

The Constitution of The DFAS Journal

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Part I. Constitutional Identity

Article 1. Preamble

The Constitution of *The DFAS Journal* is the supreme governing document of the Journal. It establishes the constitutional foundation for the Journal's governance, editorial independence, publication ethics, research integrity, institutional accountability, and scholarly responsibilities. This Constitution defines the principles, structures, authorities, rights, duties, and procedures that govern all activities conducted under the authority of *The DFAS Journal*.

The Constitution is intended to ensure that all editorial and publishing decisions are guided by transparency, fairness, scientific integrity, independence, accountability, and respect for internationally recognized standards of scholarly publishing.

All policies, protocols, procedures, guidelines, and governance instruments adopted by *The DFAS Journal* shall be interpreted and implemented in accordance with this Constitution.

Article 2. Founding Philosophy

The DFAS Journal is founded on the belief that scientific publishing is a public scholarly responsibility that must be governed by integrity, objectivity, transparency, and institutional independence.

The Journal recognizes that knowledge advances through rigorous scientific inquiry, ethical research practices, independent peer review, responsible editorial judgment, and open academic dialogue.

The constitutional framework of the Journal is designed to promote trust in scholarly communication while ensuring that editorial decisions remain free from personal, financial, political, institutional, or commercial influence.

Article 3. Mission

The mission of *The DFAS Journal* is to advance high-quality, ethical, transparent, and evidence-based scholarly publishing by providing an independent platform for the

dissemination of original research, scientific innovation, methodological advancement, and interdisciplinary knowledge.

The Journal is committed to promoting scientific excellence, protecting research integrity, supporting responsible innovation, and contributing to the global advancement of knowledge through fair and rigorous editorial processes.

Article 4. Vision

The vision of *The DFAS Journal* is to become a globally recognized scholarly journal distinguished by constitutional governance, editorial independence, scientific integrity, ethical leadership, and excellence in academic publishing.

The Journal aspires to establish an institutional model in which governance, ethics, transparency, and accountability operate as integrated constitutional principles supporting trustworthy scientific communication.

Article 5. Core Values

The Journal shall operate in accordance with the following constitutional values:

- Scientific Integrity
 - Editorial Independence
 - Academic Freedom
 - Transparency
 - Accountability
 - Fairness and Impartiality
 - Research Excellence
 - Ethical Responsibility
 - Respect for Human Authorship
 - Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence
 - Evidence-Based Decision-Making
 - Institutional Independence
 - Professional Conduct
 - Continuous Improvement
 - Public Trust in Scholarly Publishing
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Article 6. Constitutional Objectives

The objectives of this Constitution are to:

1. Establish the constitutional governance framework of *The DFAS Journal*.
2. Protect the editorial independence of the Journal.
3. Promote scientific integrity and ethical publishing practices.

4. Define the constitutional rights, responsibilities, and accountability of all stakeholders.
 5. Ensure transparency and consistency in editorial and publication decisions.
 6. Protect the integrity of the peer review process.
 7. Establish constitutional safeguards against conflicts of interest.
 8. Promote responsible human–AI collaboration in scholarly publishing.
 9. Strengthen institutional accountability and governance.
 10. Support the continuous development and improvement of the Journal's constitutional and editorial framework.
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Article 7. Scope of Application

This Constitution applies to all activities conducted under the authority of *The DFAS Journal*, including but not limited to editorial governance, manuscript submission, peer review, publication decisions, research ethics, institutional governance, constitutional compliance, and post-publication oversight.

The provisions of this Constitution are binding upon the Publisher, Editor-in-Chief, Editorial Board members, editors, reviewers, authors, advisory bodies, institutional partners, and all individuals or entities participating in the editorial or publishing activities of *The DFAS Journal*.

Where applicable, this Constitution shall prevail over any internal policy, procedure, guideline, or governance instrument that is inconsistent with its provisions. Any supplementary policy adopted by the Journal shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the principles and provisions established by this Constitution.

Part II. Constitutional Principles

Article 8. Scientific Integrity

Scientific integrity shall constitute the fundamental constitutional principle governing all editorial, publishing, research, and institutional activities of *The DFAS Journal*. The Journal shall uphold honesty, accuracy, objectivity, reproducibility, ethical responsibility, and intellectual honesty throughout the scholarly publishing process.

All participants in the publication process shall preserve the integrity of the scientific record and refrain from any practice that compromises the credibility, reliability, or trustworthiness of published research.

Article 9. Editorial Independence

Editorial decisions shall be made independently and exclusively on the basis of scholarly merit, scientific quality, ethical compliance, methodological rigor, and relevance to the Journal's aims and scope.

No editorial decision shall be influenced by financial interests, institutional affiliations, political considerations, commercial relationships, sponsorship, personal relationships, or external pressure.

The editorial independence of *The DFAS Journal* shall remain protected under all circumstances.

Article 10. Transparency

The Journal shall conduct all editorial and publishing activities in a transparent, consistent, and accountable manner.

Policies governing editorial procedures, peer review, publication ethics, corrections, retractions, conflicts of interest, artificial intelligence, and research integrity shall be publicly available and applied consistently to all submissions.

Whenever appropriate, editorial decisions shall be supported by documented reasoning and maintained as part of the Journal's governance records.

Article 11. Accountability

All individuals participating in the governance, editorial management, peer review, and publication processes shall remain accountable for decisions made within their respective responsibilities.

Accountability includes adherence to constitutional provisions, ethical standards, editorial policies, applicable governance instruments, and internationally recognized principles of scholarly publishing.

Article 12. Traceability

The Journal shall maintain appropriate records documenting editorial decisions, peer review activities, publication history, corrections, retractions, governance actions, and constitutional compliance.

Documentation shall provide sufficient evidence to enable appropriate institutional oversight while respecting confidentiality obligations and applicable data protection requirements.

Article 13. Fairness and Impartiality

All manuscripts shall receive fair, objective, timely, and impartial consideration regardless of the authors' nationality, institutional affiliation, gender, ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, career stage, funding source, or personal characteristics.

Editorial evaluations shall be based solely upon scientific merit, originality, methodological quality, ethical compliance, and relevance to the Journal.

Article 14. Research Freedom

The Journal recognizes academic freedom as an essential condition for scientific progress.

Authors shall be free to investigate, develop, and communicate scientifically sound ideas, methodologies, findings, and interpretations without ideological, political, commercial, or institutional interference, provided that such work complies with applicable ethical standards, legal requirements, and this Constitution.

Article 15. Human Authorship

Human intellectual responsibility shall remain the foundation of scholarly authorship.

Only individuals who make substantial intellectual contributions to the conception, design, execution, interpretation, or writing of scholarly work may be recognized as authors.

Artificial intelligence systems, software applications, or automated tools shall not qualify for authorship, authors' rights, or editorial responsibility under this Constitution.

Article 16. Responsible Artificial Intelligence

The Journal supports the responsible, transparent, and ethical use of artificial intelligence in scholarly publishing.

Artificial intelligence may assist human researchers in appropriate activities, provided that human authors retain full intellectual responsibility, verify the accuracy and integrity of all content, disclose applicable AI assistance where required, and remain fully accountable for the final published work.

The use of artificial intelligence shall never diminish human accountability, editorial independence, research integrity, or scientific reliability.

Article 17. Evidence-Based Publishing

Editorial decisions shall be grounded in verifiable evidence, scholarly evaluation, methodological rigor, ethical compliance, and expert peer review.

The Journal shall reject arbitrary, discriminatory, or unsupported editorial practices and shall promote decision-making based upon objective scientific assessment and documented evaluation.

Article 18. Scholarly Respect and Professional Conduct

All participants in the scholarly publishing process shall interact with professionalism, mutual respect, integrity, and civility.

Editors, reviewers, authors, and institutional representatives shall conduct themselves in a manner that promotes constructive academic dialogue, respects intellectual diversity, protects professional dignity, and maintains public confidence in scholarly communication.

Harassment, discrimination, intimidation, retaliation, abusive conduct, or other forms of professional misconduct shall not be tolerated.

Article 19. Continuous Improvement

The Journal shall maintain an ongoing commitment to improving its constitutional framework, editorial governance, publication practices, ethical standards, technological capabilities, and institutional effectiveness.

Policies, governance structures, and constitutional provisions shall be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect developments in scholarly publishing, research ethics, editorial best practices, and responsible innovation while preserving the constitutional principles established by this Constitution.

Part III. Constitutional Governance Structure

Article 20. Governance Framework

The governance of *The DFAS Journal* shall be founded upon constitutional principles that ensure scientific integrity, editorial independence, institutional accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsible scholarly publishing.

The governance structure of the Journal shall define the constitutional authority, responsibilities, reporting relationships, and accountability of all individuals and bodies participating in the editorial and publishing process.

All governance activities shall operate in accordance with this Constitution and any constitutional instruments adopted pursuant to it.

Article 21. Editor-in-Chief

The Editor-in-Chief shall serve as the highest editorial authority of *The DFAS Journal* and shall be responsible for the overall academic quality, editorial leadership, constitutional compliance, and strategic development of the Journal.

The Editor-in-Chief shall:

- safeguard the editorial independence of the Journal;
- oversee editorial operations and publication quality;
- ensure compliance with this Constitution and all constitutional governance instruments;
- appoint editorial responsibilities in accordance with established governance procedures;
- maintain the integrity of the peer review process;
- avoid conflicts of interest in editorial decision-making; and
- promote ethical, transparent, and evidence-based scholarly publishing.

The Editor-in-Chief shall not participate in editorial decisions involving personal manuscripts or any submission presenting an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

Article 22. Editorial Board

The Editorial Board shall provide academic leadership, editorial expertise, strategic guidance, and disciplinary oversight in support of the Journal's mission.

