ARES System Development Report

Introduction

The ARES system is a user-friendly manuscript and peer review platform dedicated to optimizing the submission and review process for authors, editors, and reviewers and to providing a safe and efficient manuscript processing system for publishers. It consists of the ARES manuscript (ARES MS) system and the ARES review (ARES RE) system. The ARES MS system provides a platform for authors, editors, and journal managers jointly to manage manuscripts and conduct reviews. The ARES RE system is a peer review platform developed for reviewers to provide a scientific and convenient manuscript review system and make the review more personalized and efficient.

Since launching in 2021, ARES has supported 12 member journals, processing 1600+ manuscripts and approving 5700+ reviewers. In 2024, ARES underwent further optimization, improving workflows, functionality, and reviewer recognition. Key upgrades include expanded file format support, refined decision-making processes, automated reviewer certification, and backend optimizations to enhance system efficiency and usability. These developments lay the groundwork for continuous improvements to meet growing demands and enhance the user experience refinements in the future.

Work Summary

Manuscript Processing Statistics

The volume of manuscripts processed by ARES has grown significantly over the past three years. In 2022, the system handled 166 manuscripts, which surged to 605 in 2023—a remarkable increase of 265%. The growth continued in 2024, reaching 820 manuscripts, representing a 36% increase from the previous year. While growth has stabilized, the system efficiently supports rising submissions.

Current workflows and functions meet operational needs, with prompt issue resolution ensuring smooth processing. Moving forward, continued optimization and refinement will ensure that ARES sustains its capacity to handle increasing submissions while maintaining high operational efficiency.

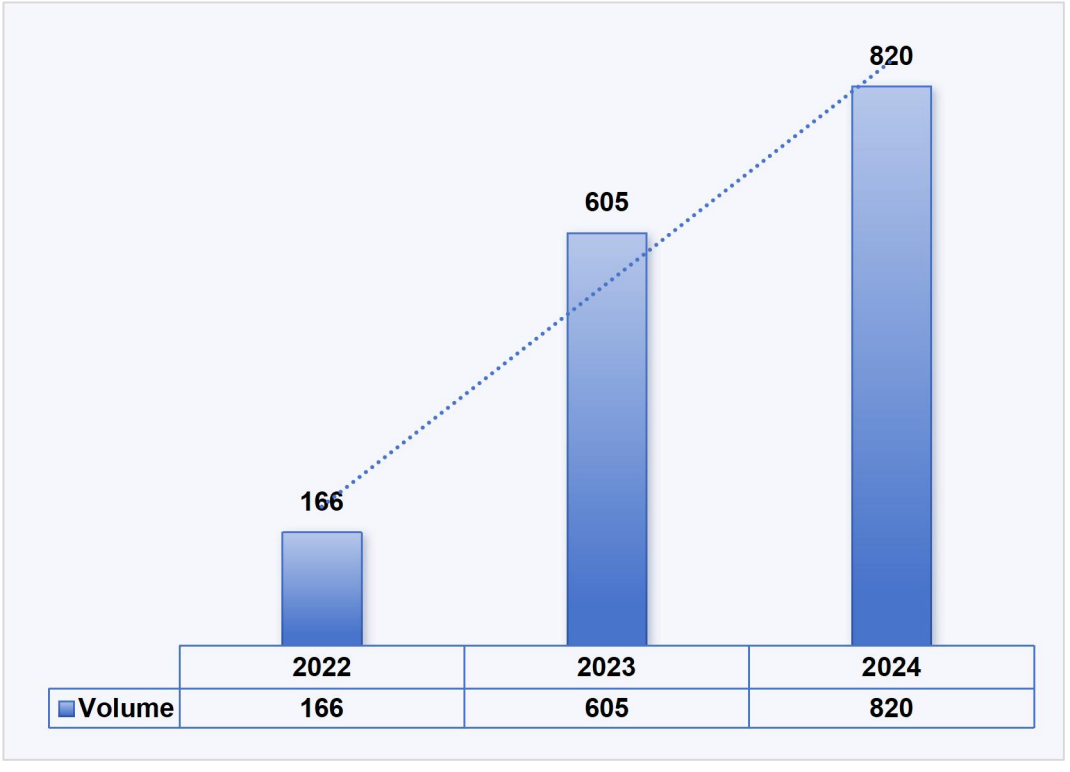


Figure 1. Annual Manuscript Processing Volume

Reviewer Growth and Participation

The ARES system has demonstrated remarkable growth in reviewer engagement since its launch. The number of registered reviewers increased from 644 in 2022 to 2,066 in 2023, marking a 221% surge, and further rose to 2,609 in 2024, reflecting a 26% increase over the past year. The sustained growth reflects the system's expanding reach and its ability to attract and engage more researchers in the peer review process.

