



FTC Charges Academic Journal Publisher OMICS Group Deceived Researchers

Complaint Alleges Company Made False Claims, Failed To Disclose Steep Publishing Fees

FOR RELEASE

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The Federal Trade Commission has charged the publisher of hundreds of purported online academic journals with deceiving academics and researchers about the nature of its publications and hiding publication fees ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars.

The FTC's [complaint alleges that OMICS Group, Inc., along with two affiliated companies](#) and their president and director, Srinubabu Gedela, claim that their journals follow rigorous peer-review practices and have editorial boards made up of prominent academics. In reality, many articles are published with little to no peer review and numerous individuals represented to be editors have not agreed to be affiliated with the journals.

According to the FTC's complaint, OMICS does not tell researchers that they must pay significant publishing fees until after it has accepted an article for publication, and often will not allow researchers to withdraw their articles from submission, thereby making the research ineligible for publication in another journal. Academic ethics standards generally forbid researchers from submitting the same research to more than one journal.

"The defendants in this case used false promises to convince researchers to submit articles presenting work that may have taken months or years to complete, and then held that work hostage over undisclosed publication fees ranging into the thousands of dollars," said Jessica Rich, Director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection. "It is vital that we stop scammers who seek to take advantage of the changing landscape of academic publishing."

Among the deceptive statements OMICS made to researchers, according to the complaint, were descriptions of its journals as having a high "impact factor," a term that describes approximately how frequently articles in a particular journal are cited in other research. Thomson Reuters' proprietary measure of journals' impact factors is the widely accepted standard, but OMICS allegedly calculated its own impact scores and did not clearly disclose that fact to consumers.

The defendants also tell researchers that their journals are indexed by federal research databases, including the National Institutes of Health's PubMed and MEDLINE services, when in fact that is not true, according to the complaint.

In addition to misrepresentations related to their journal publishing services, the FTC's complaint alleges that the defendants regularly deceive consumers while promoting academic conferences they organize. The defendants allegedly include the names of prominent researchers as participants and presenters at the conferences, which charge registration fees that can cost more than \$1,000, when in fact many of those researchers often did not agree to participate in the events.

The FTC's complaint charges the defendants, OMICS Group Inc., iMedPub LLC, Conference Series LLC, and Srinubabu Gedela, with multiple violations of the FTC Act's prohibition on deceptive acts or practices.

The Commission vote authorizing the staff to file the complaint was 3-0. The complaint was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Nevada.

NOTE: The Commission files a complaint when it has “reason to believe” that the law has been or is being violated and it appears to the Commission that a proceeding is in the public interest. The case will be decided by the court.

The Federal Trade Commission works to promote competition, and [protect and educate consumers](#). You can [learn more about consumer topics](#) and file a [consumer complaint online](#) or by calling 1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357). Like the FTC on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), read our [blogs](#) and [subscribe to press releases](#) for the latest FTC news and resources.

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