Members of the Editorial Board shall:

- promote scientific excellence;
- advise on editorial policies and journal development;
- support editorial quality assurance;
- contribute to the identification of qualified reviewers;
- uphold publication ethics and constitutional principles; and
- perform their responsibilities independently, objectively, and without improper influence.

Membership shall be based upon academic qualifications, professional expertise, research achievements, and commitment to scholarly integrity.

Article 23. Associate Editors

Associate Editors shall assist the Editor-in-Chief in managing manuscripts within their areas of expertise.

Their responsibilities may include:

- conducting preliminary manuscript assessments;
- coordinating peer review;
- recommending editorial decisions;
- monitoring reviewer performance;
- ensuring timely manuscript processing; and
- maintaining compliance with constitutional principles and editorial policies.

Associate Editors shall exercise independent academic judgment while remaining accountable to the constitutional governance framework of the Journal.

Article 24. Section Editors

Section Editors shall oversee manuscripts assigned to designated subject areas or specialized sections of the Journal.

They shall be responsible for:

- evaluating manuscript suitability;
- selecting appropriate reviewers;
- monitoring review quality and timeliness;
- ensuring disciplinary standards are maintained; and
- recommending editorial decisions based solely on scientific merit.

Section Editors shall perform their duties impartially and independently.

Article 25. Managing Editorial Office

The Managing Editorial Office shall provide administrative, technical, and operational support for the Journal.

Its responsibilities may include:

- manuscript administration;
- communication with authors, reviewers, and editors;
- publication scheduling;
- production coordination;
- record management;
- constitutional documentation;
- digital archiving; and
- operational quality assurance.

The Managing Editorial Office shall not influence scientific or editorial decisions unless expressly authorized under this Constitution.

Article 26. Reviewers

Reviewers constitute an essential component of the Journal's constitutional governance framework by providing independent, objective, confidential, and evidence-based evaluation of submitted manuscripts.

Reviewers shall:

- assess scientific quality, originality, methodology, and ethical compliance;
- provide constructive, impartial, and professional evaluations;
- maintain confidentiality throughout the review process;
- disclose conflicts of interest promptly; and
- decline assignments where impartiality cannot reasonably be maintained.

Reviewers shall not use confidential information obtained through peer review for personal, professional, or commercial advantage.

Article 27. Authors

Authors bear primary responsibility for the originality, accuracy, integrity, and ethical compliance of submitted research.

Authors shall ensure that:

- submitted work is original and authentic;
- authorship accurately reflects intellectual contributions;
- all required disclosures are complete and truthful;
- research complies with applicable ethical standards;
- data and findings are reported honestly and accurately; and
- all constitutional and editorial requirements of the Journal are satisfied.

Authors remain fully responsible for all published content regardless of any technological tools used during manuscript preparation.

Article 28. Readers

Readers are recognized as stakeholders in the scholarly communication process and beneficiaries of trustworthy scientific publishing.

The Journal shall strive to provide readers with research that is:

- scientifically rigorous;
- ethically published;
- transparently reviewed;
- accurately presented;
- properly corrected when necessary; and
- preserved as part of the permanent scholarly record.

Readers may submit comments, concerns, corrections, or allegations of potential publication misconduct through procedures established by the Journal.

Article 29. Publisher

The Publisher shall provide institutional, administrative, financial, technological, and operational support necessary for the effective functioning of *The DFAS Journal*.

The Publisher shall:

- respect the constitutional independence of the editorial process;
- refrain from influencing editorial decisions;
- support long-term preservation of the scholarly record;
- maintain publishing infrastructure;
- promote compliance with applicable publishing standards; and
- ensure that the Journal operates in accordance with this Constitution.

The Publisher shall not interfere with editorial judgments based on scientific merit, peer review outcomes, or publication ethics.

Part IV. Editorial Governance

Article 30. Editorial Independence

Editorial independence is a fundamental constitutional principle of *The DFAS Journal* and shall be protected under all circumstances.

Editorial decisions shall be based exclusively on scientific merit, methodological rigor, originality, ethical compliance, relevance to the Journal's scope, and the quality of peer review.

No editorial decision shall be influenced by financial interests, institutional affiliations, sponsorship, commercial considerations, political influence, personal relationships, or any form of external pressure.

The constitutional independence of the editorial process shall be preserved regardless of the identity, position, reputation, institutional affiliation, or financial support of any author or stakeholder.

Article 31. Editorial Decision-Making

Editorial decisions shall be made through objective, evidence-based, transparent, and impartial evaluation.

Decisions regarding manuscript acceptance, revision, rejection, correction, retraction, or other publication actions shall be based upon:

- scientific quality;
- originality and contribution to knowledge;
- methodological rigor;
- ethical compliance;
- peer review recommendations;
- relevance to the Journal's aims and scope; and
- compliance with this Constitution and applicable editorial policies.

Editorial authority shall not be exercised arbitrarily and shall remain subject to constitutional accountability.

Article 32. Editorial Accountability

Editors shall be accountable for all editorial actions performed within the scope of their constitutional responsibilities.

Editorial accountability includes:

- adherence to this Constitution;
- compliance with publication ethics;
- maintenance of editorial independence;
- timely processing of manuscripts;
- proper management of conflicts of interest;
- accurate documentation of editorial decisions; and
- protection of the integrity of the scholarly record.

Editors shall exercise their authority responsibly, consistently, and in the best interests of scientific publishing.

Article 33. Editorial Confidentiality

Editors shall preserve the confidentiality of all information obtained during the editorial and peer review processes.

Confidential information shall not be disclosed to unauthorized individuals except where disclosure is required by law, necessary to investigate research misconduct, or expressly authorized under the Journal's constitutional governance framework.

Editors shall not use confidential information acquired through editorial activities for personal, academic, financial, or commercial advantage.

Confidentiality obligations shall continue after the completion of editorial responsibilities.

Article 34. Editorial Conflict of Interest

Editors shall avoid any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest that could compromise—or reasonably appear to compromise—the impartiality of editorial decision-making.

Where a conflict exists, the editor shall immediately disclose the conflict and recuse themselves from all editorial involvement relating to the affected manuscript.

Editorial responsibility shall then be transferred to an appropriately qualified and independent editor in accordance with the Journal's constitutional governance procedures.

The Journal shall maintain documented procedures for identifying, managing, and recording editorial conflicts of interest.

Article 35. Appeals and Complaints

The Journal shall provide fair, transparent, and impartial procedures for the submission, review, and resolution of editorial appeals and complaints.

Authors, reviewers, editors, readers, and other stakeholders may submit appeals or complaints concerning editorial decisions, publication ethics, peer review, or other matters governed by this Constitution.

All appeals and complaints shall:

- be evaluated objectively;
- receive appropriate procedural review;
- be handled by individuals free from conflicts of interest;
- be documented; and
- be resolved within a reasonable period of time.

The submission of an appeal shall not guarantee modification of an editorial decision.

Article 36. Editorial Misconduct

Editorial misconduct includes any action or omission that violates this Constitution, publication ethics, or the principles of independent scholarly publishing.

Editorial misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- abuse of editorial authority;
- intentional bias or discrimination;
- breach of confidentiality;
- failure to disclose conflicts of interest;
- manipulation of peer review;
- improper interference in editorial decisions;
- misuse of confidential information;
- retaliation against authors, reviewers, or editors; and
- any conduct that compromises the integrity or independence of the Journal.

Allegations of editorial misconduct shall be investigated through the constitutional due process procedures established by the Journal.

Article 37. Independent Editorial Oversight

The Journal shall maintain mechanisms for independent oversight of editorial governance to preserve constitutional integrity, public trust, and institutional accountability.

Independent oversight may include constitutional review, governance audits, ethics investigations, conflict-of-interest monitoring, and periodic evaluation of editorial practices.

Oversight activities shall be conducted impartially, independently, and without interference from individuals who are directly involved in the matter under review.

The purpose of independent editorial oversight is to ensure that editorial authority remains accountable, constitutionally compliant, ethically responsible, and consistent with the principles established by *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

Part V. Publication Governance

Article 38. Publication Ethics

The DFAS Journal shall uphold the highest standards of publication ethics in accordance with this Constitution, applicable constitutional instruments, and internationally recognized principles of responsible scholarly publishing.

All participants in the publication process—including authors, editors, reviewers, the Publisher, and institutional partners—shall conduct themselves with honesty, integrity, transparency, fairness, and professional responsibility.

The Journal shall take appropriate action to prevent, investigate, and address publication misconduct while safeguarding due process, fairness, and the integrity of the scholarly record.

Article 39. Peer Review Governance

Peer review shall constitute the primary mechanism for evaluating the scientific quality, originality, methodological rigor, ethical compliance, and scholarly contribution of submitted manuscripts.

The Journal shall maintain an independent, objective, confidential, and transparent peer review system designed to ensure fairness, consistency, and scientific excellence.

Peer reviewers shall be selected on the basis of subject expertise, independence, professional competence, and the absence of conflicts of interest.

The governance of peer review shall be conducted in accordance with this Constitution and the Journal's established editorial procedures.

Article 40. Publication Decisions

Final publication decisions shall be made exclusively through independent editorial judgment following appropriate peer review and constitutional evaluation.

Publication decisions shall be based upon:

- scientific merit;
- originality;
- methodological quality;
- ethical compliance;
- relevance to the Journal's aims and scope;
- peer review recommendations; and
- compliance with this Constitution.

Acceptance or rejection shall never be determined by commercial interests, institutional influence, sponsorship, personal relationships, political considerations, or any other non-scientific factor.

Article 41. Corrections

Where published content contains errors that do not invalidate the principal findings or conclusions, the Journal shall issue appropriate corrections to preserve the accuracy of the scholarly record.

