

Contracts on authorship: What should they include, how should they be managed?

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UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN



The plan

1. A specific example of an authorship contract
2. A proposed general framework and its strengths and limitations
3. Authorship pathologies – to what extent can contracts prevent them?
4. Conclusions



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Samarbejdsaftale vedrørende brug af data fra master-speciale, "Udvikling i antal og hold af katte på landet i Danmark fra 1998 til 2022 – en spørgeskemabaseret undersøgelse", af Bryndís Wöhler og Ulrike Gade.

Aftalens parter: Bryndís Wöhler (BW), Ulrike Gade (UG), og professor Peter Sandøe (PS), sidstnævnte også på vegne af professor Søren Saxmose Nielsen, professor Henrik Meilby og sekretariatschef Marianne Lund Ujvári

Formålet med aftalen er at sikre, at data og resultater fra specialet kan nyttiggøres i form af en publikation af en artikel i et internationalt tidsskrift samt opfølgende formidlende publikationer.

For at dette kan lade sig gøre forpligter parterne sig til følgende:

1. BW og UG deler med de øvrige parter retten til at bruge data fra specialet for så vidt angår de omtalte publikationer.
2. BW og UG deler alle relevante datafiler og tilhørende meta-data af relevans for publikationerne med PS
3. PS har det faglige ansvar for udarbejdelsen af publikationerne, står for at koordinere arbejdet med dem og har det sidste ord at have sagt med hensyn til redigering af dem, og hvornår de er klar til at blive indsendt.
4. I arbejdet med at udarbejde artiklerne skal BW og UG løbende inddrages, i det omfang de har tid og lyst til det.
5. De næsten færdige manuskripter til publikationerne gennemlæses og kommenteres på / godkendes af alle medforfattere med en frist på to uger.
6. PS fremsætter ud fra normale kriterier herfor et forslag til, hvem der skal være medforfattere, og til forfatterrækkefølge, som sendes til høring i forfattergruppen.
7. I tilfælde af uenighed om forfatterrækkefølgen afgøres denne af PS.
8. PS står for kommunikation med tidsskriftet (er corresponding author).
9. Hvis ikke publikationerne er afsluttet ved udgangen af 2024 bortfalder denne aftale og rettighederne til data går tilbage til BW og UG.

Underskrevet af parterne på Frederiksberg (dato): 1.jan 2023



Changes in management of owned cats in the countryside – A comparison of results from surveys undertaken in the same rural area of Denmark in 1998 and 2022

Peter Sandøe^{1,2*}, **Ulrike Gade¹**, **Marianne Lund Ujvári³**, **Bryndis Wöhler¹**,
Thomas Bøker Lund², **Henrik Mellby²**, **Clare Palmer⁴**, **Søren Saxmose Nielsen¹**

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University of Copenhagen guidelines on authorship of scholarly publications

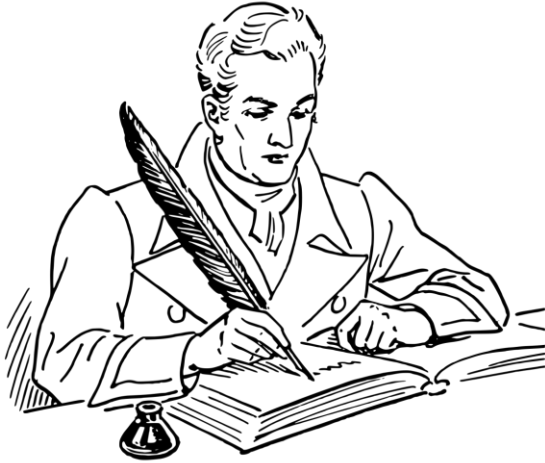
1. General: Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

According to article 4 of [The Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) fair attribution of authorship and appropriate acknowledgement of contributions that do not meet the criteria for authorship contribute to the transparency and credibility of research. Both elements are key to upholding the responsible conduct of research.

These guidelines, which are based on the principles of the Danish Code of Conduct, contain practical advice and considerations which may be useful in the deliberations of how and by which criteria it is decided to credit authors of scholarly publications.

Approved by the executive management at the University of Copenhagen on 19 September 2024.

ICJM criteria for authorship



- 1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data for the work; AND**
- 2. Drafting the text or reviewing it critically for important intellectual content; AND**
- 3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND**
- 4. Agreeing to be accountable for all aspects of the work by ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.**

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Look out not to steal the student's work

The advantage of the proposed contract is that it allows a paper to be written after the students have moved on with their life

However, it is important first to find out whether this is what the students really want

They should be given at least two other options:

1. Be in charge of writing the paper
2. End the collaboration with the supervisor

Make sure that this is done *after* the exam and that the students know it is *their* choice



DONT
STEAL
MY WORK

The plan

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Authorship Agreement

Authorship on a paper, presentation, or other scholarly work indicates a substantial contribution to a project and accountability for the results. Authorship decisions often affect reputations and careers, and they can be a source of tension, even within healthy collaborations. This tool may help to facilitate open, transparent communication about authorship decisions among collaborators.

Authorship is often best discussed as early as possible in a project. Research projects can be long and involved, and parts of a project may be disseminated at different times. As a result, authorship on each part or product may vary; for example, if a project leads to more than one publication, each may have a different first author or list of authors. Even if roles have not yet become clear, early

conversations about authorship help to set expectations and to clarify the importance of open and honest discussion throughout the process. This agreement is meant to be a "living document"—one that can be revisited and changed as circumstances evolve over the course of a project.

