CRAIL | CANADIAN REVIEW OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, LAW & SOCIETY

Editorial, Peer Review and Publication Policies

Consolidated journal rules • Author Guidelines • Reviewer Standards • Editorial Responsibilities

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Publication integrity: Editorial screening is distinct from independent peer review. CRAIL's announced review model is double-blind. Manuscripts selected for external peer review are normally evaluated by one qualified independent reviewer; additional reviewers may be appointed at editorial discretion.

Founding-issue waiver: All publication fees are waived for CRAIL's first three numbered issues (Vol. 1, Nos. 1-3, including multiple parts of any issue). Thereafter the standard publication fee for new eligible submissions is US$1,000 per accepted article, plus applicable taxes, if any. Submission and peer-review fees are always zero. See section 11.

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This document establishes standards for transparent journal operations. It is not a claim of accreditation, indexing, formal endorsement, DOI registration or institutional sponsorship. Those statuses must be stated only when verified.

1. Identity, aims, scope and editorial independence

The Canadian Review of Artificial Intelligence, Law & Society (CRAIL) is an independent Canadian interdisciplinary academic journal published quarterly online in Richmond Hill, Ontario. Its working and primary publication language is English. CRAIL examines the legal, social, institutional, ethical, philosophical, psychological and technological implications of artificial intelligence, emerging technologies and scientific developments.

CRAIL welcomes rigorous scholarship in law, technology, science, philosophy, psychology, sociology and related fields. It seeks original arguments, appropriate evidence, methodological transparency, critical engagement and meaningful human responsibility. Editorial decisions are based on scholarship and journal relevance, not an author's institutional status, personal relationship with an editor, preferred theory or ability to pay.

Work in languages other than English may be considered; any such work published by CRAIL must also be accompanied by a complete English translation. The journal does not imply university affiliation, third-party sponsorship, indexing or membership in publishing organizations unless a specific relationship is actually established and publicly identified.

2. Contribution categories and honest review labelling

CRAIL considers original empirical, theoretical and methodological research articles; doctrinal legal and interdisciplinary studies; substantive analytical essays; case analyses; critical reviews and research notes; invited commentaries, editorials and other clearly identified non-research contributions. The Editorial Office determines the appropriate classification based on content rather than the author's label.

Every manuscript receives an initial editorial assessment. A manuscript may be rejected at screening. Submissions selected for independent peer review undergo the process in section 8. Essays, commentaries or editorial material assessed only by an editor must not be described as having received independent external peer review. The review route used for a published item shall be represented accurately wherever CRAIL makes a claim about it.

3. Eligibility, originality, preprints and prior publication

Authors must submit intellectually original work and disclose preprints, earlier versions, overlapping manuscripts and related publications. Public circulation on SSRN, Zenodo, arXiv or a comparable repository does not by itself bar consideration. The corresponding author should provide a persistent link to any relevant preprint and explain material differences between versions.

A manuscript already published as the version of record elsewhere will ordinarily not be accepted as new original work. CRAIL may consider lawful republication, translation or annotated reissue only when rights, permissions, source attribution and publication status are explicit and documented. Simultaneous submission to another journal is not permitted during CRAIL's consideration unless the Editorial Office has expressly agreed otherwise.

4. Submission instructions and manuscript preparation

Send submissions and editorial queries to editor@crail.ca, identifying the email subject as “CRAIL Submission - [short title]”. The submission should indicate the intended contribution category and attach an editable .docx file. An accompanying PDF may be included when needed to preserve formulae, images, page layout or complex tables.

- Text and structure. Use a clear title, numbered or otherwise identifiable sections, consistent headings, readable typography (normally 12-point), approximately 1.5 line spacing and page numbers. Tables, charts, images and supplementary materials should carry captions and source attributions.
- Author details. Supply names of human authors, affiliations if any, countries, contact information, corresponding-author details and available ORCID identifiers in a separate title page or submission message to facilitate double-blind review.
- Abstract and keywords. For a conventional research article, an abstract of about 150–250 words and 4–7 keywords are recommended. An appropriate short abstract is encouraged for substantial essays and case studies. Editorial discretion applies to atypical formats.
- References. Use one consistent, discipline-appropriate citation system. Legal claims should provide verifiable authorities and pinpoint citations where appropriate; empirical and technical statements should point to traceable sources or data. Add source DOIs when available.
- Figures and rights. Supply reusable, legible figures and evidence of permission or a defensible legal basis for third-party materials. Identify alterations and generated images where their origin matters.