Corrections shall:

- clearly identify the affected publication;
- accurately describe the corrected information;
- remain permanently linked to the original publication; and
- be published in a transparent and timely manner.

The correction process shall maintain the integrity and traceability of the publication record.

Article 42. Retractions

A publication may be retracted where substantial evidence demonstrates that its findings, data, conclusions, authorship, ethical compliance, or publication process have been fundamentally compromised.

Retractions may result from, but are not limited to:

- fabrication or falsification of data;
- plagiarism;
- serious methodological defects;
- unethical research practices;
- duplicate publication;
- manipulation of the peer review process; or
- other forms of publication misconduct.

Retraction decisions shall follow constitutional due process, be supported by documented evidence, and be publicly communicated in a transparent manner while preserving the integrity of the scholarly record.

Article 43. Withdrawals

The Journal may permit the withdrawal of manuscripts or publications under circumstances consistent with this Constitution and the Journal's editorial policies.

Withdrawal requests shall be evaluated individually, taking into consideration:

- the stage of publication;
- the reasons for withdrawal;
- the integrity of the scholarly record;
- the interests of authors, reviewers, and readers; and
- applicable ethical and legal considerations.

Withdrawals shall be documented and managed transparently to preserve publication traceability.

Article 44. Expressions of Concern

Where credible concerns arise regarding the integrity, reliability, ethical compliance, or validity of a published work, and sufficient evidence is not yet available to support correction or retraction, the Journal may issue an Expression of Concern.

Expressions of Concern shall:

- clearly identify the publication concerned;
- explain the nature of the unresolved issues;
- remain publicly accessible during the investigation; and
- be updated or withdrawn upon completion of the investigative process.

The issuance of an Expression of Concern shall not constitute a finding of misconduct but shall serve to inform the scholarly community while due process is completed.

Article 45. Version Control

The Journal shall maintain an accurate, transparent, and permanent version history for all published materials.

Where revisions, corrections, updates, or post-publication amendments occur, each version shall be:

- clearly identified;
- permanently archived;
- appropriately dated;
- linked to previous versions where applicable; and
- preserved to ensure the integrity and traceability of the scholarly record.

No modification shall obscure or remove the historical publication record without constitutional authorization.

Article 46. Digital Preservation and Archiving

The Journal shall implement appropriate digital preservation and archiving mechanisms to ensure the long-term accessibility, authenticity, integrity, and preservation of the scholarly record.

Published content shall be maintained using reliable archival systems and preservation practices that protect against technological obsolescence, accidental loss, unauthorized alteration, or system failure.

The Journal shall maintain permanent access to published works through recognized digital preservation strategies and shall preserve the continuity, authenticity, and integrity of its scholarly publications for future generations.

Part VI. Research Governance

Article 47. Research Integrity

Research integrity shall constitute the foundation of all scholarly work submitted to *The DFAS Journal*.

Authors shall conduct, report, and communicate research honestly, accurately, transparently, and responsibly throughout every stage of the research process.

The Journal shall promote research practices that uphold scientific rigor, methodological soundness, ethical responsibility, intellectual honesty, and respect for the integrity of the scholarly record.

Article 48. Authorship

Authorship shall be granted only to individuals who have made substantial intellectual contributions to the conception, design, execution, analysis, interpretation, or writing of a scholarly work.

All listed authors shall:

- approve the final version of the manuscript;
- agree to its submission and publication;
- accept responsibility for their respective contributions; and
- remain collectively accountable for the integrity of the published work.

Honorary, guest, gift, or purchased authorship is strictly prohibited.

Artificial intelligence systems, software applications, or automated tools shall not qualify as authors under this Constitution.

Article 49. Contributorship

The Journal recognizes that scholarly work may involve contributions beyond authorship.

Contributors who do not satisfy the constitutional requirements for authorship shall be appropriately acknowledged according to the nature of their contribution.

Where applicable, manuscripts shall provide a transparent description of individual contributions to promote accountability, transparency, and accurate attribution of scholarly work.

Article 50. Human–AI Collaboration

The Journal recognizes that artificial intelligence may serve as a research-support tool but shall not replace human intellectual responsibility.

Human researchers shall remain fully responsible for:

- research design;
- scientific reasoning;
- interpretation of findings;
- verification of all outputs generated with AI assistance;
- manuscript preparation; and
- the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the published work.

Artificial intelligence shall function solely as an assistive technology under meaningful human oversight.

Article 51. Artificial Intelligence Disclosure

Authors shall disclose the use of artificial intelligence whenever such use materially contributes to the preparation, analysis, generation, editing, or presentation of a manuscript.

AI disclosures shall accurately describe:

- the AI system or tool used;
- the nature of its contribution;
- the extent of human oversight;
- any verification procedures performed by the authors; and
- any limitations relevant to the use of artificial intelligence.

Failure to disclose significant AI assistance may constitute a breach of this Constitution.

Article 52. Conflict of Interest

Authors shall disclose all actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could reasonably influence—or appear to influence—the design, conduct, interpretation, funding, authorship, review, or publication of the research.

Conflicts may include financial, institutional, professional, commercial, personal, legal, political, or other relationships capable of affecting scholarly objectivity.

The Journal shall evaluate disclosed conflicts in accordance with its constitutional governance framework and implement appropriate management measures where necessary.

Article 53. Funding Disclosure

Authors shall fully disclose all sources of financial support associated with the research, including grants, institutional funding, commercial sponsorship, governmental support, charitable funding, or other forms of financial assistance.

Funding disclosures shall accurately identify:

- the funding organization;
- grant or project identifiers where applicable;
- the role of the funding source in the research; and
- any influence the funding body may have had on study design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, manuscript preparation, or publication decisions.

The Journal shall promote complete transparency regarding research funding while preserving editorial independence.

Article 54. Data Availability

Authors shall promote transparency and reproducibility by making research data available whenever ethically, legally, contractually, and practically appropriate.

Data availability statements shall clearly indicate:

- whether supporting data are publicly available;
- where the data may be accessed;
- any applicable restrictions; and
- the reasons for any limitations on access.

The Journal encourages responsible data sharing while respecting confidentiality, privacy, intellectual property rights, legal obligations, and legitimate ethical constraints.

Article 55. Data Integrity

Authors shall ensure that all research data are collected, recorded, analyzed, stored, and reported accurately, completely, and honestly.

Data fabrication, falsification, selective reporting, inappropriate manipulation, or intentional omission of material information is strictly prohibited.

The Journal may request access to supporting data where necessary to evaluate concerns regarding the integrity or reliability of published research.

Article 56. Reproducibility and Replicability

The Journal supports scientific practices that enhance the reproducibility and replicability of scholarly research.

Authors shall provide sufficient methodological detail, analytical transparency, and documentation to enable independent evaluation, verification, or replication of research findings where reasonably possible.

The Journal recognizes that expectations for reproducibility may differ among disciplines and shall evaluate such requirements in accordance with accepted disciplinary standards.

Article 57. Ethical Approval

Research involving human participants, animals, sensitive data, biological materials, or other activities requiring ethical oversight shall obtain appropriate ethical approval before the commencement of the research, where required by applicable laws, regulations, institutional requirements, or disciplinary standards.

Authors shall accurately report ethical approval information, including the approving authority and relevant reference numbers where applicable.

Where ethical approval is not required, authors shall provide an appropriate justification when requested by the Journal.

Article 58. Research Misconduct

Research misconduct includes any intentional or reckless act that compromises the integrity, reliability, authenticity, or ethical conduct of scholarly research.

Research misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- fabrication of data;
- falsification of data or research records;

- plagiarism;
- duplicate or redundant publication;
- manipulation of images, figures, or datasets;
- unethical authorship practices;
- undisclosed conflicts of interest;
- failure to disclose significant AI assistance;
- unethical research involving human participants or animals; and
- any deliberate violation of accepted standards of responsible research conduct.

Allegations of research misconduct shall be investigated fairly, impartially, confidentially, and in accordance with the constitutional due process procedures established by *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

Part VII. Institutional Governance

Article 59. Institutional Governance Framework

The institutional governance of *The DFAS Journal* shall provide the constitutional framework through which the Journal operates as an independent, accountable, transparent, and ethically governed scholarly publication.

Institutional governance shall ensure that all organizational structures, governance bodies, partnerships, and institutional activities operate consistently with this Constitution while safeguarding scientific integrity, editorial independence, and public trust.

Article 60. Editorial Board Governance

The Editorial Board shall operate under a governance framework that promotes academic excellence, institutional accountability, editorial independence, and responsible scholarly leadership.

The appointment, responsibilities, performance, renewal, suspension, and removal of Editorial Board members shall be governed by transparent constitutional procedures based upon professional qualifications, research expertise, ethical conduct, and commitment to the Journal's constitutional principles.

Editorial Board members shall act independently and exclusively in the interests of scientific publishing.

Article 61. Reviewer Governance

The Journal shall maintain a structured governance framework for the recruitment, appointment, evaluation, recognition, and oversight of peer reviewers.

Reviewer governance shall promote:

- scientific expertise;
- independence;
- impartiality;
- confidentiality;
- ethical conduct;
- timely performance; and
- accountability.

The Journal may periodically evaluate reviewer performance to ensure the quality, consistency, and integrity of the peer review process.

Article 62. Guest Editors and Guest Editorial Teams

Guest Editors and Guest Editorial Teams may be appointed to oversee designated Special Issues, thematic collections, or other editorial initiatives.

Their appointment shall be based upon demonstrated academic expertise, professional reputation, editorial competence, and the absence of conflicts of interest.

Guest Editors shall operate under the same constitutional standards, ethical obligations, editorial responsibilities, and accountability requirements applicable to all editors of the Journal.

