

Sociological Methods & Research

Impact Factor: **6.5**

5-Year Impact Factor: **7.1**

Submission guidelines



Submit manuscript

Please read the guidelines in full before submitting your manuscript. Manuscripts not conforming to these guidelines may be returned.

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What SMR publishes

SMR publishes articles that advance the development and application of scientific methodology in the social sciences, including qualitative, quantitative, and survey methodology.

SMR publishes methodological research, substantive research that models state-of-the-art methods, and—occasionally—overviews of important methodological topics. SMR also publishes focused comments on work previously published in its pages.

Articles published in SMR must follow SMR's [Open Science Policy](#).

Author instructions

Submission process

Detailed instructions for navigating the submission process can be found in the [ScholarOne Manuscripts Author Guide](#). Below, we highlight important details and common issues.

The manuscript must be your original work, you must have the rights to the work. Manuscripts should only be submitted with the consent of all contributing authors. The individual responsible for submitting the manuscript should carefully check that all those whose work contributed to the manuscript are listed as authors.

SMR and Sage take issues of copyright infringement, plagiarism, or other breaches of best practice in publication very seriously. Please read [Sage's complete policy on plagiarism](#) and the actions we may take.

All submissions must be made through [SMR's ScholarOne Manuscripts site](#). Submitting authors must log in (or create an account) and then navigate to their Author Center and select Start New Submission. Authors should check whether they already have an account in the system before creating a new account. Those who have reviewed or authored for SMR in the past likely already have an account.

Step 1: Type, title, & abstract

Your manuscript's title should be concise (max. 20 words), descriptive, unambiguous, accurate, and reflect the precise contents of the manuscript. A descriptive title that includes the topic of the manuscript makes an article more findable in the major indexing services.

Abstracts should be no longer than 150 words and must contain no parenthetical citations. Sage allows citations in the abstract as long as they are not parenthetical. For example, "In their 2015 article, Smith et al. found..." is acceptable. By contrast, the following are not acceptable: "Smith et al. (2015) found..." and "Other researchers have found...(Smith et al. 2015)."



Step 2: File upload

Submitting authors are required to upload a title page and a main document (i.e. manuscript file) separately. Files may be submitted in Word, LaTeX, or PDF format. For manuscript formatting information, see [instructions for initial submissions](#).

Uploading LaTeX files

The submission system provides instructions for uploading LaTeX files. If .bib or .bst files were used in creating the manuscript, these should be included with the submission. Difficulties in uploading manuscript files can be resolved by contacting the ScholarOne helpdesk at ts.mcsupport@clarivate.com or consulting [Sage's LaTeX FAQs page](#).

Title page

The title page should include:

- Manuscript title
- All authors' names, degree(s), institutional affiliation(s), mailing addresses, and email addresses
 - The listed affiliation should be the institution where the research was conducted. If an author has moved to a new institution since completing the research, the new affiliation can be included in a note at the end of the manuscript – please indicate this on the title page.

Step 4: Authors & institutions

Submitting authors must carefully enter all details requested for each author. Submitting authors must ensure that co-author names are spelled correctly and email addresses are valid.

ORCID iDs

SMR strongly encourages all authors and co-authors to link their ORCID iDs to their accounts in ScholarOne Manuscripts. SMR and Sage staff cannot add ORCID iDs to the manuscript information. Instead, each author must log in to their ScholarOne Manuscripts account and follow [these instructions](#) to link their ORCID iD. ORCID iDs cannot be added to author information once a manuscript has entered the production steps of the publication process.

Authorship guidelines

All parties who have made a substantive contribution to the manuscript should be listed as authors. Authorship order should be alphabetical or based on the relative scientific or professional contributions of the individuals involved, regardless of their status. A student is typically listed as principal author on any multiple-authored publication that substantially derives from the student's dissertation or thesis.

AI bots, such as ChatGPT, may not be listed as authors on manuscripts. (See guidance for [acknowledging the used of generative AI](#) in the writing process.)

Step 5: Details & comments

Submitting authors should input details for their manuscript, including the number of tables and figures, funding information, and preprint identifier (if applicable).

Cover letter

All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter addressed to the editor-in-chief. Submissions received without a cover letter will be returned to authors for resubmission.

