

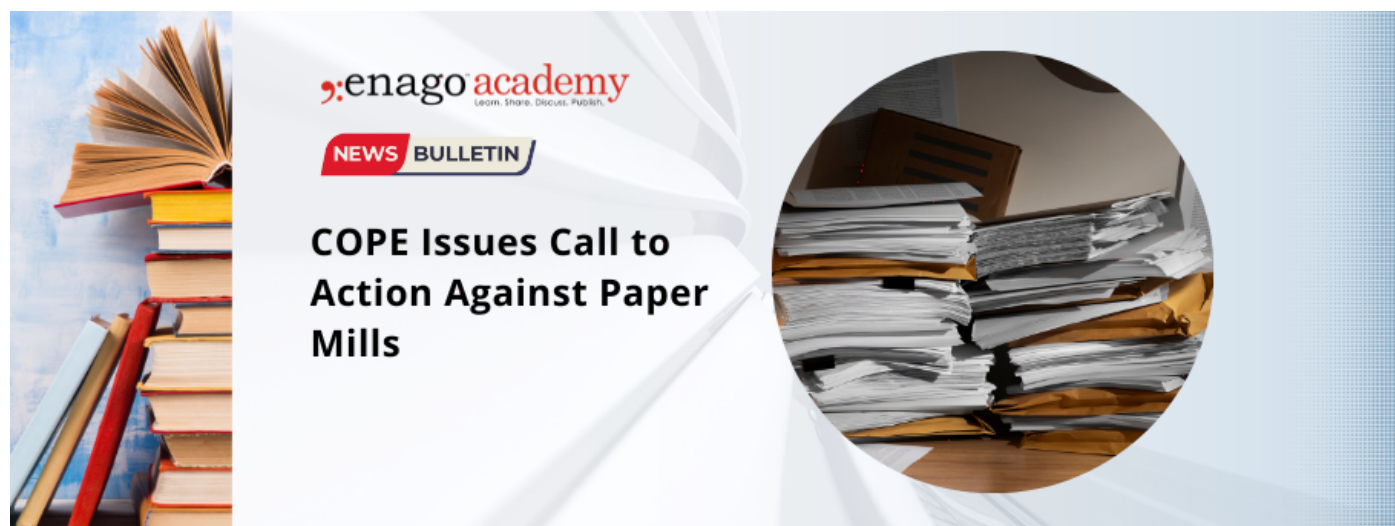
COPE Issues Call to Action Against Paper Mills, Unveils United2Act Consensus Statement

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In anticipation of the new year, the scholarly publishing industry braces for significant challenges, emphasizing the need for unity and collaboration to [safeguard the integrity of academic records](#). Recent developments, particularly the rise of paper mills, pose a threat to the scholarly publishing landscape. In response, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) has issued a [new position statement](#) calling for immediate and united action to identify and halt these fraudulent activities.

The COPE statement aligns with the United2Act (U2A) Consensus Statement, a comprehensive document outlining five collaborative actions to combat the menace of paper mills. This consensus is the result of a virtual summit held in May 2023, bringing together representatives from research bodies, publishers, researchers, and universities across 15 countries. Participants committed to ongoing discussions and the development and execution of plans through specialized working groups associated with each action.

Stakeholders are urged to stay informed about efforts to combat paper mills through COPE and the STM Integrity Hub. COPE continues to provide opportunities for participation in discussions, offering guidance and practical examples. A guest editorial from Portland Press in this month's release sheds light on a society's encounter with paper mills, reinforcing the urgency of the issue.

Looking ahead to 2024, COPE will kickstart a new strategic plan during its annual retreat in June. The focus will be on translating the plan into concrete actions, with the participation of two newly appointed COPE Trustees – James Kigera and Emilio Sanz-Alvarez. James, the Editor in Chief of the Annals of African Surgery and a lecturer at the University of Nairobi, brings a valuable perspective from the African subcontinent. Emilio, Managing Editor of the European Journal of Clinical Pharmacology and a Professor at the University of La Laguna, specializes in bioethics and has expertise in plagiarism and ethical considerations in clinical research.

COPE members are encouraged to register for two upcoming events – a Lightning Talk on AI and an Introduction to Publication Ethics workshop. The Lightning Talks, a new format introduced by COPE, aim to be more interactive and less formal, fostering increased awareness and confidence in specific topics. Stakeholders are invited to participate in these events and engage in the ongoing initiatives throughout the year.

What do you think of this statement by COPE? Share your opinion with the scholarly community via [Enago Academy's Open Platform](#) and be a part of the discussion.

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