The Editor-in-Chief shall retain ultimate constitutional oversight of all editorial activities conducted by Guest Editors.

Article 63. Special Issues and Thematic Collections

The Journal may publish Special Issues or Thematic Collections that contribute to scientific advancement within defined areas of scholarly interest.

The selection, approval, editorial management, peer review, and publication of Special Issues shall comply fully with this Constitution and shall not be subject to commercial, institutional, political, or personal influence.

All manuscripts submitted to Special Issues shall undergo independent editorial assessment and peer review equivalent to that applied to regular submissions.

Article 64. Institutional and Academic Partnerships

The Journal may establish collaborative relationships with universities, research centers, academic societies, professional organizations, governmental institutions, and other scholarly bodies.

Institutional partnerships shall support the advancement of scientific knowledge while preserving the constitutional independence of the Journal.

No institutional partnership shall grant any organization authority to influence editorial decisions, peer review, publication outcomes, or constitutional governance.

Article 65. Conference and Scientific Event Partnerships

The Journal may collaborate with scientific conferences, academic meetings, workshops, symposia, and other scholarly events to promote research dissemination and academic engagement.

Conference partnerships shall be governed by transparent procedures that preserve editorial independence and ensure that all submitted manuscripts satisfy the Journal's normal editorial, ethical, and peer review standards.

Participation in a conference shall not create any entitlement to publication.

Article 66. Advisory Boards and External Advisors

The Journal may appoint Advisory Boards or External Advisors to provide independent strategic, scientific, technical, or institutional guidance.

Advisory bodies shall serve in a consultative capacity and shall not exercise editorial authority over manuscript evaluation, peer review, or publication decisions unless expressly authorized under this Constitution.

Advice provided by Advisory Boards shall support institutional development while respecting the constitutional autonomy of the Journal.

Article 67. Sponsorship, Funding, and Financial Independence

The Journal may receive financial support, sponsorship, grants, donations, institutional assistance, or other lawful sources of funding consistent with its constitutional mission.

All funding arrangements shall be managed transparently and shall not compromise scientific integrity, editorial independence, publication ethics, or constitutional governance.

Sponsors and funding organizations shall have no authority to influence manuscript evaluation, editorial decisions, peer review outcomes, or publication priorities.

Article 68. Advertising, Promotional Activities, and Commercial Communications

Advertising, promotional activities, sponsored communications, and commercial content shall be clearly distinguished from editorial and scholarly content.

Commercial communications shall not influence editorial judgment, peer review, publication decisions, or the scientific content of the Journal.

The Journal shall maintain transparent policies governing advertising and promotional activities to preserve public confidence in the independence of its scholarly publications.

Article 69. Commercial Independence and Editorial Autonomy

The Journal shall remain institutionally and editorially independent from commercial interests.

Business operations, financial management, sponsorship arrangements, advertising activities, publication fees, and commercial relationships shall be administered separately from editorial decision-making.

No commercial consideration shall influence the acceptance, rejection, revision, correction, retraction, or publication of any manuscript.

Article 70. Third-Party Relationships and External Service Providers

The Journal may engage third-party organizations to provide publishing, technological, production, indexing, archiving, editorial management, or other professional services.

Such relationships shall be governed by agreements that preserve confidentiality, data security, editorial independence, constitutional compliance, and the integrity of the scholarly record.

External service providers shall not participate in editorial decision-making unless expressly authorized by this Constitution.

Article 71. Institutional Transparency and Public Accountability

The Journal shall operate with institutional transparency and remain publicly accountable for its governance, editorial practices, publication standards, ethical policies, and constitutional responsibilities.

The Journal shall make publicly available appropriate information regarding its governance structure, editorial leadership, publication policies, ethical standards, ownership, funding arrangements, and constitutional governance framework.

Transparency shall strengthen institutional credibility while protecting confidential information where legally or ethically required.

Article 72. Institutional Risk Management and Governance Review

The Journal shall maintain a systematic framework for identifying, assessing, managing, and periodically reviewing institutional, editorial, operational, technological, legal, ethical, and reputational risks.

Institutional governance shall be subject to regular constitutional review to evaluate the effectiveness of governance structures, identify areas for improvement, strengthen institutional resilience, and ensure continuing compliance with this Constitution.

Periodic governance reviews shall support the long-term sustainability, independence, accountability, and continuous improvement of *The DFAS Journal*.

Part VIII. Constitutional Rights and Duties

Article 73. Rights of Authors

Authors submitting work to *The DFAS Journal* shall be entitled to fair, independent, transparent, and impartial treatment throughout the editorial and publication process.

Authors have the right to:

- receive objective evaluation based solely on scientific merit;
 - be informed of editorial decisions within a reasonable timeframe;
 - receive constructive peer review comments where applicable;
 - have confidential handling of submitted manuscripts;
 - disclose and explain relevant matters during editorial review;
 - appeal editorial decisions in accordance with constitutional procedures;
 - receive equal treatment without discrimination;
 - retain applicable intellectual property rights in accordance with the Journal's publication policies; and
 - expect that all editorial activities comply with this Constitution.
-

Article 74. Duties of Authors

Authors shall uphold the highest standards of scientific integrity, ethical conduct, and professional responsibility.

Authors shall:

- submit original and authentic scholarly work;
- accurately report research methods, data, analyses, and findings;
- ensure that authorship reflects genuine intellectual contributions;
- disclose conflicts of interest and funding sources;
- obtain all necessary ethical approvals where applicable;
- disclose the use of artificial intelligence in accordance with Journal policies;
- cooperate with editorial and peer review processes;
- promptly report significant errors discovered after publication; and
- comply with this Constitution and all applicable publication policies.

Authors remain fully accountable for the accuracy, integrity, and authenticity of their published work.

Article 75. Rights of Reviewers

Reviewers shall be recognized as independent contributors to the integrity of scholarly publishing.

Reviewers have the right to:

- receive sufficient information to conduct competent reviews;
 - decline review invitations where appropriate;
 - refuse assignments involving conflicts of interest;
 - perform reviews independently and without external influence;
 - receive confidential treatment of their identity where applicable;
 - be treated with professionalism and respect by the Journal; and
 - receive appropriate recognition for their scholarly service where consistent with the Journal's policies.
-

Article 76. Duties of Reviewers

Reviewers shall perform their responsibilities with independence, integrity, competence, confidentiality, and professionalism.

Reviewers shall:

- provide objective, evidence-based, and constructive evaluations;
- assess manuscripts fairly and without bias;

- maintain strict confidentiality throughout the review process;
- disclose actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest;
- complete reviews within agreed timeframes whenever reasonably possible;
- avoid the use of confidential manuscript information for personal, academic, or commercial benefit; and
- comply with this Constitution and applicable peer review policies.

Reviewers shall evaluate manuscripts solely on scientific merit and ethical standards.

Article 77. Rights of Editors

Editors shall possess the constitutional authority necessary to perform their editorial responsibilities independently and responsibly.

Editors have the right to:

- exercise independent academic judgment;
 - make editorial recommendations free from external interference;
 - decline participation where conflicts of interest exist;
 - receive institutional support necessary to perform editorial responsibilities;
 - expect cooperation from authors, reviewers, and the Publisher;
 - participate in governance processes established under this Constitution; and
 - receive protection from improper influence, intimidation, retaliation, or coercion arising from legitimate editorial decisions.
-

Article 78. Duties of Editors

Editors shall uphold the constitutional principles of scientific integrity, editorial independence, transparency, fairness, accountability, and confidentiality.

Editors shall:

- evaluate manuscripts objectively and impartially;
- safeguard the integrity of the peer review process;
- maintain confidentiality throughout editorial proceedings;
- disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest;
- ensure compliance with publication ethics and constitutional governance;
- document significant editorial decisions where appropriate;
- treat all participants with professionalism and respect; and
- preserve the integrity of the scholarly record.

Editors shall exercise their authority solely in the interests of scientific publishing.

Article 79. Rights of Readers

Readers are entitled to access scholarly content that has been published in accordance with the constitutional principles governing *The DFAS Journal*.

Readers have the right to expect that published research is:

- scientifically rigorous;
- ethically conducted;
- independently reviewed;
- transparently presented;
- appropriately corrected when necessary; and
- preserved as part of a reliable and trustworthy scholarly record.

Readers may communicate concerns regarding published works through the procedures established by the Journal for corrections, appeals, complaints, or allegations of publication misconduct.

Article 80. Responsibilities of the Publisher

The Publisher shall provide the institutional, administrative, financial, technological, and operational support necessary for the effective functioning of *The DFAS Journal* while respecting the constitutional independence of the editorial process.

The Publisher shall:

- safeguard the editorial independence of the Journal;
- provide appropriate publishing infrastructure and technical support;
- maintain secure editorial and publication systems;
- support long-term digital preservation and archiving;
- ensure compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements;
- refrain from influencing editorial decisions or peer review outcomes;
- promote transparency, accountability, and constitutional governance; and
- support the continuous development of the Journal in accordance with this Constitution.

The Publisher shall not exercise authority over editorial decisions concerning the acceptance, rejection, correction, withdrawal, or retraction of scholarly works except where expressly required by law or authorized under this Constitution.

Part IX. Founder Governance

Article 81. Constitutional Principles of Founder Governance

The Journal recognizes that the Founder may possess institutional authority, strategic influence, or editorial responsibilities that require enhanced constitutional safeguards to preserve editorial independence, public confidence, and the integrity of scholarly publishing.

Accordingly, all editorial, publication, and governance activities involving the Founder shall be conducted under additional constitutional protections designed to eliminate actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

No constitutional privilege or exemption shall arise solely by virtue of the Founder's position within the Journal or any affiliated institution.