Instructions.

The prompts and questions provided are designed to foster transparent conversations among collaborators in order to reach a shared set of expectations. All fields are required; however, acceptable answers include "not applicable" and

Section 2.

Project background & publication goals

Working project title and description.

Section 3.

Tentative author positions & tasks

Corresponding author:

Position	Name	Tasks/roles
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

[Add additional authors and contributors as needed. A supplementary page (page 4) with additional space is available.]

Section 5.

Non-responsive co-authors

Occasionally, someone initially involved in a project may cease to respond to communication about dissemination of results, despite interest in this pursuit amongst remaining collaborators. In such cases, collaborators may find it useful to set a timeframe within which they may hold each other accountable for communication.

If a co-author ceases to participate in discussions about dissemination within

months*

of completion of a project, collaborators mutually agree that that person will not be included as a co-author.

*In most cases, twelve months is a reasonable expectation, but some cases may warrant more condensed timeframes.

Section 6.

Changes to current agreement

Sometimes roles, responsibilities, and contributions change, resulting in the need to change who will be an author and in what order.

Describe at what project stages this agreement will be discussed again (e.g., at midpoint of data collection, after an initial draft is written, prior to first submission, after any revisions to a manuscript under review at a journal).

Describe what process will be used to make authorship changes (e.g., decision by first author after consultation with others; majority vote; etc.).

Section 8.

Acknowledgment of discussion

Space for collaborators' signatures and two contact email addresses is provided below. Collecting second/backup email addresses is important as projects sometimes last longer than anticipated, even after some collaborators have left the institution or graduated.

By signing, you acknowledge that you have received and agree with the authorship plan as outlined in this document. As noted, this document is not binding and is subject to change with the evolution of the collaborative project.

Signature Date
e-mail 1: e-mail 2:

Signature Date
e-mail 1: e-mail 2:

Signature Date
e-mail 1: e-mail 2:

Signature Date
e-mail 1: e-mail 2:

Strengths of the proposed idea for an Authorship Agreement

It ensures that there is a clear and documented process where expectations are aligned

It allows a group of co-authors to move forward with a publication – even if a potential co-author stops responding

It is highly flexible and can be adopted in light of new developments of a collaboration/ project



Weaknesses of the proposed idea for an Authorship Agreement

Too little protection of the weak part – typically the junior researcher

Too much discretion / power to the seniors

Lack of recognition of specific legal rights, e.g. in connection with parental leave

Lack of mechanism of conflict resolution



The plan

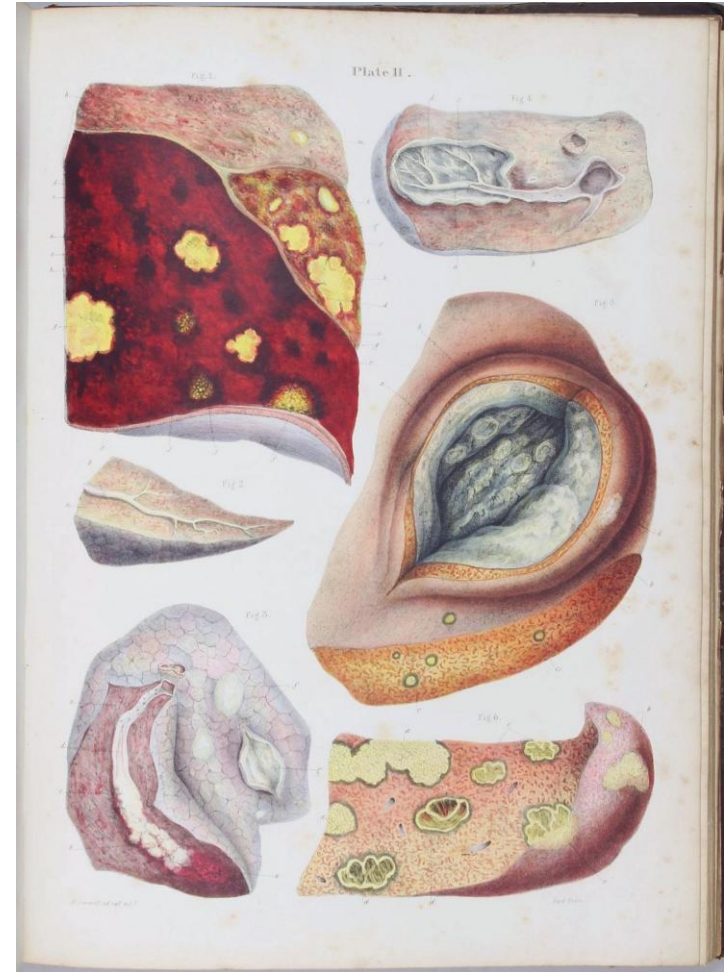
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Authorship pathologies

1. "Guest authorship"
2. Potential author excluded/ignored
3. Lack of response from co-author
4. Procrastination from co-author
5. Corresponding author fails to involve co-authors before submission
6. Disagreement about order of authors or about who should be corresponding
7. Disagreement about content of publication
8. ...

Well-designed contracts may go some way to prevent all of these



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Conclusions

1. **Authorship contracts may facilitate the publication of student work, but mind the power balance**
2. **Current suggested framework may serve as a starting point, but more safeguards of the weak parties are required**
3. **Many authorship pathologies could be prevented by timely use of authorship contracts**

