):**
- **Relevant FYM Specialty Section:**

### 3. DURING THE REVIEW PROCESS

As an Associate Editor on a submitted manuscript, you are responsible for:

1. Assessing the quality and suitability of the manuscript
2. Inviting a Science Mentor
3. Following up if the review event becomes delayed
4. Giving authors access to the Interactive Review Forum
5. Monitoring resubmission and assessing revisions
6. Making a final decision for acceptance or recommendation for rejection

Please note that while the content of emails for the review process have been customized for Frontiers for Young Minds, the "Status and Action" seen in gray at the top of the Review Forum have not. An example of the "Status and Action" is highlighted in green in the below figure.

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Accessing manuscripts and entering the review forum

- Sign in to your Frontiers Account at [www.frontiersin.org](http://www.frontiersin.org)
- From your profile go to My Frontiers>My Editing Assignments
- Your editing assignments are displayed in a grid. Check the box on the grid and click on Enter Review Forum button. For longer lists of assignments, use the Results per Page dropdown menu.
ASSESSING THE QUALITY AND SUITABILITY OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Each manuscript should undergo an initial check with the Specialty Chief Editor upon submission. However, we still rely on our Associate Editors to read through each manuscript to verify the quality, suitability, and language level for our intended younger audience. If you have any concerns that the content is in any way inappropriate or the language unsuitable, please contact the Editorial Office kids@frontiersin.org

With the initial checks performed by the Specialty Chief Editor and you as the Associate Editor, the review process seeks to identify manuscript that may need to be rejected as early as possible in the process. This is out of consideration for the Young Reviewers who would work on a manuscript, but then not have the chance to appear on a published article for their work.

Validate Submission Details

As soon as you download the manuscript and any supplementary materials, please verify the following points. If there is an issue with any of the below which affects your ability to proceed with the review process, please immediately contact the Editorial Office.

- **Ensure that you do not have a conflict of interest** (COI) with any of the authors. Refer to the Conflict of Interest section of the Review Guidelines for a list of potential COI.
- **Ensure that the manuscript has all necessary components.**
- **Ensure that the authors have chosen the correct article type** (their descriptions can be found [here](#)).
ALL MANUSCRIPTS ARE CHECKED FOR PLAGIARISM. If serious issues are identified in manuscripts you are handling, the Editorial Office will notify both you and the authors as part of our standard procedure. No action is required from you unless specifically requested for very serious concerns.

3.2 INVITING A SCIENCE MENTOR

**Please note that, due to the integration with the Frontiers platform, the Science Mentors are referred to as "Reviewers" or "Review Editors" within the platform.**

When deciding which Science Mentor from your pool should be invited for a given manuscript, please consider both the age group of the Young Reviewer(s) and the timeline of their availability. The Science Mentors will be told that to accept the review assignment they should have a class or Young Reviewer available within ~30 days.

How to invite Science Mentors

You have seven days to secure a Science Mentor for the manuscript. To invite Science Mentors (listed in the system as reviewers) select the Manage Reviewers (1) tab. Here you can see the status of the review invitations.

![Invitation Interface](image)

There are two options for inviting Science Mentors:

- **Send invitations to Science Mentors who are already members of your Editorial Board (2).** Use the search bar (3) to enter the name of the Science Mentor you would like to invite. To search for Review Editors by keyword, check the Search by keyword option (4).
- **Send invitations to Science Mentors who are not members of the Editorial Board.** Fill out the relevant information in the Invite an external reviewer tab (5) and click on the Invite icon (6).
Click on the Invite icon and choose to compose a personal message or simply send the generic invitation. Mentors who accept to handle a manuscript are automatically given access to the Review Forum.

**Do not “Assign”(7) Mentors unless they have first told you that they are willing and able to handle the manuscript. In addition, do not assign yourself to mentor for the manuscript. Contact the Editorial Office if a situation has arisen where you feel this may be necessary.**

Revoking a Science Mentor

If someone accepts to mentor for a given manuscript and turns out to be unsuitable, becomes severely delayed or unresponsive, or no longer has available Young Reviewers, you may revoke them by clicking on the Revoke icon and then writing a personal note explaining why this action had to be taken. As the Associate Editor, it is your responsibility to ensure a fair and timely review for every manuscript.

3.3 FOLLOWING UP ON THE REVIEW EVENT

The messages sent to the Science Mentor for their review assignment will ask them to provide the FYM Editorial Office with an estimated date for their review event. This will allow the FYM Editorial Office to set the timeline for reminders based on that estimate. If the Science Mentor does not provide such a date, or that date passes and no update or review report is provided, you will receive a notification that the process has become delayed. Please follow up with the Science Mentor and cc kids@frontiersin.org with any updates.