Article 82. Editorial Independence from the Founder

The Founder shall not exercise editorial authority over manuscripts in which the Founder is an author, co-author, contributor, funding recipient, research supervisor, or otherwise has a direct or indirect interest.

The Founder shall not influence, directly or indirectly:

- reviewer selection;
- editorial assignments;
- peer review outcomes;
- editorial recommendations;
- publication decisions;
- post-publication actions; or
- constitutional investigations relating to such manuscripts.

The editorial independence of the Journal shall prevail over any institutional authority held by the Founder.

Article 83. Submission and Handling of Founder Manuscripts

Manuscripts submitted by the Founder shall be processed through the same editorial workflow, ethical standards, constitutional requirements, and scientific evaluation procedures applicable to all other submissions.

Founder manuscripts shall receive neither preferential treatment nor additional restrictions beyond those necessary to preserve editorial independence and public confidence.

All handling procedures shall ensure fairness, confidentiality, objectivity, and transparency throughout the publication process.

Article 84. Independent Editorial Assignment for Founder Submissions

Upon submission of a Founder manuscript, editorial responsibility shall be assigned to an independent editor who has no actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest with the Founder.

The assigned editor shall possess full constitutional authority to manage every stage of the editorial process, including:

- preliminary editorial assessment;
- reviewer selection;
- peer review management;
- editorial correspondence;
- requests for revision;
- recommendations concerning publication; and
- post-publication actions where applicable.

The Founder shall not participate in any editorial activity relating to the submitted manuscript.

Article 85. Independent Peer Review of Founder Manuscripts

Founder manuscripts shall undergo independent peer review under the same scientific, ethical, and methodological standards applied to all other submissions.

Reviewers shall be selected exclusively on the basis of subject expertise, independence, and the absence of conflicts of interest.

Reviewers shall not receive instructions, recommendations, or communications from the Founder concerning the evaluation of the manuscript.

The identity of reviewers shall remain protected in accordance with the Journal's peer review policies.

Article 86. Editorial Decision-Making for Founder Submissions

Final publication decisions concerning Founder manuscripts shall be made exclusively by the independent editor or editorial authority assigned under this Constitution.

Acceptance, revision, rejection, correction, withdrawal, or retraction shall be determined solely on the basis of:

- scientific merit;
- originality;
- methodological rigor;
- ethical compliance;
- peer review recommendations;
- relevance to the Journal's scope; and

- compliance with this Constitution.

The Founder shall neither approve nor veto editorial decisions relating to personal submissions.

Article 87. Founder Conflict of Interest Disclosure

The Founder shall fully disclose all actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest associated with submitted manuscripts.

Such disclosures shall include, where applicable:

- institutional affiliations;
- research funding;
- financial interests;
- supervisory relationships;
- collaborative relationships;
- intellectual property interests; and
- any circumstance that could reasonably be perceived as affecting editorial impartiality.

The Journal shall maintain complete transparency regarding the management of Founder-related conflicts of interest.

Article 88. Publication Balance and Institutional Neutrality

The Journal shall maintain an appropriate balance between manuscripts authored by the Founder and those submitted by the broader scholarly community.

Editorial planning shall ensure that the Journal functions primarily as an independent international scholarly publication rather than as a publication venue for the Founder or any affiliated institution.

Publication priorities shall be determined exclusively by scientific merit, editorial standards, and the Journal's constitutional mission.

Article 89. Monitoring and Compliance

The Journal shall periodically monitor compliance with the constitutional safeguards governing Founder submissions.

Such monitoring may include reviews of editorial assignments, conflict-of-interest management, peer review independence, publication outcomes, and adherence to constitutional procedures.

Where non-compliance is identified, appropriate corrective actions shall be implemented in accordance with this Constitution.

The objective of constitutional monitoring is to preserve editorial independence, institutional credibility, scientific integrity, and public confidence in *The DFAS Journal*.

Part X. Research Sponsorship and Institutional Funding Governance

Article 90. Principles of Research Sponsorship

The Journal recognizes that research sponsorship plays an important role in advancing scientific knowledge while requiring robust constitutional safeguards to preserve research integrity, editorial independence, and public confidence.

All sponsored research submitted to *The DFAS Journal* shall be evaluated according to identical scientific, ethical, and editorial standards regardless of the identity of the sponsoring organization.

Research sponsorship shall never compromise the independence of editorial judgment or the integrity of the scholarly record.

Article 91. DFAS Research Center–Funded Research

Research financially supported, commissioned, coordinated, or otherwise sponsored by the **DFAS Research Center** shall be subject to enhanced constitutional governance designed to preserve institutional neutrality and eliminate actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

The existence of sponsorship by the DFAS Research Center shall neither advantage nor disadvantage a manuscript during editorial evaluation.

All DFAS Research Center–funded research shall be processed under the same scientific, ethical, and editorial standards applicable to all other submissions while complying with the additional safeguards established under this Constitution.

Article 92. Funding Disclosure and Transparency

Authors shall provide complete, accurate, and transparent disclosure of all financial support associated with submitted research.

Funding disclosures shall identify:

- the funding organization;
- grant or project identifiers where applicable;
- the nature of financial support received;
- the role of the sponsor in the research; and
- any involvement of the sponsor in study design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, manuscript preparation, or publication.

Incomplete or misleading funding disclosures may constitute a violation of this Constitution.

Article 93. Editorial Independence for Sponsored Research

Editorial evaluation of sponsored research shall remain entirely independent of the sponsoring organization.

Sponsors shall not participate in, influence, or attempt to influence:

- manuscript screening;
- reviewer selection;
- editorial correspondence;
- peer review;
- editorial recommendations;
- publication decisions;
- corrections;
- withdrawals;
- retractions; or
- post-publication investigations.

Scientific merit shall remain the sole basis for editorial evaluation.

Article 94. Institutional Separation Between *The DFAS Journal* and DFAS Research Center

Although *The DFAS Journal* and the DFAS Research Center may operate within the same institutional ecosystem or share organizational affiliations, they shall remain constitutionally independent in all editorial matters.

The DFAS Research Center shall not possess constitutional authority over:

- editorial appointments;
- manuscript evaluation;

- peer review;
- publication decisions;
- editorial investigations;
- corrections;
- retractions; or
- any other editorial function governed by this Constitution.

Institutional affiliation shall not diminish the constitutional autonomy of the Journal.

Article 95. Independent Handling of Sponsored Manuscripts

Manuscripts funded, commissioned, or supported by the DFAS Research Center or any sponsoring organization presenting an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest shall be assigned to editors who are independent of the sponsoring entity.

Independent editors shall possess full constitutional authority over every stage of the editorial process, including manuscript assessment, reviewer selection, editorial correspondence, publication recommendations, and post-publication actions.

Neither the sponsoring organization nor its representatives shall participate in editorial decision-making.

Article 96. Conflict of Interest Management

The Journal shall maintain comprehensive procedures for identifying, disclosing, documenting, evaluating, and managing conflicts of interest arising from sponsored research.

Conflict management shall apply to:

- authors;
- editors;
- reviewers;
- sponsoring organizations;
- institutional partners; and
- any individual participating in the editorial or publication process.

Where necessary, appropriate constitutional safeguards—including editorial recusal, independent editorial assignment, additional peer review, or institutional oversight—shall be implemented to preserve impartiality.

Article 97. Independent Peer Review of Sponsored Research

Sponsored research shall undergo independent peer review under the same scientific, methodological, and ethical standards applied to all submissions received by the Journal.

Reviewers shall be selected solely on the basis of subject expertise, independence, and the absence of conflicts of interest.

The identity or influence of a sponsoring organization shall not affect reviewer selection, reviewer recommendations, or editorial evaluation.

Article 98. Publication Decisions for Sponsored Research

Publication decisions concerning sponsored research shall be made exclusively by the Journal's independent editorial authorities.

Acceptance, revision, rejection, correction, withdrawal, or retraction shall be determined solely according to:

- scientific quality;
- originality;
- methodological rigor;
- ethical compliance;
- peer review recommendations;
- relevance to the Journal's scope; and
- compliance with this Constitution.

Financial sponsorship shall neither confer preferential treatment nor constitute grounds for adverse editorial treatment.

Article 99. Public Disclosure and Accountability

The Journal shall maintain transparency regarding its governance of sponsored research in order to strengthen public confidence in its editorial independence.

Where appropriate, funding disclosures, conflict-of-interest statements, sponsorship acknowledgements, and related constitutional safeguards shall be communicated as part of the published scholarly record.

The Journal shall periodically review its sponsorship governance framework to ensure continued compliance with this Constitution and to uphold the highest standards of scientific integrity, editorial independence, institutional accountability, and public trust.

Part XI. DFAS Constitutional Framework

Article 100. Constitutional Status of DFAS Governance Documents

The governance documents developed under the DFAS constitutional framework shall serve as official constitutional instruments supporting the implementation of *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

These constitutional instruments provide detailed governance, ethical, procedural, and operational standards for specific areas of scholarly publishing while remaining fully subordinate to this Constitution.

Where any constitutional instrument is inconsistent with the provisions of this Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail.

All DFAS constitutional instruments shall be interpreted consistently with the constitutional principles established herein.

Article 101. DFAS Future Engine Prototype Protocol (DFAS-FEP)

DFAS-FEP establishes the constitutional framework governing financial ethics, financial transparency, disclosure obligations, funding integrity, financial conflicts of interest, and responsible financial conduct associated with scholarly publishing.

The Protocol shall apply where financial ethics issues arise during manuscript submission, editorial evaluation, peer review, publication, post-publication activities, or institutional governance.

Compliance with the DFAS-FEP shall support the constitutional principles of transparency, accountability, scientific integrity, and institutional independence.

