

Critical Review: Brain Sciences (MDPI)

Journal: Brain Sciences **Publisher:** MDPI **ISSN:** 2076-3425 **Scope:** Neuroscience (cognitive, behavioral, neuroimaging, clinical, molecular, computational)

Overview & Strengths

- **Broad scope:** Covers all aspects of neuroscience including translational and clinical applications.
- **Indexing:** PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science (SCIE), Embase, PsycINFO, etc.
- **Open Access:** Freely available online with liberal copyright license (CC-BY).
- **Speed:** ~15.6 days to first decision, ~1.9 days to publication after acceptance.

Impact & Metrics

- **Impact Factor:** Indexed in SCIE, has a measurable IF (check current JCR for exact).
- **Publication Volume:** High, with many articles published via special issues.
- **Affiliation Mix:** About 13% of authors from top-10 institutions; rest from diverse backgrounds.
- **Self-citation:** Within acceptable range (~15-20%).

⚠ Criticisms & Concerns

- **Volume & Special Issues:** Overreliance on guest-edited special issues (~80-90% of papers).
- **Editorial Integrity:** Past editorial board resignations in some MDPI journals.
- **Predatory Allegations:** Previously listed by Jeffrey Beall; still controversial in some academic circles.
- **Aggressive Solicitation:** Frequent email invitations to submit or edit issues.
- **Reputation Downgrades:** Downgraded by Finland's Publication Forum to level 0.

Community Perception

- Some researchers appreciate the fast, open-access format.
- Others consider it a “quantity over quality” outlet.
- Seen as a “gray zone” journal — not outright predatory, but with quality-control concerns.

Verdict

Factor	Strengths	Caveats
Accessibility	Open access, fast processing	Peer review may be variable
Visibility	Indexed in major databases	Institutional perception may vary
Author Experience	Fast, supportive editorial process	Risk of publication in low-impact issues
Academic Value	Easy dissemination	May carry less weight in tenure/grants

□ Recommendations

- Good for early dissemination, case reports, and rapid publication.
- Less suitable if targeting high-impact career milestones (grants, tenure).
- Review recent articles and special issue themes before submitting.
- Check your institution's stance on MDPI journals.

□ Further Reading

- [Brain Sciences official page](#)
- [MDPI controversies on Wikipedia](#)
- [SJR Metrics for Brain Sciences](#)
- [StackExchange discussion on MDPI](#)

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