

American Journal of Evaluation

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Manuscript Submission Guidelines:

The American Journal of Evaluation (AJE) publishes original papers about the theory, methods, practice, or use of evaluation, along with the broader implications of evaluation in support of the public interest. The general goal of *AJE* is to present the best work in and about evaluation to improve the knowledge base and practice of its readers and the broader evaluation community. Because the field of evaluation is diverse, with different intellectual traditions, approaches to practice, cultural perspectives, and domains of application, the papers published in *AJE* will reflect this diversity. Whatever the focus, preference is given to papers that are (1) fully grounded in the evaluation literature, (2) likely to be of interest to a wide range of evaluators, and (3) written to be accessible to most readers. Please note that the obligation to cite appropriate literature is not only to acknowledge influences on your work and to establish the significance of your contribution; it is *also* important to guide readers to relevant work on the topics being addressed. Accordingly, *AJE* editors often recommend citing additional sources.

Individuals interested in contributing to the Book Review section need to receive prior approval from its editors, Cherie Avent (cmavent@illinois.edu) and Aileen Reid (amreid3@uncg.edu). All other manuscripts should be submitted to the *AJE* Scholar One site at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ajeval>, where authors will be required to set up an online account. Please do indicate whether you are submitting your manuscript to one of the identified journal sections or, more generally, as an article or a forum contribution. Section options are: Economic Evaluation; Ethics, Values, and Culture; Experimental Methodology; International Developments in Evaluation; Method Note; and Teaching and Learning of Evaluation. (see *AJE* Contribution Categories, available at [/description/AJE](#)).

Submissions should be in Word format. Submission letters should specify that the manuscript is not currently under consideration elsewhere and has not been published elsewhere in the same or a substantially similar form. In addition, manuscripts should be prepared following the style of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.); this includes references, in-text citations, tables, and figures. Authors should review the *AJE* [style and format guidelines](#). Any figures should be submitted in their native file format. Please see a recent issue of the journal for the format for headings and for references. Manuscripts must include an abstract of no more than 150 words, followed by four or five keywords that can be used for online indexing of the manuscript.

Prospective contributors who have questions, including about the appropriateness of possible submissions, are welcome to contact the relevant section editor (*AJE* sections are listed below) or *AJE* Co-Editors-in-Chief, Rodney Hopson (AJEHopson@american.edu) and Laura Peck (AJE.EICPeck@gmail.com).

Articles – Articles focus on topics applicable to the broad field of program evaluation. We seek articles that examine topics in evaluation theory, methods, and/or practice. In all cases, implications for practicing evaluators should be clearly identified. Examples of contributions include, but are not limited to, reviews of new developments in evaluation, descriptions of challenges or lessons from a current evaluation study, critical reviews of some area of evaluation practice, and presentations of important new techniques. Length is not a specific criterion for manuscripts, yet well-developed manuscripts tend to be between 20-30 pages (double-spaced). Manuscripts in excess of 35 pages may be returned to the author for additional editing before review at the discretion of the editor.

Forum – Forum contributions present essays, opinions, and professional judgments. These may speak to and about the philosophical, ethical, and practical dilemmas of our diverse, inter- and trans- disciplinary profession. By design, the Forum section encourages submissions from diverse points of view and experiences, in the hope that our professional dialogue will benefit from learning from multiple perspectives. Forum submissions should reference the literature that has contributed to the authors' perspectives. Manuscripts should not exceed 15 pages (double-spaced).

Special Section – *AJE* sometimes considers and publishes special sections. Special sections consist of curated articles on a common topic or theme, assembled by an outside group and submitted for consideration through our peer review system. These sections are typically reviewed by peers external to *AJE* and then reviewed by *AJE* reviewers. Examples of special sections can be found in issues 44-3 (A Focus on the Evaluation Profession), 39-1 (Building Evidence in Challenging Contexts), and (36-4 Unpacking the “Black Box” of Social Programs and Policies). Please contact the Co-Editors-in-Chief, Rodney Hopson (AJEHopson@american.edu) and Laura Peck (AJE.EICPeck@gmail.com), if you are interested in submitting a proposal for a special section.

