

Is plos.org legit? TrustSniffer's high-trust assessment: 90/100

plos.org

Verdict

90

OUT OF 100

HIGH TRUST

plos.org appears legitimate.

Our checks found nothing pointing to fraud. Ordinary care still applies when you pay or sign in.

Not Scam

Safe for Login

Low Risk

Assessed 2026-08-17 by automated analysis. Classification confidence 55%.

What this site appears to be

Official PLOS site content describing its mission, journals, open science advocacy, organizational information, contact channels, and cookie preferences. No signs of credential harvesting or financial solicitation present.

Evidence status and limitations

Evidence completeness: UNKNOWN

- The real-world operator identity was not independently verified.
- Module-level completeness metadata is unavailable for this legacy report.

At a glance

The checks that decide most of this verdict.

Malware engines	None flagged it VirusTotal	CLEAR
Google Safe Browsing	Not listed Google	CLEAR
Abuse reports on the host	0 reports AbuseIPDB; shared hosting inflates this count	NOTED
Domain age	26 years old Registered history	CLEAR
Web archive	Never archived No public history of this site	WATCH
Certificate	Encrypted connection Issued by WE1	NOTED

The page as captured

<https://plos.org/>



Our website uses different types of cookies. Optional cookies will only be set with your consent and you may withdraw this consent at any time. Below you can learn more about the types of cookies PLOS uses and register your cookie preferences.

What plos.org served when TrustSniffer captured it on 2026-08-17. The page may look different now.

Key findings

- Automated classification: Not Scam.
- Domain age: more than 10 years (registration continuity).
- No flags from the reputation services TrustSniffer consulted at assessment time.

Full analysis

Overview

PLOS is a nonprofit open-science publishing website presenting research journals, publication metrics and fees, open-science policy, governance, author and editor resources, institutional agreements, and contact and legal information. Its apparent business model is public-interest publishing supported by article-processing charges, institutional agreements, grants, and partnerships rather than investment or custodial financial services.

Scam/Impersonation Risk

No scam, phishing, impersonation, blacklist, or conflicting-identity contradictions were observed. The homepage and linked organizational content present a coherent publishing and open-science purpose, with no financial solicitation, credential-harvesting form, or suspicious brand imitation. Behavioral telemetry did record dynamic page changes, external communications, and suspicious inline-script activity; however, these observations were attributed to general page behavior because no hidden forms, password submissions, wallet connections, clipboard activity, or cloaking were detected. The clean external reputation, strong global traffic footprint, and established page authority materially support the conclusion that the site is apparently legitimate and low risk, while not independently proving the real-world operator identity.

EVIDENCE

- Domain registration: 2000-10-02; age 25.89 years.
- Global traffic rank: 1156; within the top 1,000,000 sites.
- Homepage: coherent PLOS publishing and open-science content, with no phishing indicators, financial solicitation, or credential-harvesting behavior.
- External reputation checks: 0 malicious detections, 0 suspicious detections, 0 abuse reports, and no blacklist hit.

Regulatory Verification Notes

The About, Governance, Executive Team, Board of Directors, Contact, Terms of Service, and Privacy Policy pages provide substantial organizational and operational context. The site does not present a financial-services license or registration number, but its stated activity is nonprofit research publishing rather than a regulated investment, brokerage, or custodial service; this is therefore a disclosure point for ordinary entity and payment review, not evidence of a scam. Available evidence is consistent with an established website, although operator identity remains likely rather than independently verified. Cloudflare, Inc. is also the domain registrar, which is an administrative registration fact rather than proof of ownership or affiliation.

EVIDENCE

- Domain registrar: Cloudflare, Inc.; creation date 2000-10-02T17:03:51Z; expiration date 2026-10-02T17:03:51Z.
- Hosting: AS13335, CLOUDFLARENET - Cloudflare, Inc., US.
- TLS certificate: issuer WE1; DV validation; valid to 2026-10-06T14:11:02+00:00.
- Governance and legal pages: About, Executive Team, Board of Directors, Governance, Contact, Terms of Service, and Privacy Policy are linked from the site.

What to Verify Next

Before credential or payment interactions, an enterprise or individual should independently confirm the applicable PLOS legal entity through an official organizational or institutional channel, review the relevant publication-fee and service terms, and confirm refund, payment-protection, and billing arrangements through an independently sourced contact route. Where a transaction involves an institution, the agreement and invoice details should be matched against the institution's established procurement or accounts-payable records.

EVIDENCE

- About and Governance pages: suitable sources for independent entity and organizational confirmation.
- Publication Fees and Terms of Service pages: suitable sources for reviewing charges, contractual conditions, and service limitations.
- Contact page: suitable starting point for confirming official communication channels through an independent route.
- Institutional Agreements and Institutional Sales pages: suitable sources for validating organization-to-organization payment arrangements.

Summary Verdict

Available evidence is consistent with an established, apparently legitimate website with a high-trust, low-risk posture. No contradictory signals were identified, but the real-world operator identity is not independently verified and should not be treated as proven solely from the site presentation.

Infrastructure Integrity

The site is protected by Cloudflare CDN/WAF infrastructure, with traffic observed through Cloudflare-managed edge hosting. This provides a meaningful mitigation against direct infrastructure exposure and common web attacks, but protective infrastructure alone is not proof of organizational legitimacy.

Closing Assessment

Normal browsing is proportionate to the assessed posture; before submitting credentials or making payments, ordinary independent checks of entity identity, applicable terms, and payment protection should be completed.

Written analysis generated 2026-08-17 by the TrustSniffer Analysis Engine from the evidence in this report.

What the analysis found

No rule findings contributed to this verdict.

Identity verification

Status	LIKELY
Identity score	76/100
Identity verification confidence	76%

- Trusted social count=2

Identity verification measures whether the site can be independently connected to a real-world brand or person. It is separate from the classification confidence.

What TrustSniffer observed

First-party facts recorded during the assessment of plos.org.

- The request stayed on plos.org. It was not redirected to another domain. CLEAR
- Registration is published under Cloudflare, Inc.. CLEAR
- DNS for this domain is served by cloudflare.com, across 2 name servers. NOTED
- The registration is paid up to 2026-10-02. NOTED
- It is hosted on CLOUDFLARENET, from a server in US. NOTED

Domain intelligence

Registrar	Cloudflare, Inc.
Hosting	CLOUDFLARENET - Cloudflare, Inc., US
Country	US
Server IP	2606:4700:20::681a:8b6

Name servers	chad.ns.cloudflare.com, paloma.ns.cloudflare.com
SSL issuer	WE1
SSL expiry	2026-10-06
Domain age	25.89 years (continuous registration)
Domain expiry	2026-10-02
Archive first seen	Not available
Archive snapshots	0
Reputation	VirusTotal: 0 flagged AbuseIPDB: 0 reports Google Safe Browsing: 0 matches

About this assessment

A trust score summarises the evidence TrustSniffer could collect about plos.org at assessment time. It is a starting point for your own judgement, not a guarantee: a high score means the signals were consistent with a legitimately operated site, a low or critical score means several risk patterns were present.

TrustSniffer assesses a website from the evidence it can collect at a point in time: domain registration and age, hosting and certificate, the content the site served, and third-party reputation feeds. A score is a summary of that evidence, not a guarantee and not a legal finding. There is no human rating and no user review in it. A site can change after it is assessed.

This report online: <https://trustsniffer.com/report/plos.org> · assessed 2026-08-17