# ACM TOCE Reciprocity Poll Results

Amy J. Ko, August 4th, 2023

Thank you to everyone who offered comments on the ACM TOCE [reviewing reciprocity proposal](#) and/or responded to the poll. Below are a few highlights from the poll data, and the board's recommendation for how to proceed. Because one respondent felt that the poll was not anonymous, and we did not explicitly request permission to share data, I don't think we should release the raw data. However, a good compromise to enable transparency would be an independent analysis; if you're interested in conducting that, contact Amy, and we can arrange data access, so the community can hear some other trusted person's interpretation of the results.

I conducted this analysis this afternoon, and aimed for basic aggregate statistics and inductive grouping of qualitative sentiments. (Nothing that would look particularly rigorous, but this uncompensated volunteer role is only 5% of my time, so I did what I could with the time I had).

Overall, the poll received **123 responses**. Of these, 93 (**75.6%**) were in favor of proceeding with a pilot and 21 (**17.1%**) were opposed. The remaining 9 preferences were:

- Proceed with a pilot, but broaden to other ACM venues (1)
- Newcomers should get one submission free (already part of proposal) (1)
- Use some different incentive mechanism (1)
- State an expectation of reviewing, but do not enforce (1)
- Have an excellent reviewer recognition (1)
- Revise to address concerns (1)
- Only require reviewing if authors paper is accepted (1)
- Change tenure and promotion criteria
- Pay reviewers (1)

Respondents and their level of support, in order of prevalence were:

| *n* | Role | % in support | Mean total TOCE reviews | Mean total TOCE submissions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 36 | Full Professors | 64% | 3 | 1 |
| 19 | Associate Professors | 63% | 5 | 1 |
| 15 | Assistant Professors | 89% | 3 | 1 |
| 11 | Associate Teaching Professor | 91% | 2 | 1 |
| 11 | Doctoral students | 82% | 0 | 1 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Research Scientists | 100% | 4 | 3 |
| 4 | Teaching Professor | 100% | 2 | 2 |
| 4 | Assistant Teaching Professor | 100% | 1 | 0 |
| 3 | Faculty (rank unspecified) | 100% | 1 | 0 |
| 2 | Postdocs | 66% | 4 | 1 |
| 2 | Emeritus Professors | 100% | 1 | 2 |
| 2 | Unidentified | 0% | 5 | 4 |
| 1 | Student Advisor | 0% | 2 | 1 |
| 1 | Industry | 0% | 0 | |
| 1 | Dean | 100% | 2 | 0 |

Overall, only 50% of respondents had ever submitted to TOCE and only 50% had ever reviewed for TOCE. There was a **weak correlation** between reviewing and submitting ($r$=.57).

We asked you for any context or rationale for your vote. Here are the high level sentiments contained in the responses:

- It's worth trying (28)
- I've never been invited to review (3)
- This will harm junior faculty and researchers on the margins (3)
- Skeptical of markets and incentives (2)
- I'm worried this will lower review quality (1)
- This is not anonymous; delete all the data (1)
- Everyone I've talked to seriously dislikes this idea (1)
- I don't see how this addresses actual/perceived collusion (1)
- How will people get invited to review? (1)
- Reviewing should be fully voluntary (1)
- This will require enormous transparency (1)
- TOCE doesn't value research from liberal arts colleges (1)
- This is too complicated (1)
- This will reduce submissions (1)
- This may not be legal (1)

We also asked if you wanted to help design and build infrastructure necessary for this; 7% of you said **yes**, and 30% of you said **maybe**, for a total of 45 potential helpers.

## *Summary*

Overall, there appears to be high levels of support for a pilot, with the most likely to oppose being those with the greatest power and history with the status quo — Full and Associate Professors. Those with the least power — Doctoral students, Teaching Track Faculty, and Assistant Professors — generally had the highest rates of support.

Given this high level of support, especially from those with the least power in our community, the board is inclined to proceed with a pilot. This will not be fast — expect years of planning, building, and reviews before anything is in place. And it will not be easy — there are still 15-20% of our community whose voices, needs, and concerns need to be heard and addressed in building this. So consider this the beginning of the conversation, not the end.