The cover letter should contain, in this order:

- **Disclosure statements;** submitting authors must state:
 - That all authors approve of the submitted manuscript
 - That the manuscript has not already been published and is not being considered for publication elsewhere
- **Suitability for publication in SMR (optional):** Authors may state why they think the manuscript is a good fit for SMR.
- **Recommended reviewers:** Submitting authors should include the names of six possible reviewers, with their institutional affiliations and email addresses. These recommendations must not include mentors, students, coauthors, or individuals who have any other close connection to the author(s); have collaborated with the author(s) in the last five years; have prior knowledge about the manuscript; or are based in the same institution as the author(s).

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Instructions for initial submissions

File formats

Manuscript submissions may be in Word, LaTeX, or PDF file formats.

If .bib or .bst files were used in creating the manuscript, these should be included with the submission. Difficulties in uploading manuscript files can be resolved by contacting the ScholarOne helpdesk at ts.mcsupport@clarivate.com or consulting [Sage's LaTeX FAQs page](#).

Manuscript length

SMR does not have target numbers for word count, tables, or figures. SMR judges manuscripts by their intellectual contribution and clarity, not length. However, typical articles are around 10,000 words in length. SMR will publish shorter and longer articles, as appropriate. Shorter articles tend to be read and cited more often. Manuscripts should be as efficient as possible, including only as much detail as necessary in the main body of the manuscript.

Articles typically contain up to six figures/tables that are strictly necessary for the article's argument. Authors may consider combining related figures into a single multi-panel figure in order to reach this target. Additional tables and figures may be included in the online supplement (to be published online).

Anonymization and self-citations

SMR employs double-anonymized peer review. Submitted manuscripts must not identify the authors or the authors' institutions in any way.

SMR strongly prefers that self-citations are formatted so that they do not identify the manuscript's author(s) using first person pronouns (e.g. "I," "we," "our"). For example, "Smith et al. (2016) found that..." is better than the anonymized self-citation, "We found that... (Authors 2016)."

Very occasionally, it may be necessary to anonymize self-citations. If so, the in-text citation should be replaced with "(Author(s), date)." Anonymized self-citations should have corresponding entries in the reference list. They should only include "Author(s)" and the year of publication (i.e. no publication information, title, etc.) and should be placed alphabetically (i.e. in the As).


Any reference to an author's institutional affiliation (e.g., when referring to IRB approval or funding) should be replaced with "[Anonymized for peer review]."

Manuscripts will be checked for anonymization prior to editorial review and will be returned to authors if these guidelines are not followed.

Backmatter

SMR requires that several backmatter sections be included before the References, in this order. For initial submissions, these sections should be [anonymized](#).

Preregistration statement (required)

 Manuscripts must include a preregistration statement that states whether or not the study is preregistered. See further [guidance for preregistration statements](#) in SMR's Open

Science Policy.

Code, materials, and data availability statement (required)

All manuscripts must include an availability statement disclosing where anonymized code and materials (and, optionally, data) can be accessed for peer review. If data are not shared at submission, the availability statement must also disclose how data will be shared if the paper is accepted and/or justify clearly if [exceptions](#) apply. See [further guidance for code and materials sharing at submission](#) and [examples of availability statements](#) in SMR's Open Science Policy.

Institutional review and consent (required for some manuscripts)

All papers reporting studies involving human participants, human data, or human tissue must state that the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board approved the study or waived the requirement for approval.

When applicable, please include participant consent information and state whether informed consent to participate was written or verbal. If the requirement for informed consent to participate has been waived by the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board, please state this.

More information and example statements can be found on [Sage's publication ethics and research integrity policy guidelines for authors](#).

Acknowledgements (required for some manuscripts)

If you have received any writing or editing assistance from a third-party, for example a specialist communications company, this must be clearly stated in the Acknowledgements section in your initial submission. If your submission is being made on your behalf by someone who is not listed as an author, for example the third-party who provided writing/editing assistance, you must state this in the Acknowledgements section. Please note that the journal editor reserves the right to not consider submissions made by a third party rather than by the author/s themselves.

Declaration of conflicting interests (required)

All manuscripts must include a declaration of any conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as any direct or indirect interest that might influence the reading, assessment of, or conducting of the research reported in the submission. Any interests within a five-year period prior to beginning the research are considered relevant, although authors must disclose interests outside this time frame if they may have influenced the research.

If there are no conflicting interests, declaration should read: “The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.”