In addition to the above submission types, we organize some of the journal's content into sections. The following describes each section, its expectations for submissions, and the Section Editors.

Book Reviews – The vision of the Book Reviews section is to highlight single books applicable to the broad field of evaluation. In addition, this section may include reviews of other kinds of resources for evaluations (e.g., web-based resources, manuals, and handbooks). Book reviews should be less than 2,500 words long. On rare occasions, the Book Reviews Editors also consider essay reviews—in-depth, peer-reviewed articles that examine one or more recent books of particular significance on a single topic. Essay reviews are between 5,000 and 8,000 words long. Ideally, the reviewed books represent a range of topics, diverse authors, and various publishers. All reviews are commissioned by the Book Reviews Editors. Please contact the Book Reviews Editors, Cherie Avent (cmavent@illinois.edu) and Aileen Reid (amreid3@uncg.edu), before beginning to work on a review. You may also contact the Book Reviews Editors with recommendations for books to review.

Economic Evaluation – *AJE*'s Economic Evaluation section is a space for exemplary methodological and empirical work that deepens our understanding of economic evaluation and the value these methods bring to understanding and guiding social policy and investments. The Economic Evaluation Section Editors invite you to submit manuscripts describing theories, qualitative as well as quantitative methods, findings, uses, and constructive critiques of cost-inclusive evaluations, cost-effectiveness analysis, and cost-benefit analysis. The Section Editors also hope to see evaluations including Value for Money and Social Return on Investment in their inboxes. For additional information, please contact the Section Editors, Viviana Rodriguez (viviana.rodriguez@utsa.edu) and Brian Yates (brian.yates@mac.com).

Ethics, Values, and Culture – This section includes articles that focus on ethics, values, and culture in evaluation, posing questions about the purpose of social inquiry and the responsibility of the evaluator in asking reflective questions of culture, purpose, and role. We invite potential contributors to revisit our vision for this *AJE* section in this 2024 [AEA365](#) [blogpost](#). As intersectional scholars, we value rooted community framing and lived

experience as a necessary part of published scholarship. To that end, we invite authors from underrepresented, marginalized, and minoritized populations individually or as part of the author team. This section is re-imagined to intentionally make space, hold space, and celebrate the rich diversity existing within AEA membership and throughout the field of evaluation, including the communities most impacted by our evaluations. Knowing your positionality, lived experience, and scholarship are the braided components we expect for this section of *AJE*. If you are an ally, accomplice, or subject matter expert from a majority, white, or other privileged evaluator group, we invite your courageous and critical voices, too. Reflecting on your positionality, privilege, and the settler state at large in the field of evaluation are all very important contributions that our profession desperately needs; therefore, we request that all contributors include a positionality statement with their submitted article. Manuscripts for this section should range from 10-25 double-spaced pages. Before submission of a full article, you may feel free to share an abstract or idea, or request a brief meeting with the editorial team to discuss your ideas. Our contact information is Nicky Bowman (nicky@bpcwi.com), Ayesha Boyce (ayesha.boyce@asu.edu), and Gregory Phillips II (Glp2@northwestern.edu).

Experimental Methodology – The Experimental Methodology section was originally conceptualized under the leadership of George Julnes who pointed to four conditions (i.e., values) that support appropriate and effective use of experimental evaluations: potential information value, legal and ethical value, practical value, and portfolio value. The Experimental Methodology Section Editor aims to continue to publish articles that contribute to our understanding of these conditions and increase an evaluator's ability to address threats to these values in practice. The Section Editor envisions contributions primarily coming through articles that advance the design and analysis of experimental methods directly (where participants are randomly assigned to treatment and comparison conditions), but also would like the section to be inclusive of other strong quasi-experimental designs (for example, that are recognized by the What Works Clearinghouse) that lead to credible evidence. The Section Editor encourages submissions that pertain to advancing evaluation theories, methods, and practice in the area of experimental methodology. For additional information, please contact the Section Editor, Carl Westine (cwestine@charlotte.edu).