3.4 ACTIVATING THE INTERACTIVE REVIEW FORUM

Read the Review Report

Once the Science Mentor submits the review report, you will automatically be notified. If you feel that there is some error with the report or that the Science Mentor has not provided their own final thoughts, please follow up with the Science Mentor directly and ask for any updates before activating the interactive review. Once the Interactive Review Forum has been activated, the Science Mentor will not be able to edit their responses until the authors respond to their comments. If the Science Mentor has answered “No” to the question about sending the Young Reviewer profile form to the FYM Editorial Office, please notify us at kids@frontiersin.org.

Activate the Review Forum

Once you have received and checked the review report, please activate the Interactive Review Forum to give authors access to the review reports. Select Activate Interactive Review (1) and choose the recommended level of revisions based on the review report. This choice determines the amount of time that authors are given to respond to the comments: minor, moderate, or substantial revisions (2) would allow authors 15, 25, or 35 days respectively. Add a personal message and finalize activation by clicking on Activate (3).

At any point during the review process, should your or the Science Mentor have an annotated PDF with comments on the manuscript to pass on to authors, please contact the FYM Editorial Office to ensure the authors receive this.
Please note: As the FYM review process takes place in the online discussion forum, we encourage that all comments be inserted in the forum.

3.5 MONITORING RESUBMISSION AND ASSESSING REVISIONS

While the Science Mentors and authors are the main players in the Interactive Review Forum, the Associate Editor ensures the review process is fair, transparent, collaborative, and timely. Please note that you can access and post comments in the Review Forum at any time.

Timely Review Process: How does the Interactive Review Work?

Authors are asked to respond to the Science Mentor's comments in the Forum and upload revised versions of their manuscript (accessible under the Download latest PDF icon). You, the Science Mentor, and the authors can now see all comments in each tab. Our system automatically notifies participants when a new comment or revised manuscript is uploaded and gives 10 days to respond. This process can continue for multiple rounds if necessary.

Adding your own comments

To add your own comment, click on the Save (1) icon below the corresponding discussion point. A box then appears where you can enter text. (2) Comments auto-save when you click outside of the comment box. Continue to respond throughout the Review Forum with the same process. After all of your comments have been made, scroll to the top of the page and click Submit all comments (3)—
this makes your comments visible and notifies the Science Mentor and authors. Encourage the authors to provide a message (if they have not already done so) for the Mentor to pass on to their Young Reviewers.

Fair and Constructive Review Process: Mediating the Discussion

We rely on the Associate Editor to ensure the constructiveness of the participant’s interaction. Should a dispute arise at this stage, the Associate Editor acts as a mediator or invites new reviewers for additional opinions.

- **If a Science Mentor is satisfied with the Authors’ comments and revisions**, they can “endorse” publication. This signifies the Science Mentor’s recommendation for the manuscript to be accepted in its current form.
• **If the Science Mentor** believes there are objective flaws or that the manuscript is for some other reason unsuitable to be published for a young audience, they can withdraw from the review and send you their recommendation for rejection. You are notified and receive their letter recommending rejection. Their report remains visible in the Review Forum, but they do not participate further in the review and remain anonymous.

Please consider the Science Mentor’s comments and determine whether the manuscript should, in fact, be rejected or whether further work would make the manuscript suitable for publication. If you are unsure of how to proceed, please do not hesitate to contact the FYM Editorial Office.

3.6 **TAKING A FINAL DECISION ON THE MANUSCRIPT**

**Accepting a Manuscript**

If the Science Mentor endorses publication, you are asked to take a final decision on the manuscript.
If the Science Mentor endorses publication prematurely but he/she would still like to post further comments to the author, you may reactivate their review by clicking on the Reactivate Review icon.
If you have any minor additional recommendations for the authors, you now have the final opportunity to communicate those to the authors using the compose function (please also cc kids@frontiersin.org).
Once the final manuscript is resubmitted online, you can accept it for publication by clicking on Accept manuscript (Initiate final validation).

! The final validation stage includes a final verification by the FYM Editorial Office that the manuscript is ready to enter production, and starts immediately upon selecting the “Accept manuscript” option, therefore you should only accept the submission when the final version of the manuscript has been uploaded by the authors.

**Rejecting a Manuscript**

With the initial checks performed by the Specialty Chief Editor and you as the Associate Editor, the review process seeks to identify manuscripts that may need to be rejected as early as possible in the process. As mentioned above, this is out of consideration for the Young Reviewers who would take part in the review process but not have the chance to be acknowledged on a published article for their work.
If a manuscript has completed the review process and should be recommended for rejection (objective errors, low quality of language, or inappropriate language for younger audiences) please determine whether the authors are unwilling or unable to address these concerns.
If so, please recommend the manuscript for rejection and notify the FYM Editorial Office at kids@frontiersin.org.