For more guidance on conflicts of interest, see Sage’s [publication ethics and research integrity policy guidelines for authors](#).

Declaration of generative AI use (required for some manuscripts)

Authors may use generative artificial intelligence (AI) (e.g., ChatGPT) in the writing process to improve the readability of their manuscript. Authors should be aware of the limitations of generative AI tools, including the possibility that AI introduces errors or plagiarize its sources. Authors are responsible for the entire content of their manuscript, including passages edited by generative AI tools. For more information, please see [Sage’s full policy](#) on using generative AI in preparing manuscripts.

Authors must acknowledge the use of generative AI tools in the back matter of the manuscript. If no generative AI tool was used, no acknowledgement is needed. AI bots, such as ChatGPT, may not be listed as authors on manuscripts.

Example disclosure statement:

During the preparation of this manuscript the author(s) used [NAME TOOL / SERVICE] in order to [REASON]. The author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Manuscript style guide

Manuscripts should be double-spaced with readable (e.g., 12 point) font and 1 ¼ inch margins on all sides.

Manuscripts should use footnotes rather than endnotes.

Authors may use an APA template for Word or LaTeX manuscripts. Templates are widely available in common programs and on third-party sites like [Overleaf](#).

References

In-text citations and references should be in [American Sociological Association \(ASA\) style](#).

Dataset references should follow [DataCite style](#).

Authors should carefully check their reference list before submitting. If references are missing information, the manuscript will be returned before editorial review.

Tables, figures, and images

- **Placement:** For review purposes, tables and figures should be placed in the main text shortly after their first citation and must be numbered following their order of appearance. Tables should include a label (e.g., “Table 1”) and a brief, descriptive title, placed above the table. Table footnotes or notes must be placed below the table. Figures should have a label (e.g., “Figure 1”) and a brief, descriptive title, placed below the figure. Informative figure footnotes or notes should be placed below the figure.
- **Color-blind friendly:** SMR is printed in greyscale (black and white), but the online edition supports colors. Hence, all color figures must also be readable in black and white. Additionally, color figures should be color-blind friendly. Several tools, such as [ColorBrewer](#) and [Coblis](#), can help generate color-blind friendly color schemes and test figures for legibility.
- **Permissions:** You must have obtained and be able to supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you, including figures, illustrations, tables, lengthy quotations, or other material previously published elsewhere.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations should be kept to a minimum and defined upon first appearance in the manuscript. Non-standard abbreviations should not be used unless they appear at least three times in the manuscript.

Empirical reporting standards

Qualitative and quantitative empirical manuscripts should disclose key details about data collection, e.g., tools/techniques, population, sampling procedure, recruitment, response rates, sample size. For detailed guidance see the [AAPOR Disclosure Standards](#).

SMR recommends reporting point estimates and confidence intervals for statistical estimates. Statements of statistical significance (e.g., p-values or “stars”) must be accompanied by standard errors or confidence intervals for point estimates, by test statistics where appropriate, and a statement whether tests are one- or two-sided.

Authors should avoid the appearance of false precision. Percentages should be reported as integers or rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent. Test statistics should be reported with two decimal points (e.g., $t(34) = 5.67$) and p-values with three decimal points. Exact p-values should be reported for all results greater than 0.001; p-values below this range should be described as “ $p < 0.001$.”

SMR strongly encourages adjustments for multiple hypothesis testing.

Authors should carefully distinguish between causal effects and non-causal associations. Typically, referring to an estimate as an “effect” implies a causal interpretation. Estimates for which the authors do not claim a causal interpretation are better referred to as associations, coefficients, or other non-causal terms. Causal interpretations of empirical results should be accompanied by appropriate causal identification criteria (e.g., ignorability), which should be explicitly justified by the study’s design (e.g., randomization) or theory.

English language editing

SMR is an international journal that actively encourages submissions from non-English native speakers. Experience suggests, however, that reviewers can be distracted from the merit of an argument by errors in language. Manuscripts containing many grammatical errors will be returned to the authors for copyediting.

Authors may consider using a professional copy-editing service. Many institutions have in-house services. Alternatively, authors may use [Sage's Author Services](#).

