

Authorship – Discussion Cases

Discuss the cases below. Are there any ethical considerations? What should (or should not) be done in each case? Why?

1. A group of researchers have performed an interview study with urban poor in a large city. The researchers were helped in getting access to the people they interviewed by Max, who works for a charity organization in the area. Max introduced the researchers to the interviewees. The researchers have written a paper reporting their results, and one of them now argues that Max should be listed as one of the co-authors of the paper: 'Without Max' efforts, we wouldn't have any results at all!'
2. Professor Y wants to hire a postdoc in her lab. Before the hiring, Prof Y makes it clear that she expects to be listed as a co-author of the postdoc's papers written during the postdoc's time in Y's lab.
3. Paul, a fellow PhD student in your department, presents a draft of a long review article that he has been asked to write for a journal. You read it and think it is a good one. Paul is pleased with this and then says: 'I enjoyed doing this. You know, I wrote most of the first draft using a Generative AI and then edited it, both for style and content. It worked quite well, but there were a couple of inaccuracies that I corrected. Do you know whether I should include the AI in the acknowledgements, list the AI as co-author, or something else?'