Beyond registration numbers, reviewer participation remains a key indicator of system effectiveness. In 2024, 835 reviewers actively completed online peer reviews, accounting for 32% of total registered reviewers. This level of engagement underscores the system's ability to effectively integrate new reviewers into the peer review workflow, ensuring manuscript processing remains efficient and responsive.

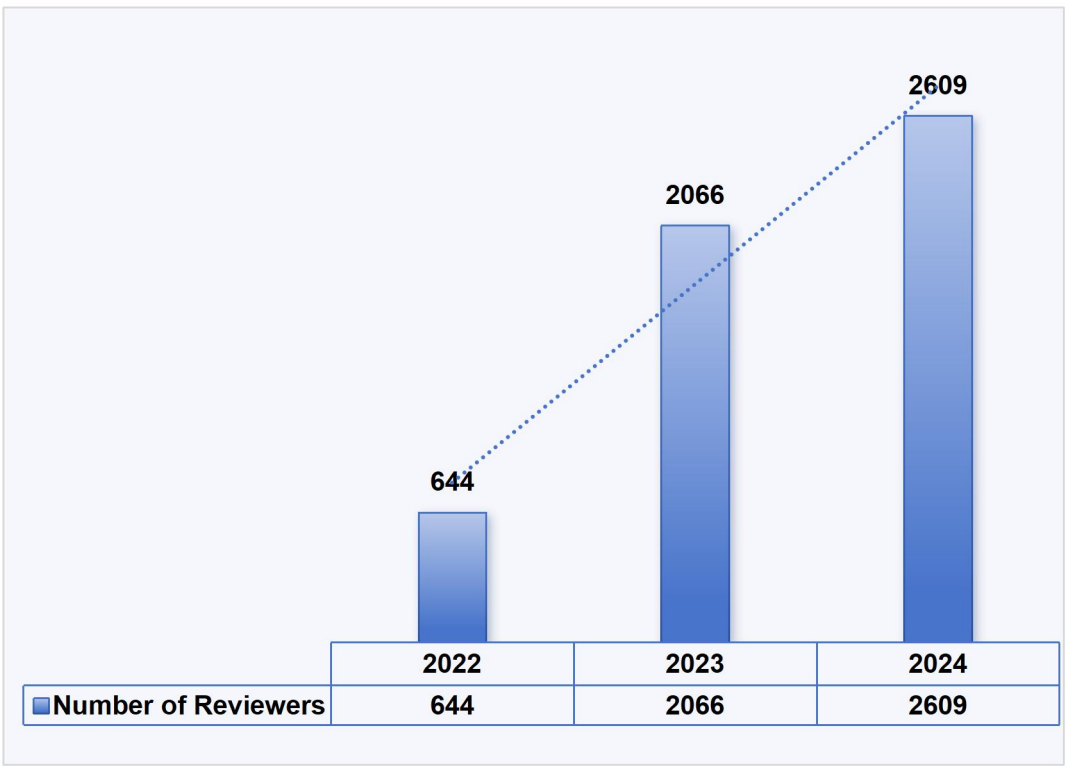


Figure 2. Annual Number of Registered Reviewers

This growing reviewer base is not only expanding in numbers but also diversifying geographically. As of the end of 2024, ARES had attracted 5,765 registered reviewers from over 100 countries, reflecting its growing reach and recognition within the global research community. Among these, China, the United States, and Italy had the highest number of registered reviewers, indicating strong engagement from researchers in these regions.