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Instructions for revised manuscripts

Authors who receive a “Revise and Resubmit” decision should revise their manuscript using a word processing program and save it on their computer. They should track changes to the manuscript in bold, colored, or highlighted text and submit (a) a version with tracked changes and (b) a clean version. Both versions of the manuscript should be uploaded as “Main documents.” Reviewers, by default, will only see the clean version of the revised manuscript; therefore, the Response to decision letter should not refer to the tracked manuscript changes.

Submitting authors must submit the revised manuscript through their Author Center in ScholarOne Manuscripts. The original manuscript files are available in the submission portal. Any redundant files should be deleted before completing the submission.

Response to decision letter

When submitting a revised manuscript, authors should upload a document that responds to all points made in the reviews. They should copy each reviewer comment verbatim and then type a response to the comment. Since reviewers will see the Response to Decision Letter, it should not contain author information.

Authors may additionally submit confidential comments to the editor by uploading a cover letter. Reviewers will not see this cover letter.

Adding or removing an author (before publication)

SMR follows the [COPE guidelines for changing authors](#) during the peer review and revision process. Authors can be added or removed to the manuscript by indicating this change in a cover letter submitted with the revised manuscript and submitting a completed [author change form](#) signed by all originally listed authors.

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Instructions for conditionally accepted manuscripts

At the conditional accept stage, authors may be asked for final (minor) substantive changes to their manuscripts. They will also be asked for administrative and formatting changes to prepare their manuscript for the production team. Authors must:

- Un-anonymize any anonymized self-citations
- Provide main manuscript files in Word or LaTeX format
- Upload a file with 10-30 word biographies for each author

Backmatter

SMR requires that several backmatter sections be included before the References, in this order. These sections may need to be revised at the at this stage.

Preregistration statement (required)

All manuscripts must include a preregistration statement that states whether or not the study was preregistered. See further [guidance for preregistration statements](#) in SMR's Open Science Policy.

Code, materials, and data availability statement (required)

All manuscripts must update their availability statement to disclose how the study data, code, and materials can be permanently accessed. If [exceptions](#) apply, the reasons must be stated clearly in the availability statement, along with instructions and/or conditions for access. See [further guidance for data, code, and materials sharing](#) and [examples of availability statements](#) in SMR's Open Science Policy.

Institutional review and consent (required for some manuscripts)

Manuscripts reporting studies involving human participants, human data, or human tissue must state that the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board approved the

study or waived the requirement for approval.

When applicable, please include participant consent information and state whether informed consent to participate was written or verbal. If the requirement for informed consent to participate has been waived by the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board, please state this.

More information and example statements can be found on [Sage's publication ethics and research integrity policy guidelines for authors](#).

Acknowledgements (required for some manuscripts)

The Acknowledgments section should include all contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship. It is best practice to obtain consent from non-author contributors who you are acknowledging in your manuscript.

If you have received any writing or editing assistance from a third-party, for example a specialist communications company, this must be clearly stated in the Acknowledgements section in your initial submission. If your submission is being made on your behalf by someone who is not listed as an author, for example the third-party who provided writing/editing assistance, you must state this in the Acknowledgements section. Please note that the journal editor reserves the right to not consider submissions made by a third party rather than by the author/s themselves.

Declaration of conflicting interests (required)

All articles must include a declaration of any conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as any direct or indirect interest that might influence the reading, assessment of, or conducting of the research reported in the submission. Any interests within a five-year period prior to beginning the research are considered relevant, although authors must disclose interests outside this time frame if they may have influenced the research.

If there are no conflicting interests, declaration should read: "The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article."

For more guidance on conflicts of interest, see Sage's [publication ethics and research integrity policy guidelines for authors](#).

Funding statement (required)

Articles must include a Funding Statement, **even if the authors did not receive funding**. For further guidance on Sage's [Funding statements page](#).

Examples of Funding Statements:

- *The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This work was supported by the Medical Research Council [grant number xxx].*
- *The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.*

Declaration of generative AI use (required for some manuscripts)

Authors may use generative artificial intelligence (AI) (e.g., ChatGPT) in the writing process to improve the readability of their manuscript. Authors should be aware of the limitations of generative AI tools, including the possibility that AI introduces errors or plagiarize its sources. Authors are responsible for the entire content of their manuscript, including passages edited by generative AI tools. For more information, please see [Sage's full policy](#) on using generative AI in preparing manuscripts.