International Developments in Evaluation – We evaluate in—and from—every corner of our complex and diverse world. While American and international evaluation stakeholders are faced with similar opportunities and challenges, this section focuses on the aspects of evaluation—the evaluands, the evaluators, the evaluation systems—that are of relevance to international program evaluation stakeholders. For this reason, this section promotes learning through evaluations that take place outside the United States. Topics include: advances in evaluation practice that embrace complex contexts or diverse cultures, innovative approaches to the evaluation of development programs or of international aid, work of VOPEs and regional evaluation movements to advance the practice of new forms

of evaluation, and evaluation's role in transforming power dynamics or inequality. All authors contributing original perspectives on such evaluation are welcome. We welcome manuscripts drawing from empirical data, but also practice experience, and reflections on learning-through-doing. We particularly welcome the voices of those traditionally absent from the literature, including voices from the Global South and those underrepresented in global scholarship, such as evaluation practitioners. For more information, please contact the section editors, Caitlin Blaser Mapitsa (Caitlin.Mapitsa@wits.ac.za) and Alysson Akiko Oakley (alyssonakiko@gmail.com).

Method Notes – The Method Note section highlights new or improved developments in evaluation methods, techniques, and tools. The Method Note Section Editor is particularly interested in methods that have been systematically studied, and that can be applied to different types of evaluations. The section is methods neutral, welcoming articles that enhance qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches to evaluation. The critical point to consider when developing a Method Note is to connect it directly to the evaluation process or outcome. The most common structure for a Method Note is to overview the area of focus or interest, identify a current issue or limitation with a method, and propose then illustrate a solution. This solution is the new development or innovation being presented in the paper, and it typically includes a description of how the new method addresses the issue raised or allows evaluators to answer questions in an improved or more efficient manner. The typical note also provides an example of the new method as applied in a real-world evaluation, followed by a discussion of its strengths and limitations. This section introduces the evaluation community to cutting-edge development that can help enhance the quality and rigor of our evaluations. Method Notes are typically between 20-25 pages (double-spaced) describing methods and techniques that support effective evaluation practice. For additional information, please contact the Section Editor, Tarek Azzam (uazzat00@gmail.com).

Teaching and Learning of Evaluation – Teaching matters! Do you care deeply about evaluator competencies and what practitioners should know, understand, or be able to do? The Teaching and Learning (T&L) Section Editors seek to publish pieces that advance thinking about teaching and learning of evaluation in formal and informal settings and across diverse cultural contexts, communities, and disciplines. The Section Editors seek scholarly contributions that clearly focus on teaching and learning of evaluation theory, methodology, or practice. While a wide range of contributions are relevant for the scope of the T&L section, the Section Editors are particularly interested in research studies of any systematic design, conceptual frameworks, and teaching and learning strategies. For questions, please contact Section Editors, Daniela Schröter (daniela.schroeter@wmich.edu) and Rebecca H. Woodland (rebecca.woodland@educ.umass.edu).

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Time for Review, Decision, and Production

The usual time from manuscript submission to the author's receipt of the editor's decision about publication is approximately 2-3 months. During that time, each manuscript undergoes a rigorous double-anonymized peer review, commonly by 3 reviewers, along with review by the Editor and Associate or Section Editor. The editor's possible decisions are (1) accept; (2) accept, with minor revisions; (3) major substantive revisions required (must be resubmitted for full review with no guarantee of acceptance); or (4) reject. Revised manuscripts are requested to be returned within 120 days. The time from acceptance to publication is dependent on many factors including the number and types of manuscripts awaiting publication, variations in time required for revisions, and ability of author(s) to provide all materials required for publication. All manuscripts are edited and copyedited before they are sent to the printer. The corresponding author receives page proofs for approval before publication. The Editor will keep authors informed of the projected date of publication.

Membership Information

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