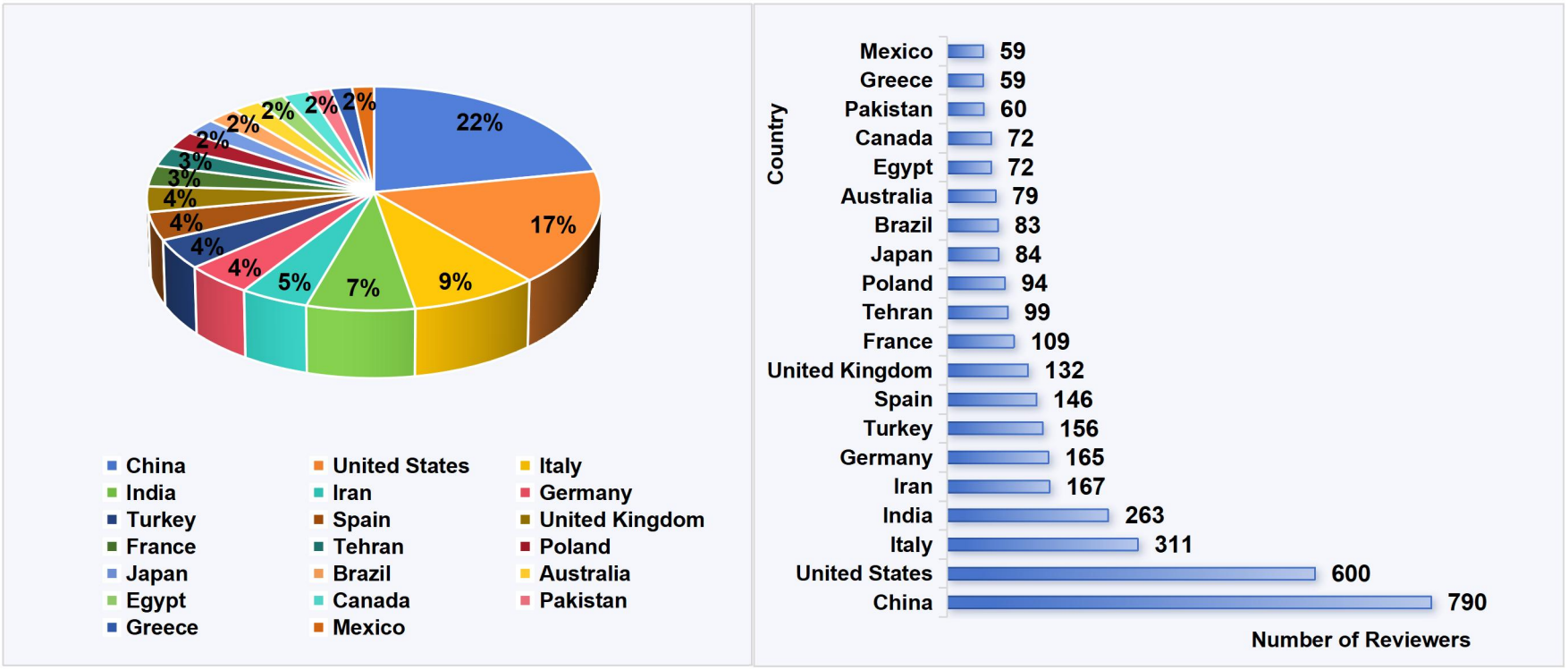


Figure 3. Country Distribution of Reviewers: Top 20 Countries

Review Quality & Efficiency Metrics

In 2024, the average H-index of participating reviewers was 21.02, reflecting a generally solid academic background among the reviewer pool. This suggests that ARES is committed to engaging reviewers with relevant research experience and qualifications. On average, each manuscript submitted through the ARES system received 3.05 review reports, ensuring that editorial decisions were informed by diverse and balanced expert perspectives.

As of May 2025, more than 2000 registered reviewers had participated in peer review assignments through ARES. These reviewers demonstrated commendable responsiveness and efficiency:

- Review Invitation Response Time: 3.25 days (average time to accept invitation)
- Review Completion Time: 6.21 days (average time to submit report)

These figures show that reviewers generally respond promptly and complete assignments within a reasonable timeframe.

In addition to timeliness, ARES tracks quality and speed using standardized evaluation metrics:

- Review Speed Score: 4.59/5 (average)
- Overall Review Quality Score: 4.32/5 (average)

These data indicate that reviewers are not only able to provide timely feedback but also maintain a high standard of review quality.

Review quality is assessed across five criteria: field expertise, accuracy and completeness of comments, objectivity, feasibility of suggestions, and contribution to manuscript improvement. The average of these indicators forms the Overall Review Quality score. Speed scores are assigned based on the number of days a report is delayed relative to the agreed deadline, with on-time submissions receiving the full score of 5. Each review receives a composite score, ensuring fair and standardized assessment across all evaluations.