Authors must acknowledge the use of generative AI tools in the back matter of the manuscript. If no generative AI tool was used, no acknowledgement is needed. AI bots, such as ChatGPT, may not be listed as authors on manuscripts.

Example disclosure statement:

During the preparation of this manuscript the author(s) used [NAME TOOL / SERVICE] in order to [REASON]. The author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Online supplements

Unless authors make a specific case for including short appendices at the end of the printed manuscript, all appendices and supplements will be published exclusively online and will be referred to as "online supplements." In your manuscript, all mentions of both appendices or supplements should reference the "online supplement" (e.g., "Figure 1A in the online supplement..." "See Appendix B in the online supplement for more information.").

Upload any appendices or supplements as one or more [pdf](#) files (separate from the main manuscript file) with "ONLINE SUPPLEMENT" included in the file name.

Online Supplements will be posted to the article webpage as-is (the production team will not copyedit or typeset the files). Therefore, please carefully review online supplements to ensure that they are ready to be posted.



format tables, figures, and images

Placement

For production purposes, figures and other files created outside of Word should be submitted as separate documents with placeholders for the figures in the body of the text (e.g. "Insert Figure 1 here"). Tables and figures created in Word should remain in the body of the text.

Format

TIFF and JPEG are acceptable formats for pictures (containing no text or graphs). EPS is the preferred format for graphs and line art (retains quality when enlarging/zooming in).

Resolution

Rasterized based files (i.e. with .tiff or .jpeg extension) require a resolution of at least 300 dpi (dots per inch). Line art should be supplied with a minimum resolution of 800 dpi.

Color

Images supplied in color will be published in color online and black and white in print. Therefore, images should be comprehensible in black and white (i.e. by using colors with distinctive patterns or dotted lines). Captions for figures should reflect this by not using words indicating color. Additionally, color figures should be color-blind friendly. Several tools, such as [ColorBrewer](#) and [Coblis](#), can help generate color-blind friendly color schemes and test figures for legibility.

Fonts

The lettering used in the artwork should not vary too much in size and type.

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Editorial process

Checking in

Submitted manuscripts will be checked for adherence to submission instructions. Manuscripts in this stage will appear as "Awaiting Admin Processing" in ScholarOne Manuscripts. Manuscripts that do not follow the submission instructions will be returned to the corresponding author with an invitation to resubmit with appropriate changes. If a manuscript is resubmitted after an administrative unsubmission without implementing the changes indicated, it will be immediately rejected.

Editorial review

The editors will screen manuscripts for fit with the journal's mission. Manuscripts in this stage may appear as "Awaiting AE Assignment" or "Awaiting Reviewer Selection" in ScholarOne Manuscripts.

External peer review process

For manuscripts that pass editorial review, the journal invites external reviewers and waits for reviews to arrive. Manuscripts in this stage may appear as "Awaiting Reviewer Selection," "Awaiting Reviewer Invitation," "Awaiting Reviewer Assignment," or "Awaiting Reviewer Scores" in ScholarOne Manuscripts. External peer review typically takes a few months.

Decisions

Following the evaluation of external reviews, possible decisions are "Reject," "Revise & Resubmit," and "Conditional Accept." The status of the manuscript will appear as "Awaiting AE Recommendation" or "Awaiting Final Decision" in ScholarOne Manuscripts.

Conditional acceptance

Before a manuscript is officially accepted, it will first be conditionally accepted. At this stage, authors will be asked to make final changes to prepare the manuscript for production. See [instructions for conditionally accepted manuscripts](#).

Production and publication

Once your manuscript is accepted, you will receive an email directing you to Sage's licensing and payment platform, where you will be asked to sign the contributor form. Sage requires that at least one author signs a Journal Contributor's Publishing Agreement. Sage's Journal Contributor's Publishing Agreement is an exclusive license agreement which means that the author retains copyright in the work but grants Sage the sole and exclusive right and license to publish for the full legal term of copyright. At this time (and via Sage's licensing and payment platform), you may also request that your article is published [open access](#) and preview any [article processing fees](#).

SMR will then send the manuscript to Sage production, where it will be copyedited and typeset. Authors will receive page proofs, which they must review carefully. It is the authors' responsibility to ensure that the text appears as they would like it to be published. Upon authors' approval of the page proofs, the article will be published OnlineFirst before appearing in SMR's quarterly print edition.

