



Request for Proposals: Analysis of Disparities Across SPSSI Journals by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) is now accepting written proposals from individual researchers or teams of researchers to carry out an analysis of SPSSI journals. This analysis will investigate our editorial teams, reviewers, published articles and rejected articles (as far as available information allows) to identify possible disparities across race/ethnicity and gender, with an additional focus on intersectionality. SPSSI publishes three peer-reviewed journals: *The Journal of Social Issues* (published since 1945); *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* (published since 2001); and *Social Issues and Policy Review* (published since 2007).

A primary goal of [SPSSI's Strategic Plan](#) is to “infuse diversity and inclusion throughout the organization.” This includes—for example—structures (e.g., Council, committees), programs (e.g., conferences, webinars), membership, and publications. This project aligns with SPSSI's Strategic Plan and comes at an important time for the field of psychology. In October of 2021, the American Psychological Association (APA) issued an apology to people of color for APA's role in promoting, perpetuating, and failing to challenge racism, racial discrimination, and human hierarchy in the United States.

Buchanan, Perez, Prinstein, and Thurston (2021) explain that current scientific practices serve to maintain white supremacy and that epistemic oppression exists throughout the production of psychological science, from how the science is conducted and reported to how the science is reviewed and disseminated.

Research by Roberts and colleagues (2020) helps to illustrate these points. Their analysis of more than 26,000 empirical journal articles across six journals (in cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, and social psychology) finds that “across the past five decades, psychological publications that highlight race have been rare...most publications have been edited by White editors, under which there have been significantly fewer publications that highlight race...[and] many of the publications that highlight race have been written by White authors who employed significantly fewer participants of color” (p. 1295).

With this scholarship in mind, SPSSI is commissioning an analysis of our journals to investigate whether, or to what extent, these biases are replicated therein. The selected research team

would be required to submit a detailed pre-registration and analysis strategy to SPSSI prior to beginning the research. Provided the team adheres to this pre-registration, the team would be guaranteed publication of the findings in a SPSSI journal, **regardless of the results**. For absolute clarity, this is not a public relations exercise. If there is bias in SPSSI journals, we make it our mission to identify and reduce it.

We offer this research proposal as one critical starting point for engaging this work. We recognize that structural analyses of equity, diversity, and inclusion extends beyond the scope of SPSSI journals. To recognize and leverage the knowledge and strengths of our members, we invite research proposals that outline other examples of critical structural analyses of SPSSI's organizational policies, practices, programs, membership processes, etc. Proposals should be specific in aims and scope, similar to the idea provided here, and should fit within the research budget.

Costs. The proposal should not exceed \$12,000.

Submission Deadline. Proposals must be submitted by 5 pm ET on August 1, 2022 by email to SPSSI's Executive Director, Anila Balkissoon (abalkissoon@spsai.org). Please keep your proposal to no more than 4-5 pages. Questions? Email: abalkissoon@spsai.org.

Review Process. The review committee will be comprised of members of SPSSI's standing committees. Applicants will be notified of SPSSI's decision by September 15, 2022.

Publication Guarantee. The research team will be encouraged to publish results in a SPSSI journal by undergoing a preliminary peer review of their detailed pre-registration and analysis strategy (including introduction and methods sections). Provided they carry out the study according to that methodology, they will be guaranteed a publication at the end of the study. As noted before, the research team would be encouraged to publish the results of their analysis even if the results show bias in SPSSI.

References

American Psychological Association. (October, 2021). Apology to people of color for APA's role in promoting, perpetuating, and failing to challenge racism, racial discrimination, and human hierarchy in U.S. <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-racism-apology.pdf>

Buchanan, N.T., Perez, M., Prinstein, M.J., & Thurston, I.B. (2021). Unpending racism in psychological science: Strategies to change how science is conducted, reported, reviewed, and disseminated. *American Psychologist*, 76(7), 1097–1112. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000905>

Roberts, S.O., Bareket-Shavit, C., Dollins, F.A., Goldie, P.D., & Mortenson, E. (2020). Racial inequality in psychological research: Trends of the past and recommendations for the future. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 15(6), 1295-1309. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691620927709>