CRAIL imposes no fixed word or page limit. Length is evaluated in relation to scholarly necessity, coherence and contribution. Editors may request substantive editing, shortening or restructuring rather than applying an arbitrary page ceiling. Receipt will be acknowledged as reasonably practicable; neither review completion nor publication is guaranteed within a fixed period.

5. Authorship, contribution and source integrity

Only human persons who make a meaningful scholarly contribution and accept responsibility for the work may be listed as authors. Each author must approve the submitted and final versions and accept responsibility for the integrity of the published contribution. Where several persons are listed, a contribution statement should explain material intellectual, empirical or drafting roles.

Authors are responsible for the reliability, authenticity, lawful use and traceability of citations, quoted passages, data, figures, factual statements, technical assertions and legal authorities. Invented citations, fabricated or falsified data, unattributed copying, materially misleading descriptions, and uncorrected errors incompatible with research integrity may justify rejection, correction or retraction.

Authors must distinguish allegations from adjudicated facts, assumptions from findings, quotations from paraphrases and hypotheses from established results. A fluent or technically consistent text is not independent evidence of truth. The corresponding author shall provide sources, permissions or original materials reasonably requested for editorial evaluation.

6. Artificial intelligence: use, disclosure and verification

CRAIL permits the use of AI tools for legitimate research assistance, literature discovery, drafting support, language revision, data processing, coding and related purposes. AI systems cannot be listed as authors. Authorship, professional judgment, accurate source verification and final approval remain human duties that cannot be delegated to an automated system.

Substantive AI use must be disclosed in a statement identifying the relevant tool or tool class, the purposes for which it was used, and the parts of the research or manuscript materially affected. Minor routine spelling or formatting assistance need not be described in disproportionate detail; where materiality is uncertain, authors should disclose the use.

All AI-generated or AI-assisted citations, quotations, legal authorities, data descriptions, numerical results, factual claims and bibliographic details must be independently checked against accessible primary or reliable original materials before submission. Rephrasing a prompt, agreement between several AI systems, or a generated claim of having verified a source is not a substitute for checking the underlying source.

AI-generated outputs may be reproduced, attributed or studied as research objects when clearly identified as such; that does not confer authorship or scholarly authority on the system. Authors must respect confidentiality, privacy, third-party rights and research-participant protections when sending material to an AI service.

7. Research ethics, data, permissions and competing interests

Authors shall identify relevant funding, financial or professional conflicts of interest, institutional relationships and any material support affecting the work; “none declared” may be used where accurate. Relevant research involving human participants, sensitive records or identifiable data must include a proportionate ethics/consent statement identifying approval, exemption or another lawful basis as applicable.

Where empirical claims depend on data or software, authors should state whether the materials are available, how they can be accessed, and any lawful or ethical restrictions. CRAIL may request reasonable descriptions of data collection, methodology, sampling, limitations or reproducibility safeguards. No authors are required to disclose confidential records or personal data unlawfully.

Authors must obtain any necessary copyright permissions for tables, figures, substantial quotations or other third-party works, and must make clear when material has been previously published, translated, substantially transformed or used under an applicable exception.

8. Editorial screening and independent peer review

8.1 Initial screening

Every submission is first screened for scope, quality, original contribution, ethical compliance, source reliability and basic conformity with submission requirements. Submission does not create an entitlement to peer review. The Editorial Office may decline work without external assessment and should communicate the decision clearly.

8.2 Review procedure and number of reviewers

CRAIL operates a double-blind peer-review process. Where a manuscript is selected for independent peer review, it is normally assessed by one qualified, independent specialist. The Editorial Office may commission two or more additional independent assessments where disciplinary range, unresolved disagreements, methodological complexity or other circumstances warrant it. No fixed maximum applies, and no promise of two or more reviewers is made.

Authors should remove identifying information from the anonymous manuscript; the Editorial Office should share the manuscript and reports using reasonable anonymization precautions. The identities of authors and reviewers are withheld from each other as part of the journal’s double-blind procedure, subject to practical limitations such as publicly available preprints, distinctive self-citations or voluntarily disclosed identities. The journal cannot guarantee that a reviewer will never infer authorship.