Corrections

Articles published online

When an article is published OnlineFirst but not yet published in a print issue, only very limited corrections may be made if serious errors appear in the text. At the discretion of the SMR editors and Sage, an erratum or corrigendum may be added to the article. Implementation of corrections may take several months.

Articles published in print

If a significant error is discovered after an article is published in a print issue of SMR, the SMR editors and Sage may choose to publish an erratum or corrigendum.

Please see [Sage's policies on corrections](#) for more information.

Author appeals

SMR does not typically consider revisions of rejected manuscripts.

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Preprints

Authors may post original (pre-peer review) or accepted (post-peer review) versions of the manuscripts to a preprint server.

During the submission process, authors will be asked whether they have posted a preprint of the manuscript and to share the DOI of the preprint. After submission (i.e. during the editorial and peer review processes), you are asked to refrain from posting updated versions of your manuscript until a decision is made.

Upon acceptance of your paper to SMR, you may post the finalized, accepted version of your manuscript to a preprint server. However, the typeset and formatted version of the article published on the SMR website should not be posted to a preprint server.

Please see [Sage's Author Archiving and Re-Use Guidelines](#) for the full policy on preprints and re-sharing articles.

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ation policy

SMR's citation policy has been copied from [Springer Nature's editorial policies](#).

- Any statement in the manuscript that relies on external sources of information (i.e. not the authors' own new ideas or findings or general knowledge) should use a citation.
- Authors should avoid citing derivations of original work. For example, they should cite the original work rather than a review article that cites an original work.
- Authors should ensure that their citations are accurate (i.e. they should ensure the citation supports the statement made in their manuscript and should not misrepresent another work by citing it if it does not support the point the authors wish to make).
- Authors should not cite sources that they have not read.
- Authors should not preferentially cite their own or their friends', peers', or institution's publications.
- Authors should avoid citing work solely from one country.
- Authors should not use an excessive number of citations to support one point.
- Ideally, authors should cite sources that have undergone peer review where possible.
- Authors should not cite advertisements or advertorial material.

Excessive self-citation, coordinated efforts among several authors to collectively self-cite, gratuitous and unnecessary citation of articles published in the journal to which the manuscript has been submitted, and any other form of citation manipulation are inappropriate. Citation manipulation will result in the manuscript being rejected and may be reported to authors' institutions.

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Access options and fees

Articles can be published under two different access options:

- [Green Open Access](#): Those who want to read and download the article will need to be subscribed to SMR. However, the author may reshare the finalized, published article in some restricted ways, including for teaching purposes, with individual colleagues, and in a dissertation or thesis. See [Sage's Author Archiving and Re-Use Guidelines](#) for the full policy on re-sharing finalized, typeset articles. **There is no fee to publish under this access option.**
- [Sage Choice](#): The article will be freely available to read and download upon publication without a subscription to SMR (it will be open access). **The fee to publish via Sage Choice as of February 18, 2025 is \$3,900 (US) plus taxes.**

The manuscript submission and peer review process is the same for manuscripts to be published under Green Open Access and Sage Choice. Upon acceptance of your manuscript, you will receive an email directing you to Sage's licensing and payment platform, where you

may select Sage Choice publishing and preview article processing fees. Authors of accepted manuscripts can also send an email to openaccess@sagepub.com to request that their manuscript is published with Sage Choice.

Open Science Policy

SMR is a signatory to the [TOP Guidelines](#) for open science, designed to promote research transparency and increase public trust in science.

SMR's Open Science Policy applies **to all manuscripts submitted after June 1, 2025**.

Data, code, and materials sharing

SMR requires that the [data](#), [code](#), and [materials](#) used to produce the manuscript's empirical, simulation, and methodological results are clearly documented and openly accessible. Typically, authors will share a well-documented replication package (containing their data, code, and materials and a README file) openly in a [trusted public repository](#). Openly sharing data, code, and materials improves the transparency of and trust in sociological science and enables the validation, reproduction, replication, reanalysis, and reinterpretation of sociological studies.

[Exceptions](#) to this requirement are noted below.

Summary of data, code, and materials sharing requirements

	Data	Code	Materials
Required* at submission		✓	✓
Encouraged at submission	✓		
Required* for accepted manuscripts	✓	✓	✓



See [exceptions](#).

At submission

At submission, authors must provide their anonymized code and materials for peer review. Optionally, authors may also share their data at submission.