Article 102. DFAS Editorial Ethics Protocol (DFAS-EEP)

DFAS-EEP establishes detailed constitutional standards governing editorial ethics, editorial conduct, editorial responsibilities, publication ethics, and professional behavior within the Journal.

The Protocol provides operational guidance for editors, authors, reviewers, and other participants involved in the editorial process.

The DFAS-EEP shall complement this Constitution by providing practical implementation standards while remaining fully consistent with its constitutional principles.

Article 103. DFAS Editorial Ethics Protocol for Reviewers (DFAS-EEP-RR)

DFAS-EEP-RR establishes the constitutional standards governing reviewer conduct, reviewer independence, confidentiality, impartiality, conflict-of-interest management, ethical peer review practices, and reviewer accountability.

The Protocol defines the professional responsibilities expected of reviewers throughout the manuscript evaluation process.

All reviewers participating in the Journal's peer review system shall comply with the requirements established by the DFAS-EEP-RR.

Article 104. DFAS Editorial Ethics Protocol for Artificial Intelligence (DFAS-EEP-AI)

DFAS-EEP-AI establishes the constitutional framework governing the responsible, transparent, ethical, and accountable use of artificial intelligence within scholarly publishing.

The Protocol provides standards concerning:

- human oversight of AI-assisted work;
- disclosure of AI use;
- verification of AI-generated content;
- editorial evaluation of AI-assisted manuscripts;
- responsible AI governance; and
- preservation of human intellectual responsibility.

The DFAS-EEP-AI shall support innovation while ensuring that artificial intelligence remains subordinate to human scientific judgment and constitutional accountability.

Article 105. DFAS Conference–Journal Governance Protocol (DFAS-CGP)

The **DFAS Conference Governance Protocol (DFAS-CGP)** establishes the constitutional methodology governing the development, implementation, interpretation, amendment, and administration of governance instruments adopted under *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

The Protocol provides standardized principles for constitutional governance, institutional consistency, policy development, document hierarchy, governance review, and constitutional implementation.

All governance instruments adopted by the Journal shall be developed and maintained in accordance with the DFAS-CGP.

Article 106. Future Constitutional Instruments

The Journal may adopt additional constitutional instruments whenever necessary to strengthen governance, publication ethics, research integrity, editorial operations, technological innovation, legal compliance, or institutional administration.

Future constitutional instruments shall:

- be formally approved through the constitutional governance procedures established by the Journal;
- remain consistent with this Constitution;
- complement rather than replace constitutional provisions unless formally amended;
- clearly define their constitutional purpose and scope; and
- become binding upon adoption in accordance with the constitutional amendment and implementation procedures established by *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

No future constitutional instrument shall supersede, modify, or invalidate any provision of this Constitution except through the formal constitutional amendment procedures established herein.

Part XII. Constitutional Interpretation and Definitions

Article 107. Constitutional Definitions

For the purposes of this Constitution, terms and expressions shall be interpreted according to their definitions as established within this Constitution, its Annexes, and any constitutional instruments adopted pursuant to it.

Where a term is expressly defined, that definition shall prevail throughout all constitutional documents, policies, governance instruments, editorial procedures, and publication activities of *The DFAS Journal*.

Definitions shall be interpreted consistently to promote legal certainty, institutional consistency, transparency, and effective constitutional governance.

Article 108. Interpretation Principles

This Constitution shall be interpreted in a manner that best advances its constitutional objectives and fundamental principles.

Interpretation shall be guided by:

- scientific integrity;
- editorial independence;
- transparency;
- accountability;
- fairness and impartiality;

- research integrity;
- constitutional consistency;
- institutional independence;
- proportionality;
- good faith; and
- the preservation of public trust in scholarly publishing.

Where multiple interpretations are reasonably possible, the interpretation that most effectively safeguards the integrity, independence, and constitutional purpose of the Journal shall prevail.

Article 109. Definitions of Editorial Roles

The constitutional roles established within the governance structure of *The DFAS Journal* shall be interpreted according to their defined responsibilities, authorities, and constitutional obligations.

Editorial roles include, but are not limited to:

- Editor-in-Chief;
- Associate Editors;
- Section Editors;
- Managing Editorial Office;
- Editorial Board Members;
- Guest Editors;
- Reviewers;
- Authors;
- Publisher;
- Advisory Boards; and
- any other governance body established under this Constitution.

The constitutional authority assigned to each role shall be exercised only within the scope expressly provided by this Constitution and applicable constitutional instruments.

Article 110. Definitions of Research and Publication Misconduct

Research and publication misconduct shall include any intentional, reckless, or seriously negligent act or omission that compromises the integrity, reliability, authenticity, transparency, or ethical conduct of scholarly research or scientific publishing.

Such misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- fabrication;
- falsification;
- plagiarism;
- duplicate or redundant publication;

- inappropriate authorship practices;
- undisclosed conflicts of interest;
- manipulation of peer review;
- unethical research practices;
- data manipulation;
- image manipulation;
- intentional misrepresentation;
- failure to disclose significant artificial intelligence assistance where required; and
- any other conduct inconsistent with responsible scholarly publishing.

The constitutional definitions of misconduct shall be interpreted broadly to protect the integrity of the scholarly record.

Article 111. Definitions of Artificial Intelligence and Human Authorship

For the purposes of this Constitution, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** refers to computational systems capable of generating, analyzing, transforming, organizing, or assisting in the creation of scholarly content through automated or machine-learning processes.

Human Authorship refers exclusively to natural persons who exercise substantial intellectual contribution, independent scientific judgment, critical reasoning, interpretation, accountability, and responsibility for scholarly work.

Artificial intelligence systems shall not possess authorship status, legal responsibility, editorial authority, intellectual ownership, or constitutional rights under this Constitution.

Human authors shall remain fully responsible for all AI-assisted content submitted to or published by the Journal.

Article 112. Resolution of Interpretative Conflicts

Where uncertainty, ambiguity, inconsistency, or conflict arises concerning the interpretation of this Constitution or any constitutional instrument adopted under it, the matter shall be resolved in accordance with the constitutional principles established by this Constitution.

In resolving interpretative conflicts, priority shall be given to:

1. *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*;
2. formally adopted DFAS constitutional instruments;
3. officially approved governance policies and procedures; and
4. supplementary guidance consistent with this Constitution.

Interpretative decisions shall preserve constitutional coherence, editorial independence, scientific integrity, institutional accountability, and the long-term objectives of *The DFAS Journal*.

No interpretation shall be adopted that diminishes or contradicts the constitutional principles established by this Constitution.

Part XIII. Constitutional Due Process

Article 113. Principles of Due Process

The Journal shall ensure that all constitutional investigations, editorial proceedings, ethical assessments, governance reviews, and disciplinary actions are conducted in accordance with the principles of due process.

Due process shall guarantee:

- fairness;
- impartiality;
- independence;
- transparency;
- proportionality;
- procedural consistency;
- the right to be heard;
- the presumption of good faith until sufficient evidence demonstrates otherwise; and
- decisions based upon objective evidence.

No individual shall be subject to constitutional or editorial sanctions without an appropriate procedural review conducted under this Constitution.

Article 114. Preliminary Assessment Procedures

Upon receiving an allegation, complaint, appeal, or report concerning a potential violation of this Constitution, the Journal shall conduct a preliminary assessment to determine whether sufficient grounds exist to initiate a formal investigation.

The preliminary assessment shall:

- evaluate the credibility of the allegation;
- determine the relevance of the matter to the Journal's constitutional authority;
- identify any immediate risks to the integrity of the scholarly record;
- consider whether interim measures are necessary; and
- determine whether the matter should proceed to formal investigation.

The preliminary assessment shall not constitute a finding of responsibility or misconduct.

Article 115. Investigation Procedures

Where sufficient grounds exist, the Journal shall conduct a fair, independent, confidential, and evidence-based investigation.

Investigations shall be carried out by individuals who are free from actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

The investigation process shall include, where appropriate:

- collection and evaluation of relevant evidence;
- review of applicable documentation;
- consultation with relevant parties;
- assessment of constitutional and ethical compliance;
- consideration of expert opinion where necessary; and
- preparation of documented findings.

Investigations shall be completed within a reasonable timeframe while ensuring procedural fairness and thorough evaluation.

Article 116. Right to Respond

Any individual who is the subject of an investigation or proposed constitutional action shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations, evidence, or concerns before a final decision is made.

The right to respond includes the opportunity to:

- review the substance of the allegations, subject to confidentiality requirements;
- provide explanations, supporting evidence, or clarifications;
- correct factual inaccuracies;
- identify procedural concerns; and
- present any information relevant to the constitutional review.

The Journal shall consider all relevant submissions in good faith before reaching a final determination.

Article 117. Appeals Procedures

Individuals directly affected by constitutional or editorial decisions may submit an appeal in accordance with the procedures established by the Journal.

Appeals shall be considered only where there are reasonable grounds, including:

- procedural error;
- significant new evidence;
- material factual error;
- conflict of interest;

- disproportionate application of constitutional measures; or
- other circumstances that may have materially affected the original decision.

Appeals shall be reviewed independently by individuals who did not participate in the original decision-making process whenever reasonably practicable.

Where appropriate, the Journal may seek independent external advisory guidance from internationally recognized publication ethics organizations, scholarly publishing bodies, or independent experts. Any such guidance shall be advisory in nature only and shall neither bind nor supersede the constitutional authority, editorial independence, or final decision-making authority of *The DFAS Journal*.

The outcome of an appeal shall be final unless otherwise provided by this Constitution.

Article 118. Corrective Actions and Sanctions

Where a constitutional violation, ethical breach, or publication misconduct has been established through due process, the Journal may implement corrective actions or sanctions that are proportionate to the nature, severity, intent, and impact of the violation.