A qualified reviewer must be chosen for relevant independent expertise and absence of an unmanaged material conflict. An editor’s own screening or an AI-generated critique is not a substitute for the independent report when an article is designated externally peer reviewed. The number of reports obtained and the actual route must be recorded internally and represented truthfully.

8.3 Review criteria and outcomes

Peer review evaluates originality, methodological fitness, quality and traceability of evidence, doctrinal and technical accuracy, coherence, treatment of contrary arguments, clarity, scholarly relevance, limitations and adherence to ethical standards. Different genres require different methods: philosophical or doctrinal scholarship must not be judged by an inappropriate demand for experimental data.

Review recommendations may be Accept, Minor Revision, Major Revision / Further Review, Reject or Unable to Recommend. Such recommendations are advisory. CRAIL may request revision, seek further reviews, accept or reject after considering the record. The final decision belongs to an unconflicted human editor acting for the Editorial Office.

8.4 Author response and timing

Where revisions are invited, authors should receive usable reasons and a reasonable opportunity to respond point by point. Review may be repeated if substantial changes warrant it. Review periods are agreed case by case and depend on reviewer availability and manuscript complexity; CRAIL does not guarantee a rapid review, a specific publication date or favorable decisions.

9. Reviewer duties, reports and confidentiality

Reviewers shall accept assignments only where they have sufficient expertise and time, disclose conflicts promptly, keep materials confidential, evaluate arguments fairly and distinguish objective errors from legitimate scholarly disagreement. A reviewer must not use an unpublished manuscript for personal advantage, insist on irrelevant self-citations, or publicly assert an uninvestigated integrity allegation as proven.

A reviewer report should briefly identify the manuscript's thesis and strengths, set out major objections with references to sections or pages, identify minor corrections, state the extent of any checks actually performed, and offer a reasoned recommendation. Confidential concerns for the handling editor must be separated from comments intended for the author. Reports should be constructive, specific and respectful.

Unpublished papers, author identities where known, evidence, correspondence and reports are confidential. Reviewers may not circulate them to colleagues, students or third parties without prior editorial authorization and equivalent confidentiality obligations. Reviewers may not upload unpublished material or identifiable extracts to outside AI or other processing services unless the Editorial Office grants prior written authorization and the author's permission is obtained where disclosure of confidential work requires it. All material AI assistance by reviewers must be disclosed to the editor and cannot replace human judgment.

Reviewers must accurately identify checks they personally completed; an unverified citation should not be labelled fabricated merely because it was not verified. Concerns about plagiarism, false sources, unreliable data or improper AI use shall be referred confidentially to the handling editor for consideration and, when appropriate, an author response.

10. Editorial responsibilities, decisions and appeals

The Editorial Office safeguards independence, impartiality, fairness, reviewer competence, confidentiality and an auditable record of important procedural steps. Editors record screening outcomes, reviewer appointments, material conflicts, reports, requested revisions, author responses and final decisions. They communicate relevant decisions and material delays without making unsupported promises.

Editorial Board membership is a responsibility, not a privilege to publish without scrutiny. Editors and Board members must disclose interests that could compromise impartiality and must not evaluate or decide manuscripts in which they have a material conflict. A manuscript authored by the Editor-in-Chief, handling editor or Board member requires oversight by an unconflicted editor; if none is available, the journal should designate a genuinely independent guest editor or defer consideration. Authors may not supervise review of their own work.

Appeals or complaints alleging a procedural defect, unmanaged conflict, material factual error or mishandling of evidence may be addressed in writing to the Editorial Office. The matter should be considered by an unconflicted editor, with a fair opportunity for relevant parties to respond. Mere disagreement with a scholarly recommendation does not require a reversal. No appeal right transfers the final publication decision to the reviewer, complainant or AI system.

11. Publication charges and financial transparency

11.1 No submission or peer-review fees

CRAIL charges no manuscript submission fee and no peer-review fee. Authors are never required to pay for initial editorial screening, for an external referee assessment, or for the rejection of a manuscript. Payment is never a criterion for acceptance and must not influence reviewer appointment, scholarly evaluation or final editorial judgment.

