

## Who is a JMD Reviewer?

*How do I become a reviewer for JMD?* This is a question I receive frequently, usually along with some nice complimentary comments about the quality of JMD and its articles. It is a legitimate question. A closely-related one is: Who should be a JMD reviewer?

To answer the mechanics of the process within the constraints of the ASME online Journal Tool, I put together the following description that you can now find on the “Frequently Asked Questions” of the [asmejmd.org](http://asmejmd.org) companion site:

How do I become a reviewer for JMD? If you have never submitted a paper to JMD, you must first create an account as corresponding author in the ASME online Journal Tool: <http://journaltool.asme.org/Content/SubmitPaper.cfm>. In the corresponding author’s profile that you are creating for yourself, there is a “biography field.” You should place a text entry in that field starting by inserting keywords that most closely express your interests and expertise. (You can add some more bio information as you wish.) The reserved keywords you may use can be found conveniently in the [asmejmd.org](http://asmejmd.org) companion site: <http://asmejmd.org/authors.php#keywords>. They can be also found in a pull down menu on the ASME journal tool, when you go to “Step 2: Submittal” of a paper submission process. These keywords are updated periodically, so you may wish to do the same for your profile. Once you have completed the profile process, your name is available for selection by an editor or associate editor. Please note that the database is specific for each journal and reviewers are not transferable to other ASME journals at this time; you make the journal selection when you create your author profile. As a registered author in the system, you should send an email to the JMD associate editors that most closely relate to your fields of expertise, visiting again the companion site at <http://asmejmd.org/board.php>, and express your desire to serve and the areas you consider yourself an expert. You should copy your email to the technical editor ([editor@asmejmd.org](mailto:editor@asmejmd.org)) and to the editor’s assistant ([assistant@asmejmd.org](mailto:assistant@asmejmd.org)). At this point, any JMD editor can select you as a reviewer for a paper at hand and add you to the JMD reviewers database. This is done only once, and your name will appear in the reviewers list for use by any editor for any JMD submission.

I must confess I am always a bit nervous giving instructions on the use of the Journal Tool, as this wonderful tool has twists and turns that sometimes elude me. It is also dynamic, as the ASME IT team makes frequent updates. In any case, my description above proffers a somewhat complicated process, one not fully satisfactory at present. For example, I would prefer to see the keywords describing a reviewer’s interests in a field separate from

the bio, and to have any editor be able to search the database for available reviewers by keyword interest. The ASME IT team is working on that, and I hope we will be able to have this utility in the near future.

The process does offer some insights. Any JMD reviewer is expected to be a JMD author. Indeed, “peer review” means exactly that: Our fellow journal authors review the submitted material to assess its value and help to improve it. Since such evaluation is always relative to the publication venue, in this case JMD, a reviewer who has been a JMD author is likely to have the requisite familiarity with the journal. Clearly, not all reviewers we select are also JMD authors, and this is acceptable and even desirable as the journal evolves over time. Still, reviewers from the JMD authoring community are the majority. For some thoughts on how one can be a *good* JMD reviewer, I recommend revisiting my December 2008 editorial, [http://asmejmd.org/show\\_editorial.php?id=21](http://asmejmd.org/show_editorial.php?id=21). Another insight from the process is the critical role of the associate editors (AEs). Although I make the initial assignment of a submitted paper to an AE, the AE selects the reviewers and collects and interprets the reviews. Obviously, the AE does not rely just on the keywords that may be in the reviewers database, but takes a lot of factors into account. One of them is the reviewer’s history as a successful author in general, and JMD author in particular—again the concept of a peer has a major role here.

Reviewers working in academic institutions or large research establishments often may seek assistance from their doctoral students or other colleagues in reviewing a particular paper. This practice is acceptable but requires much care. As a reviewer, you accept the obligation to follow proper review practice, including confidentiality. Inviting a third party in a review requires that you must instruct that party into the same obligations that you have accepted. Furthermore, when submitting the review under your name, you must include in the private comments to the AE the names and titles of any other individual who contributed to the review you are submitting. On the boundary, you may recommend to the AE a colleague or mature doctoral student as a reviewer to be assigned separately. Thus, they can also get into the JMD database and become available for future review duties, and hopefully contribute also as authors.

Good reviewers are the most valuable assets of the journal, second only to good authors, and they are always very welcome contributors to the JMD operation.

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Editor