Reviewers will receive author's code/materials/data only after agreeing to review the manuscript and confirming that they will access code/materials/data confidentially and solely for purposes of review.

Authors must include an [availability statement](#) disclosing where anonymized code and materials (and, optionally, data) can be accessed for peer review. If data are not shared at submission, the availability statement must also disclose how data will be shared if the paper is accepted and/or justify clearly if [exceptions](#) apply.

Acceptable ways to share code, materials, and (optionally) data at submission:

- Authors deposit code and materials in a repository that allows for anonymous link sharing (see [recommended repositories](#)), then include the anonymous link to the code/materials in the submitted manuscript. **This is the preferred method.**
- Authors include an [Anonymous GitHub](#) link to the code/materials in the manuscript submission.*
- Authors include code/materials by uploading them as supplementary material with the manuscript submission during [Step 2](#) of the submission process. Only .pdf, .txt, or .docx files are acceptable.*

*If the paper is accepted, code and materials must be moved to a trusted data repository prior to publication. If shared via GitHub, they may be [archived via Zenodo](#) prior to publication.

Unacceptable ways to submit code, materials, and data at submission:

- Authors include supplementary material as files *other than* .pdf, .txt, or .docx with their manuscript submission.
- Authors include a link to a personal, institutional, unanonymized GitHub, CRAN, or any other web page that contains personal or institutional information about any of the authors.

Before acceptance

Prior to acceptance for publication, authors must make their data, code, and materials openly available via a trusted public repository (see [recommended repositories](#)). SMR does not generally accept that data, code, or materials are exclusively available “upon request from the authors,” or are exclusively shared via authors’ GitHub or personal webpages. However, authors may [permanently archive their GitHub repository on Zenodo](#).

Prior to acceptance, all manuscripts must update their [availability statement](#) to disclose how the study data, code, and materials can be permanently accessed. If [exceptions](#) apply, the reasons must be stated clearly in the availability statement, along with instructions and/or conditions for access.

Exceptions

Data, code, and materials should be shared as openly as possible while respecting legal and ethical constraints. Exceptions should be applied minimally. Exceptions will often apply only to part of the data, while the rest of the data, code, and materials can be shared openly.

If exceptions apply, the manuscript’s [availability statement](#) must (a) clearly state the reasons and (b) include instructions and/or conditions for accessing the data, code, and materials to the fullest extent possible.

SMR permits the following exceptions:

- **Publicly available data, code, and materials**

Many commonly used source datasets, code packages, and study materials are already permanently archived by another provider (e.g, PSID data and codebooks, R packages on CRAN).

1. Authors using publicly available source data, code, and materials must provide detailed instructions for access in their [availability statement](#).
2. Even if source data are publicly available, authors should still post their derived analytic dataset, and authors must provide the complete code that derived the analytic dataset from the source data.
3. Some public datasets, such as the PSID or Population Registers, have existing policies and procedures regarding data sharing that restrict authors’ ability to share the source data or derived analytic dataset openly in a public repository. Authors should comply with the sharing policy of the data provider.

- **Proprietary data, code, and materials**

1. When proprietary data, code, and materials may not legally be shared by the authors, the authors must provide all information necessary to apply for access in their [availability statement](#).



2. Authors must share openly in a public repository any subset of proprietary data, code, and materials that they are allowed to share.

- **Sensitive or restricted data, code, and materials**

1. If sensitive data, code, and materials can be fully de-identified or anonymized with reasonable effort, then the de-identified or anonymized version should be shared with open access via a public repository, barring other exceptions.
2. If sensitive data, code, or materials cannot reasonably be de-identified or anonymized, authors should:
 1. i) Share the sensitive portion of the data, code, or materials in a public repository with *restricted* access if that is possible (see [recommended repositories](#)).
 - Authors must note access restrictions in their [availability statement](#) and provide detailed instructions for access.
 - When sharing data, code, or materials with restricted access, access should be managed by a third party (typically the repository) rather than the authors. SMR does not generally accept that data, code, or materials are exclusively “available upon request from the authors.”
 2. ii) Openly share any non-sensitive portions of the data in a trusted repository.
 - For example: Consider a qualitative manuscript that presents verbatim quotations as evidence, but full field notes or interview transcripts cannot legally or ethically be shared. The authors should share longer passages around the direct quotations via a trusted repository to provide additional context.
3. If data, code, or materials cannot be shared via methods (a) or (b) (e.g., if the consent process for a study, IRB conditions, or data use agreements prohibit sharing in a public repository with or without restricted access), then the [availability statement](#) must explain this, along with where, how, and under what conditions access can be gained, if at all possible. (For example, access to a replication package that contains data from national population registers and is hosted in a secure enclave may be available only to researchers affiliated with a university in a particular country, upon application to a specific office.)