Together, these metrics demonstrate that ARES supports a reliable and efficient peer review process. With qualified reviewers, high acceptance rates, and steady performance, the system helps ensure timely, consistent, and constructive feedback for both editors and authors.

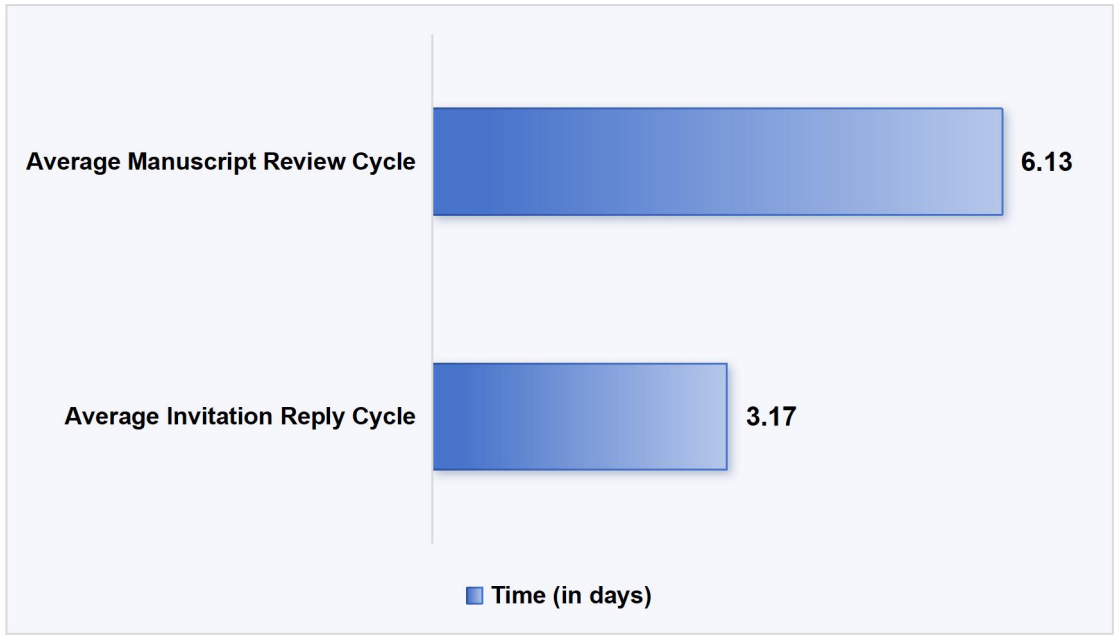


Figure 4. Review Cycle Efficiency

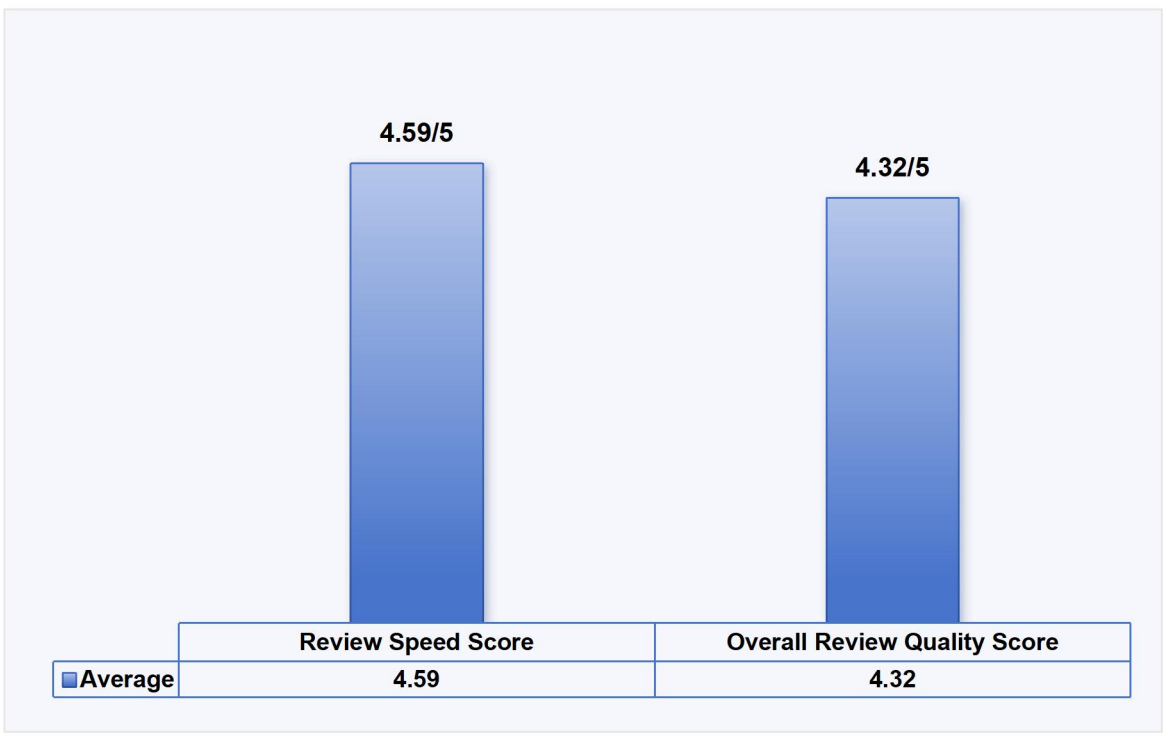


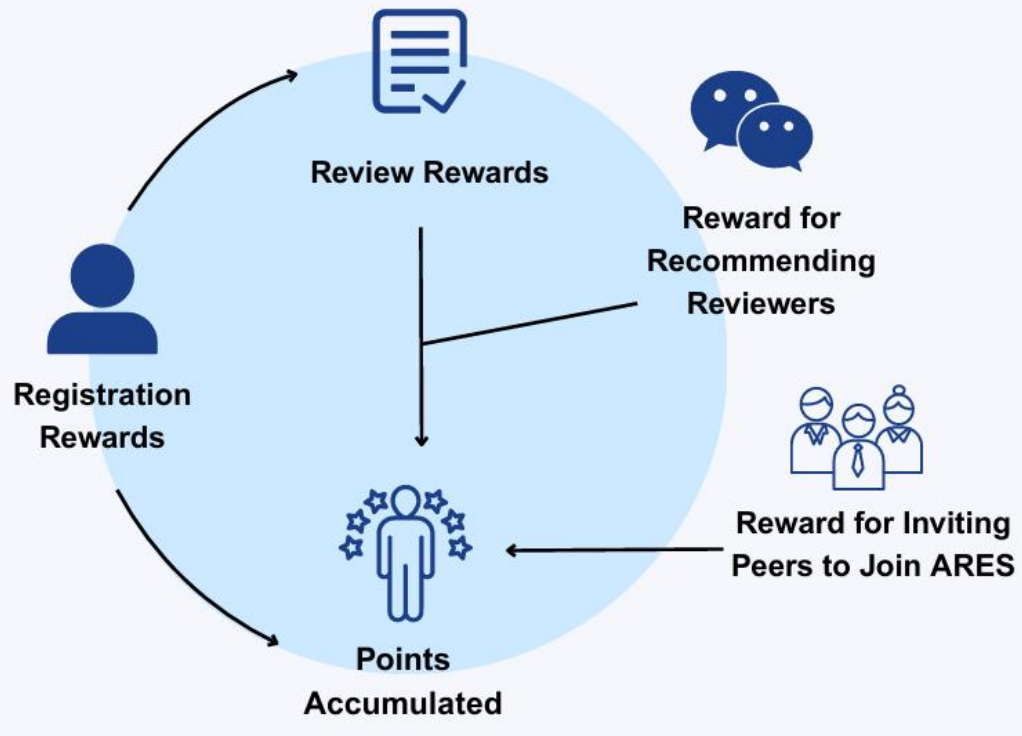
Figure 5. Review Speed & Quality Scores

Reviewer Reward Mechanism

ARES encourages reviewer participation through a clear, points-based reward system. Contributions such as completing profiles, submitting timely and high-quality reviews, and inviting peers are recognized with points redeemable for cash (1 point = 1 USD). The low redemption threshold ensures accessible and fair recognition.

At the same time, the system maintains review integrity through structured validation, ethical oversight, and disciplinary policies—ensuring quality while encouraging participation.