11.2 Founding-issue publication-fee waiver

All publication fees are waived in full for the first three numbered issues of CRAIL (Vol. 1, Nos. 1, 2 and 3). This includes all parts of any issue released in multiple parts. Authors whose articles appear in these three issues pay no submission, peer-review or publication charge. Where a manuscript was explicitly assigned to a fee-waived issue and CRAIL subsequently defers its publication, the author retains the waiver unless the author expressly agrees in advance and in writing to a different arrangement. No undisclosed or retroactive charge may be introduced.

11.3 Standard publication fee for subsequent issues

For eligible new submissions to issues after the first three numbered issues, the standard publication fee is US$1,000 per accepted article, plus applicable taxes, if any. The publication fee is assessed per article, not per author, and becomes chargeable only after formal editorial acceptance following the applicable assessment and, where required, independent peer-review process. It is not a payment for a favourable referee report, a guaranteed review outcome, indexing, DOI registration before it occurs, or acceptance. CRAIL does not charge authors for rejected articles.

The applicable fee, currency, terms, and possibility of a waiver or reduction must be clearly available before manuscript submission and must be confirmed to the corresponding author before a payment obligation is incurred. This newly stated standard charge does not apply retrospectively to manuscripts already submitted under a no-fee arrangement without that author’s express advance agreement. An invoice shall be issued only following formal acceptance; any waiver or reduction must be reflected in the invoice or written fee confirmation.

11.4 Taxes and billing currency

Publication fees are stated in United States dollars (USD). CRAIL will charge and collect GST/HST or any other applicable tax only where required by law. The applicable tax rate, if any, depends on the nature and place of supply, the payer’s circumstances and the publisher’s tax-registration obligations; some qualifying cross-border supplies may be zero-rated. Applicable tax and the total amount due must be itemized on the invoice. Currency conversion and tax reporting shall follow applicable Canadian rules. The phrase “plus applicable taxes” must not be interpreted as a fixed tax surcharge for every author.

11.5 Reductions, waivers and financial independence

Following or independently of the scholarly acceptance decision, the Editorial Office may grant a partial reduction or full waiver of the publication fee at its discretion. Relevant considerations may include the significance and originality of the scholarly contribution, exceptional academic or public-interest value, lack of institutional publication support, financial hardship, or other justified circumstances. Decisions must be made by an unconflicted editor, recorded consistently, and communicated confidentially. A waiver is a financial arrangement, not a positive scholarly assessment or an entitlement to acceptance.

No author shall be given preferential editorial treatment by reason of willingness or ability to pay. CRAIL shall disclose publication charges and relevant financial terms accurately, shall not present publication payment as a guarantee of quality, and shall not claim an indexing, accreditation or DOI status before it is actually established.

12. Copyright, licensing, open access and republication

Copyright remains with the human author or other lawful rights holder unless the owner expressly specifies a different lawful arrangement. CRAIL does not require assignment of copyright; authors grant the journal a non-exclusive licence sufficient for publication, dissemination, indexing and preservation of the accepted version of record and associated metadata.

Unless otherwise expressly stated for a specific work, CRAIL articles are published under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0). The actual licence and any exceptions must be clearly identifiable on the relevant publication. Authors must have rights and permissions compatible with the licence they grant and with lawful archival distribution. Repository deposit or republication must preserve attribution and applicable third-party restrictions.

CRAIL welcomes secondary publication of its articles in other scholarly journals, including translations, with the prior editorial agreement of CRAIL and the receiving journal, consistent with the applicable licence. Any republication must clearly acknowledge CRAIL as the original place of publication and include the full original bibliographic citation, including its DOI or permanent URL where available.

13. Article identity, DOI registration and metadata

CRAIL aims to register and maintain article-level Crossref DOI records for its published works once an eligible membership or acceptable institutional sponsorship arrangement is active and the registration workflow has been implemented. No DOI is represented as registered until the identifier and metadata have actually been deposited and the link resolves. Existing past publications must not be retrospectively described as holding a CRAIL/Crossref DOI unless verified.

Each CRAIL-registered DOI will point to an article-specific landing page providing title, human authors or designated work attribution, journal citation, volume/issue, date, abstract or description, licence, version status and access to the published work. CRAIL will maintain accurate metadata and update URL destinations as needed. Article records should not be confused with issue-level records.

Where an identical version of a publication already has an appropriate DOI, repository deposition should normally use the existing DOI rather than generating a second identifier for the same object. Relationships among preprints, distinct revisions and the version of record should be recorded as accurately as available systems permit.

