

Editorial Board Terms of Reference for the Fourth UNITAR International Research Conference (4UIRC)

Educating for Futures | 18–19 November 2026 | UN House Brussels, Belgium and Online

1. Purpose:

The Editorial Board is established to provide scholarly leadership, peer-review oversight, and thematic guidance for the development of the UNITAR special volume Educating for Futures – Empowering Individuals and Institutions for Human Security, Peace, and Sustainable Development, developed in connection with the 4th UNITAR International Research Conference (4UIRC).

The Editorial Board supports the 4UIRC Editorial Coordination Team in ensuring the academic integrity, analytical coherence, and policy relevance of the volume, in alignment with internationally recognised publishing standards and the editorial expectations aligned with the United Nations Publications Office guidelines and standards.

2. Mandate:

The Editorial Board is mandated to:

- Contribute to shaping the editorial vision, thematic scope, and structure of the volume;
- Participate in the review and selection of abstracts;
- Serve as peer reviewers for submitted manuscripts;
- Advise on scholarly quality, relevance, diversity, and research ethics;
- Support coherence, rigour, and integration across contributions;
- Provide editorial recommendations regarding revision, acceptance, or rejection of manuscripts.

3. Composition:

The Editorial Board shall consist of experts selected on the basis of:

- Recognised subject-matter expertise aligned with the themes of the 4UIRC, including education for futures, human security, peace, and sustainable development;
- Demonstrated research and publication experience;
- Regional, disciplinary, and gender diversity;
- Familiarity with sustainable development, multilateral policy, education, or UN-related contexts.

Members serve in an independent scholarly capacity.

4. Roles and Authority:

The Editorial Board exercises scholarly and technical oversight of the volume and provides editorial recommendations to the 4UIRC Editorial Coordination Team.

Editorial coordination, anonymisation, reviewer assignment, documentation, and institutional clearance are conducted independently by the 4UIRC Editorial Coordination Team.

5. Responsibilities of Members:

Editorial Board members are expected to:

- Participate actively in abstract review and peer review;
- Provide timely, objective, and constructive scholarly assessments;
- Uphold confidentiality and ethical standards;
- Declare and appropriately manage conflicts of interest;

- Recuse themselves where conflicts arise;
- Support thematic coherence and editorial quality;
- Engage respectfully and professionally in all editorial activities.

6. Dual Roles and Conflict of Interests:

It is standard practice in edited research volumes for Editorial Board members to also contribute manuscripts.

Where an Editorial Board member submits a manuscript:

- They shall be fully recused from all handling, review coordination, discussion, and decision-making related to their submission;
- Editorial coordination shall be managed independently by the 4UIRC Editorial Coordination Team or a designated non-conflicted editor;
- The manuscript shall be subject to the same double-blind peer-review procedures and acceptance criteria as all other contributions.

All conflicts of interest shall be disclosed and documented.

7. Meetings and Working Methods:

The Editorial Board shall operate primarily through:

- Virtual meetings;
- Written consultations;
- Structured peer-review assignments.

Records of meetings, decisions, and key editorial actions shall be maintained by the 4UIRC Editorial Coordination Team.

8. Confidentiality and Professional Conduct:

Editorial Board members shall treat all manuscripts, reviews, deliberations, and correspondence as strictly confidential and shall conduct themselves in accordance with these Terms of Reference and the Peer Review Ethics Policy.

Failure to comply with ethical or confidentiality obligations may result in removal from the Editorial Board.

9. Voluntary Nature of Service:

Membership on the 4UIRC Editorial Board is a voluntary, non-remunerated role. Editorial Board members serve in an independent scholarly capacity and are not considered staff members, consultants, or representatives of UNITAR or the United Nations.

Participation does not create any employment, contractual, or financial relationship with UNITAR or the United Nations.

While service is voluntary, members are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct, academic integrity, confidentiality, and ethical responsibility.

10. Term and Duration:

Membership applies for the duration of the development, review, and completion of the 4UIRC special volume, unless otherwise extended or concluded by UNITAR.

11. Institutional Oversight:

The Editorial Board operates under the coordination of the 4UIRC Editorial Coordination Team.

The editorial process is led by:

- **Editor-in-Chief:** Dr Jon-Hans Coetzer (Jon-Hans.COETZER@unitar.org)

And supported by:

- **Editorial Coordinator:** Alexandra Severino (Alexandra.SEVERINO@unitar.org)
 - **Creative Editor and Outreach Support Focal:** Ana Moreira (Ana.MOREIRA@unitar.org)
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