Reviewer Reward Mechanism



Disciplinary Measures

Reviewers are evaluated on:

- Ethical compliance
- Timeliness
- Review quality

Recognition of Active Reviewers

We sincerely thank all reviewers who have contributed their time, expertise, and dedication to supporting the ARES peer review process. Their efforts are the cornerstone of our system's growth and reliability. We would especially like to recognize the 28 active reviewers listed for their outstanding engagement and contributions. Their commitment sets an inspiring example for the ARES community.

We invite more reviewers to engage actively in the system, benefit from its recognition and reward mechanisms, and help shape an inclusive, efficient peer review environment.

Top Active Reviewers by Points (*Count by March 18, 2025*):

Dr. Vladimir Achikyan *University of Michigan, USA*	**Dr. Hoss Dowlat** *PharmaBio Consulting, Germany*	**Dr. Anton Landgren** *Sahlgrenska Akademin, Sweden*	**Dr. José Roberto de Oliveira Ferreira** *Universidade Estadual de Ciências da Saúde de Alagoas, Brazil*
Dr. Omid Akhavan *Sharif University of Technology, Iran*	**Dr. Mohammad Farazuddin** *University of Michigan, USA*	**Dr. Jianhui Liu** *The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, China*	**Dr. Raghu Solanki** *Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar, India*
Dr. Akash Batta *Dayanand Medical College & Hospital, India*	**Dr. Johannes Früh** *Harbin Institute of Technology, China*	**Dr. Dayamon D Mathew** *Banaras Hindu University, India*	**Dr. Prabu Kumar Seetharaman** *Shandong University of Technology, China*
Dr. Jerzy Beltowski *Medical University of Lublin, Poland*	**Dr. Manana Kandashvili** *Ilia State University (ISU), Georgia*	**Dr. Lucio Marinelli** *Università degli Studi di Genova, Italy*	**Dr. Xin Xie** *Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China*
Dr. Isabella Bolognino *Università degli Studi di Bergamo, Italy*	**Dr. Sai Shilpa Kommaraju** *St. John's University, USA*	**Dr. Amir Hossein Miri** *School of Pharmacy, Iran*	**Dr. Xinna Li** *University of Michigan, USA*
Dr. Yujie Chen *Third Military Medical University, China*	**Dr. Vivek Kumar** *University of Michigan, USA*	**Dr. Han Moshage** *Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands*	**Dr. Zheng Yuan** *China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences, China*
Dr. Lu Chen *Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China*	**Dr. Amedeo Lonardo** *Universitaria di Modena, Italy*	**Dr. Mehrnoosh Neghabi** *FAU College of Engineering and Computer Science, USA*	**Dr. Zhidong Zhou** *Duke-NUS Medical School, Singapore*

What Reviewers Say

“ARES System provides a smooth and efficient peer review experience, with a user-friendly interface, flexible review timelines, and clear feedback tools that simplify the process. Its detailed review history tracking also promotes transparency and keeps reviewers actively engaged.”

---Dr. Vivek Kumar

“This mechanism suggested by ARES system is absolutely valuable so that encourages researchers to devote their time and expertise for peer-review opportunities.”