14. Preservation, repositories and version history

CRAIL is committed to durable public access and the long-term preservation of the scholarly record. Its preservation programme is to retain each published article on crail.ca and to arrange copies in both Zenodo and the Internet Archive (Archive.org), alongside any appropriate full-issue deposits. Repository deposits are a publication-workflow responsibility, subject to lawful rights, technical availability and preservation of a coherent version history.

Status must be accurate: until a particular deposit has been completed and verified, CRAIL shall not label that article “archived in Zenodo” or “archived in the Internet Archive.” Article pages should link to their actual deposit records when available. A deposit of an entire issue may be described as “included in the archived full issue”; it must not be represented as a separate article-level archival record if no such record exists.

If a service is temporarily unavailable, the Editorial Office should retain the preservation copy and complete or correct the external deposit when practicable. Deposit records should be associated with the correct article, edition and licence. Archiving improves persistence but does not constitute an absolute guarantee that any external hosting service will operate without interruption.

15. Corrections, concerns, retractions and the scholarly record

Authors must promptly notify the Editorial Office of material factual, legal, bibliographic, methodological or ethical errors discovered after publication. CRAIL may issue a dated correction, clarification, expression of concern, editorial notice or retraction appropriate to the evidence and seriousness of the matter. The affected work and notice should be linked publicly wherever practicable.

Published versions of record shall not be silently modified so as to conceal material changes. Corrections must state what has changed and when, and retained records should preserve an intelligible publication history. Where allegations of misconduct or significant factual error arise, CRAIL should seek available evidence and afford relevant authors a fair opportunity to respond before recording conclusions, except where immediate protective action is required by law or serious circumstances.

16. Privacy, policy maintenance and contact

Personal details, manuscripts, reviewer identities, reports and editorial correspondence are used for legitimate journal operations and must be managed with reasonable confidentiality and access controls. CRAIL should retain only information necessary for defensible editorial records, lawful obligations and preservation. Confidential submissions and reviewer records shall not be posted publicly without an appropriate basis and authorization.

This edition consolidates CRAIL’s established public editorial principles with more detailed procedural guidance. Future amendments shall be dated and made publicly accessible. Changes materially affecting authors already under consideration should be communicated before application; the journal must not retrospectively misstate a past review, licence, fee arrangement or DOI status. Existing publication-specific terms remain identifiable in the relevant issue or article.

Editorial Office: editor@crail.ca | CRAIL, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada | www.crail.ca.

Appendix A. Author submission checklist

- Original, relevant manuscript; contribution type identified; prior preprints or related versions disclosed.
- Editable manuscript, complete title and anonymous peer-review copy where requested.
- Human author names, affiliations where applicable, corresponding-author email and available ORCID information supplied separately.
- Abstract and keywords supplied where appropriate; citations and pinpoint sources traceable.
- Author contributions, conflicts, funding, ethics approval/exemption, data access and third-party permissions stated where relevant.
- Material AI assistance disclosed by tool/purpose; AI-assisted claims and all references checked against original sources.
- No simultaneous journal submission without editorial permission; all authors approved the submitted text.
- Founding-issue waiver or applicable US$1,000 publication fee and taxes confirmed; any reduction or full waiver identified before invoicing; payment never secures acceptance.

Appendix B. Minimum reviewer report structure

- Brief description of the work and its central thesis.
- Assessment of significance, originality, disciplinary contribution and fit.
- Major substantive and methodological observations supported by specific passages or sources.
- Minor editorial, citation or presentation corrections.
- Declaration of relevant conflicts and disclosure of any authorized AI/third-party assistance.
- Explicit indication of which citations, claims or underlying materials were independently checked, if any.
- Reasoned recommendation: Accept / Minor Revision / Major Revision or Further Review / Reject / Unable to Recommend.
- Separate confidential remarks to the editor where necessary.

Policy provenance. This consolidated edition is based on CRAIL’s public Editorial & Publication Policies (crail.ca/policies.html), core Editorial Policies in Vol. 1, No. 2 (October 2026), and the October 2026 working drafts of the Author Guidelines and Peer Review Policy. Where working drafts diverged, established published CRAIL principles were retained, particularly double-blind review, one reviewer as the normal baseline, published fee rules and CC BY-NC 4.0 as the default licence.