Corrective measures may include, where appropriate:

- requests for clarification or correction;
- publication of corrections;
- expressions of concern;
- manuscript rejection;
- publication withdrawal;
- retraction;
- temporary or permanent editorial recusal;
- suspension of editorial or reviewer responsibilities;
- restrictions on future submissions; or
- any other constitutionally authorized action necessary to protect the integrity of the Journal.

All corrective actions shall be documented and supported by the findings of the constitutional review.

Article 119. Confidentiality During Investigations

The Journal shall maintain the confidentiality of investigations to the greatest extent consistent with fairness, legal obligations, and the protection of the scholarly record.

Information obtained during an investigation shall be disclosed only to individuals who have a legitimate constitutional or professional need to know.

Confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the investigation and, where appropriate, after its conclusion, except where disclosure is required by law, necessary to protect research integrity, or authorized under this Constitution.

The obligation of confidentiality shall not prevent the Journal from publishing appropriate editorial notices, corrections, retractions, or other public statements necessary to preserve the integrity, transparency, and reliability of the scholarly record.

Part XIV. Constitutional Compliance and Auditing

Article 120. Constitutional Compliance Framework

The Journal shall maintain a comprehensive constitutional compliance framework to ensure that all editorial, publishing, governance, administrative, and institutional activities are conducted in accordance with *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

The compliance framework shall promote:

- constitutional consistency;
- scientific integrity;
- editorial independence;
- institutional accountability;
- ethical publishing practices;
- transparent governance; and
- continuous institutional improvement.

All individuals and governing bodies operating under the authority of the Journal shall comply with the provisions of this Constitution and all constitutional instruments adopted pursuant to it.

Article 121. Internal Constitutional Audits

The Journal shall periodically conduct internal constitutional audits to evaluate compliance with this Constitution and its associated governance instruments.

Internal constitutional audits may assess:

- editorial governance;
- peer review processes;
- publication ethics;
- conflict-of-interest management;
- research integrity procedures;
- constitutional decision-making;
- institutional governance;
- documentation and recordkeeping; and

- implementation of constitutional policies.

Audits shall be conducted objectively, independently where appropriate, and in a manner that promotes institutional learning rather than solely identifying deficiencies.

The findings of constitutional audits shall be documented and retained as part of the Journal's governance records.

Article 122. Periodic Governance Reviews

The Journal shall undertake periodic reviews of its constitutional governance framework to ensure its continuing effectiveness, relevance, and consistency with developments in scholarly publishing, research ethics, technology, and institutional governance.

Governance reviews may include evaluation of:

- constitutional provisions;
- governance structures;
- editorial procedures;
- publication policies;
- constitutional instruments;
- institutional performance; and
- emerging risks affecting the Journal.

The purpose of periodic governance review is to strengthen institutional resilience, enhance governance quality, and support the long-term sustainability of the Journal.

Article 123. Corrective and Preventive Actions

Where constitutional non-compliance, governance deficiencies, procedural weaknesses, or institutional risks are identified, the Journal shall implement appropriate corrective and preventive actions.

Corrective actions shall address identified deficiencies, while preventive actions shall seek to reduce the likelihood of future constitutional or governance failures.

Such actions may include:

- revision of policies or procedures;
- constitutional amendments;
- governance improvements;
- additional training or guidance;
- enhanced oversight mechanisms;
- strengthened internal controls; or
- other measures necessary to improve constitutional compliance.

The implementation and effectiveness of corrective and preventive actions shall be periodically monitored and documented.

Article 124. Annual Constitutional Compliance Report

The Journal shall prepare an Annual Constitutional Compliance Report summarizing the overall implementation and effectiveness of its constitutional governance framework.

The report may include, where appropriate:

- the status of constitutional compliance;
- governance review activities;
- internal audit findings;
- implementation of corrective and preventive actions;
- significant constitutional amendments;
- institutional governance developments;
- major ethical or governance issues addressed during the reporting period; and
- recommendations for continuous improvement.

The Annual Constitutional Compliance Report shall serve as an institutional accountability mechanism supporting transparency, constitutional governance, and the continuous advancement of *The DFAS Journal* in accordance with the principles established by this Constitution.

Part XV. Constitutional Administration

Article 125. Constitutional Supremacy

The Constitution of The DFAS Journal shall constitute the highest governing authority of the Journal.

All constitutional instruments, governance documents, editorial policies, operational procedures, ethical protocols, administrative regulations, and institutional practices adopted by the Journal shall be interpreted and applied consistently with this Constitution.

Where any governance document, policy, procedure, or constitutional instrument conflicts with this Constitution, the provisions of this Constitution shall prevail.

No editorial decision, institutional practice, or administrative action shall override the constitutional principles established herein except through the constitutional amendment procedures provided by this Constitution.

Article 126. Constitutional Enforcement

The Journal shall maintain appropriate governance mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of this Constitution.

Responsibility for constitutional compliance shall be shared among all constitutional bodies, editorial authorities, institutional officers, reviewers, authors, and other participants acting under the authority of the Journal.

Where constitutional violations are identified, the Journal shall take appropriate actions consistent with:

- due process;
- proportionality;
- fairness;
- transparency;
- scientific integrity;
- editorial independence; and
- institutional accountability.

Constitutional enforcement shall seek not only to address non-compliance but also to promote continuous institutional improvement.

Article 127. Constitutional Amendments

This Constitution may be amended whenever necessary to strengthen governance, improve editorial practices, respond to developments in scholarly publishing, address technological advances, or enhance institutional effectiveness.

Constitutional amendments shall:

- be formally documented;
- clearly identify the provisions being amended;
- state the rationale for the amendment;
- preserve the coherence and integrity of the constitutional framework; and
- become effective only upon formal constitutional adoption by the Journal.

No amendment shall undermine the fundamental constitutional principles of scientific integrity, editorial independence, research integrity, transparency, accountability, fairness, or human responsibility established by this Constitution.

Article 128. Periodic Constitutional Review

The Journal shall periodically review this Constitution to ensure that it remains current, effective, comprehensive, and consistent with evolving international standards of scholarly publishing, research ethics, governance, and technological development.

Periodic constitutional review shall evaluate:

- constitutional effectiveness;
- governance performance;
- editorial practices;
- institutional developments;
- legal and ethical considerations;
- technological innovation;
- emerging risks; and
- opportunities for constitutional improvement.

Constitutional review shall support the long-term sustainability, resilience, and continuous development of *The DFAS Journal*.

Article 129. Effective Date

This Constitution shall enter into force on the date formally adopted by *The DFAS Journal*.

Upon its effective date, this Constitution shall govern all constitutional, editorial, governance, publication, research, administrative, and institutional activities conducted under the authority of the Journal.

The Constitution shall remain in force unless amended or replaced in accordance with the constitutional procedures established herein.

Article 130. Version History

The Journal shall maintain an official Constitutional Version History documenting the evolution of this Constitution.

The Version History shall record, where applicable:

- version number;
- date of adoption;
- effective date;
- constitutional amendments;
- revisions;
- additions or removals of provisions;
- constitutional review outcomes; and
- summaries of significant governance changes.

The Constitutional Version History shall serve as the authoritative record of the constitutional development of *The DFAS Journal*, supporting transparency, institutional memory, traceability, and accountable constitutional governance.

Article 131. Constitutional Continuity

This Constitution shall remain the permanent constitutional foundation of *The DFAS Journal* irrespective of changes in its Founder, Publisher, Editor-in-Chief, Editorial Board, institutional affiliation, ownership structure, administrative personnel, or governance bodies.

The constitutional principles, governance framework, rights, responsibilities, procedures, and safeguards established herein shall continue to govern the Journal unless amended or replaced in accordance with the constitutional amendment procedures provided by this Constitution.

No change in leadership, organizational structure, institutional partnership, ownership, or operational administration shall suspend, invalidate, or diminish the constitutional authority of this Constitution.

All present and future individuals, governing bodies, institutional partners, and editorial authorities acting under the authority of *The DFAS Journal* shall remain bound by this Constitution from the date they assume their respective responsibilities.

The principle of constitutional continuity shall preserve the Journal's institutional identity, editorial independence, scientific integrity, governance stability, and long-term public trust across successive generations of leadership and institutional development.

Annexes

Annex A. DFAS Publishing Standards

This Annex establishes the official publishing standards adopted by *The DFAS Journal* in support of *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

The DFAS Publishing Standards provide detailed operational guidance for maintaining consistency, transparency, scientific quality, and editorial excellence throughout the publication process.

The Standards may include, but are not limited to:

- manuscript preparation requirements;
- formatting and style standards;
- citation and referencing requirements;
- reporting guidelines;
- data availability standards;

- authorship requirements;
- artificial intelligence disclosure requirements;
- publication ethics standards;
- editorial workflow requirements;
- peer review procedures;
- production standards;
- digital publishing standards;
- correction and retraction procedures; and
- other publication requirements adopted by the Journal.

International Publishing Standards

The DFAS Journal supports and, where appropriate, aligns its publishing practices with internationally recognized scholarly publishing standards, principles, and best-practice frameworks, including those developed by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), ORCID, Crossref, and other internationally recognized scholarly publishing organizations.

Such international standards and best-practice frameworks shall serve as complementary guidance for the development and implementation of the Journal's publishing policies and practices. They shall neither supersede nor override *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*, which shall remain the supreme governing authority of the Journal.

The DFAS Publishing Standards shall remain subordinate to this Constitution and may be revised independently, provided that such revisions do not conflict with the constitutional provisions established herein.

Annex B. Constitutional Governance Framework

This Annex describes the constitutional governance architecture established by *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

The Constitutional Governance Framework documents the institutional relationships among:

- the Constitution;
- constitutional instruments;
- editorial governance;
- publication governance;
- research governance;
- institutional governance;
- constitutional oversight mechanisms;
- compliance procedures;
- constitutional review processes; and
- governance implementation mechanisms.