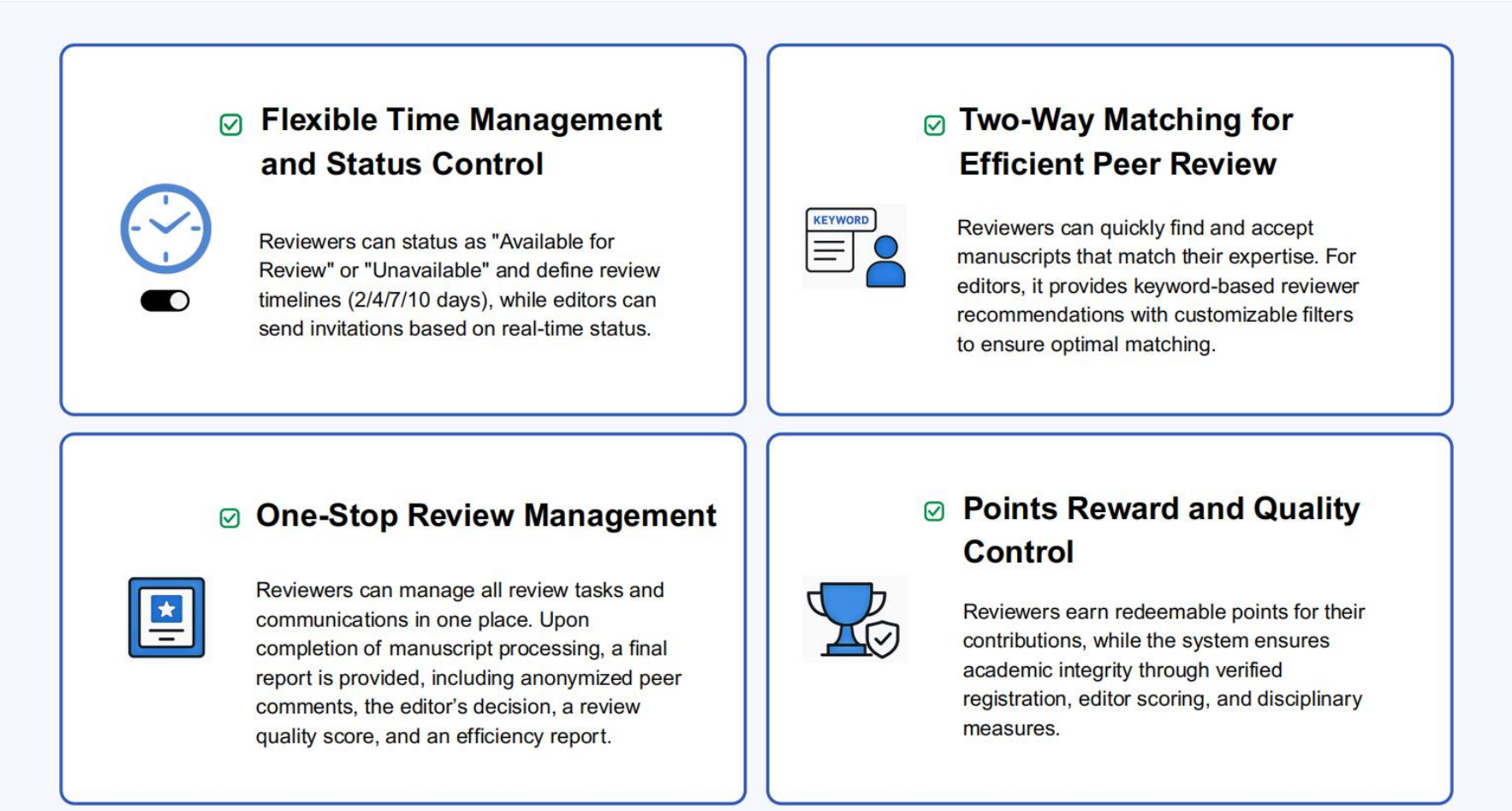
---Dr. Amir Hossein Miri

“I am highly impressed by the kind gesture of the team in rewarding Reviewers like myself for their time and effort.”

---Dr. Akash Batta

Key Advantages of the ARES RE System

The ARES Review System is built to streamline the peer review process while supporting reviewers with practical and transparent tools. Reviewers can manage their availability and set preferred timelines, enabling editors to send invitations based on real-time status. Through two-way matching, the system helps reviewers identify suitable manuscripts and provides editors with keyword-based reviewer suggestions for more accurate pairing. All review tasks and communications are centralized in one platform, improving efficiency and clarity. Meanwhile, a points-based reward system, combined with quality control measures, ensures that reviewer contributions are both recognized and held to consistent academic standards. Together, these features promote a more efficient, fair, and supportive review experience.



Conclusion

The ARES system continues to evolve as a reliable and efficient platform for peer review and manuscript management. We sincerely thank all reviewers for their time, expertise, and continued support, which form the foundation of a fair and rigorous publishing process.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to refining the system in ways that truly support our reviewers—by improving workflow efficiency, enhancing user experience, encouraging communication within the reviewer community, and strengthening international academic ties. These efforts are not only about system upgrades, but about building a more collaborative and rewarding review environment.

The success of ARES is inseparable from the dedication of its reviewers. As we move forward, we warmly invite more experts to join our global reviewer network and contribute to a more open, efficient, and impactful peer review ecosystem—advancing science, together.

Best Regards,

The ARES System

Contact Us: support@aressystem.com