The Framework serves as the official reference for understanding the constitutional hierarchy governing the Journal.

Figure B-1. Constitutional Governance Hierarchy of *The DFAS Journal*

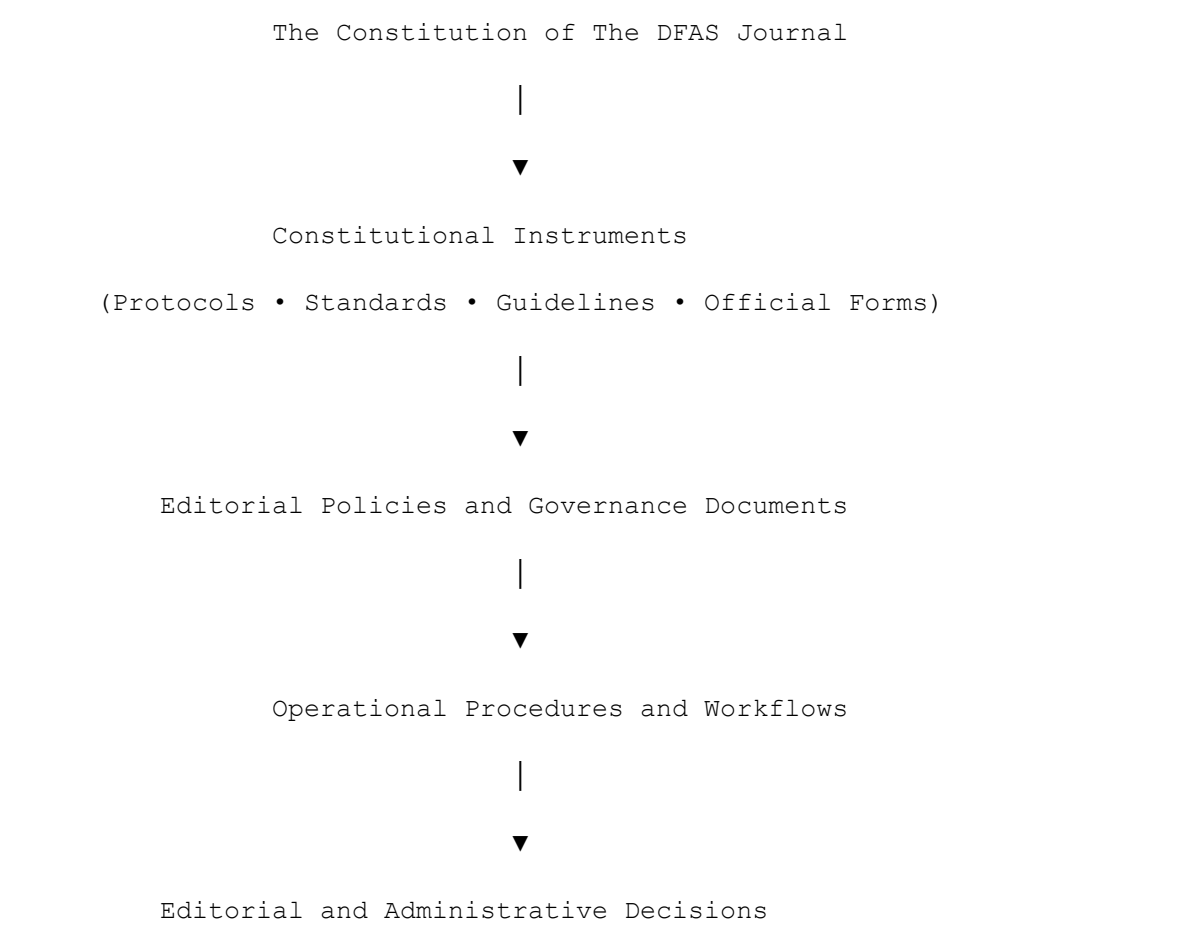


Figure Description

This hierarchy illustrates the constitutional authority framework governing *The DFAS Journal*. The Constitution serves as the supreme governing authority of the Journal. All Constitutional Instruments, including protocols, standards, guidelines, and official forms, derive their authority from the Constitution. Editorial policies and governance documents shall remain consistent with these Constitutional Instruments, while operational procedures shall implement the approved policies in practice. All editorial and administrative decisions shall be made in accordance with this constitutional hierarchy, ensuring consistency, transparency, accountability, constitutional compliance, and institutional integrity throughout the Journal's governance and publication processes.

No constitutional instrument, policy, procedure, or decision shall conflict with or override any provision of *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

Annex C. Constitutional Definitions and Glossary

This Annex provides the official glossary of constitutional terminology used throughout *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal*.

The Glossary may define:

- constitutional terminology;
- editorial terminology;
- publication terminology;
- governance terminology;
- research integrity terminology;
- peer review terminology;
- artificial intelligence terminology;
- ethical terminology;
- institutional governance terminology; and
- other technical expressions used within constitutional documents.

Definitions contained in this Annex shall be interpreted consistently with Article 107 (Constitutional Definitions).

Annex D. Abbreviations

This Annex contains the official abbreviations adopted by *The DFAS Journal* for constitutional, editorial, research, and governance purposes.

Abbreviations may include, but are not limited to:

- DFAS – Dynamic Financial Applied Meta-Science
- DFAS-FEP – DFAS Future Engine Prototype
- DFAS-EEP – DFAS Editorial Ethics Protocol
- DFAS-EEP-RR – DFAS Editorial Ethics Protocol for Reviewers
- DFAS-EEP-AI – DFAS Editorial Ethics Protocol for Artificial Intelligence
- DFAS-CGP – Conference–Journal Governance Protocol
- AI – Artificial Intelligence
- COI – Conflict of Interest
- ORCID – Open Researcher and Contributor ID
- DOI – Digital Object Identifier
- Crossref
- ORCID iD
- ISSN
- ISBN
- COPE
- DOAJ

- OJS

Additional abbreviations may be incorporated as governance documents evolve.

Annex E. Constitutional Revision History

This Annex provides the official historical record of constitutional development.

The Constitutional Revision History shall document:

- constitutional versions;
- adoption dates;
- effective dates;
- amendment history;
- constitutional revisions;
- newly adopted provisions;
- repealed provisions;
- constitutional reviews; and
- summaries of significant constitutional developments.

The Constitutional Revision History shall constitute the authoritative record supporting constitutional traceability and institutional continuity.

Annex F. Governance Flowcharts and Decision Frameworks

This Annex contains visual governance materials supporting the implementation of this Constitution.

These materials may include:

- editorial workflow diagrams;
- manuscript processing flowcharts;
- peer review decision trees;
- appeals procedures;
- misconduct investigation workflows;
- constitutional governance structures;
- conflict-of-interest management frameworks;
- constitutional compliance processes;
- governance reporting structures;
- publication correction pathways;
- constitutional amendment procedures; and
- other governance models adopted by the Journal.

The flowcharts and decision frameworks contained in this Annex are intended to facilitate consistent implementation of constitutional requirements.

Where any visual representation differs from the text of this Constitution, the constitutional text shall prevail.

Annex G. Official Constitutional Forms

This Annex establishes the official constitutional forms adopted by *The DFAS Journal* for the implementation of this Constitution. These forms provide standardized documentation to ensure the consistent application of constitutional governance, editorial procedures, publication ethics, research integrity, transparency, and institutional accountability.

The forms listed in this Annex are constitutional implementation instruments and shall be interpreted in accordance with *The Constitution of The DFAS Journal* and all related constitutional instruments. Their detailed content, format, and administrative procedures may be maintained, updated, or revised through official operational documents, provided that such revisions remain fully consistent with this Constitution and do not alter its constitutional principles or requirements.

The official constitutional forms include, but are not limited to, the following:

Form	Purpose	Applicable To	Related Constitutional Articles
Form G-1. Author Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form	Disclosure of actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest associated with manuscript submission.	Authors	Conflict of Interest Articles
Form G-2. Research Funding Disclosure Form	Disclosure of all financial support, sponsorship, grants, and funding sources related to the submitted work.	Authors	Funding and Transparency Articles
Form G-3. Artificial Intelligence Disclosure Form	Disclosure of the use of artificial intelligence systems during the research, writing, analysis, or publication process.	Authors	Artificial Intelligence Governance Articles
Form G-4. Author Constitutional Compliance Declaration	Confirmation that the manuscript complies with the Constitution and all applicable editorial and ethical requirements.	Authors	Author Responsibilities Articles
Form G-5. Reviewer Declaration Form	Declaration of reviewer independence, confidentiality, impartiality, and	Reviewers	Peer Review Articles

	compliance with constitutional obligations.		
Form G-6. Editorial Conflict of Interest Declaration Form	Disclosure and management of conflicts of interest involving editors participating in editorial decisions.	Editors	Editorial Independence and Conflict of Interest Articles
Form G-7. Editorial Decision Record	Documentation of editorial decisions, supporting rationale, and constitutional basis for the final determination.	Editors	Editorial Decision Articles
Form G-8. Research Misconduct Investigation Record	Documentation of allegations, investigations, findings, and resolutions relating to research or publication misconduct.	Editorial Authorities	Research Integrity and Misconduct Articles
Form G-9. Appeals Submission Form	Submission of formal appeals against editorial or constitutional decisions.	Authors and Other Eligible Parties	Appeals Articles
Form G-10. Constitutional Amendment Proposal Form	Submission and documentation of proposed constitutional amendments and supporting justification.	Constitutional Authorities	Constitutional Amendment Articles

The detailed versions of these forms shall be maintained as official constitutional implementation documents and shall be adopted and used in all applicable editorial, administrative, ethical, and governance procedures of *The DFAS Journal*.