Inquiries about exceptions to the data, code, and materials sharing policy, other than those listed above, must be communicated and explained to the editors at the time of submission via the cover letter and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Data format and permissions

The data may be shared in any standard format (e.g., .dta, .txt, .R, .csv), preferably readable by free (open source) software. SMR encourages authors to use field- and method-specific guidelines for preparing data and code for sharing. See the [FAIRsharing website](#) for guidance.

Authors are responsible for ensuring that their replication package is usable and well-documented. The Econometrics Society provides some [guidance and best practices](#) for preparing your data and code in an organized and well-documented replication package. Social Science Data Editors provides an excellent [template README](#) for replication packages.

Authors are responsible for having appropriate rights to (re)distribute data.

Examples of availability statements for data, code, and materials

Data, code, and materials availability statements may be combined (e.g. if the data, code, and materials are all shared via one repository link).

Examples of data availability statements:

- The datasets generated and/or analyzed during this study are available in the [REPOSITORY NAME] repository, [PERSISTENT WEB LINK TO DATASETS].
- The datasets generated and/or analyzed during this study are not publicly available due to [REASON WHY DATA ARE NOT PUBLIC]. However, they can be accessed in the [REPOSITORY NAME] repository, [PERSISTENT WEB LINK TO DATASETS], with the following restrictions: [LIST OF RESTRICTIONS].
- The data were used under license from [DATA PROVIDER NAME] for the current study and are not publicly available. However, the data can be accessed using the following instructions: [DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACCESSING DATA INCL. WEBSITE/EMAIL].
- Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no data were generated or analyzed during this study.
- All data generated or analyzed during this study are included in this published article.

Examples of code availability statements:

- The code used during this study and documentation for the code are available in the [REPOSITORY NAME] repository, [PERSISTENT WEB LINK TO CODE].
- All code used during this study is included in this published article.
- The code was used under license from [THIRD PARTY NAME] for the current study and is not publicly available. However, the code can be accessed using the following instructions: [DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACCESSING CODE].

Examples of materials availability statements:

- The [NAME OF STUDY MATERIAL] used during the current study is available in the [REPOSITORY NAME] repository, [PERSISTENT WEB LINK TO DATASETS].
- All materials used during this study are included in this published article.
- The [NAME OF STUDY MATERIAL] was used under license from [THIRD PARTY NAME] for the current study and are not publicly available. However, the [NAME OF STUDY MATERIAL] can be accessed using the following instructions: [DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACCESSING STUDY MATERIAL].

Recommended repositories

Trusted public repositories adhere to policies that make data discoverable, accessible, and usable. They also provide for long-term preservation and assign unique and persistent identifiers (DOIs) (see [TOP Guidelines](#), [Lin et al. 2020](#))

Here is a list of recommended trusted public repositories. Authors can search for other data repositories at the [FAIRsharing website](#) or the [Registry of Research Data Repositories](#).

Repository	Anonymous link sharing for peer review?	Restricted access function? (Click link for instructions)	Data size limit*	re3data entry
Dryad Digital Repository	Yes (search “private for peer review”)	No	300 GB per data publication	https://www.re3data.org/ref
figshare	Yes	No	20 GB per account	https://www.re3data.org/ref



Harvard Dataverse	No	Yes	1 TB per researcher	https://www.re3data.org/rep
ICPSR	No	Yes	30 GB per deposit	https://www.re3data.org/rep
OpenICSPR	No	Yes	30 GB per deposit	https://www.re3data.org/rep
Open Science Framework	Yes	No	5 GB for private projects, 50 GB for public projects	https://www.re3data.org/rep
Qualitative Data Repository	Yes (search “reviewer access”)	Yes	5 GB per user**	https://www.re3data.org/rep
Science Data Bank	Yes (#5 via link)	No	No limit	https://www.re3data.org/rep
UK Data Service	Sort of...	Yes	5 GB per collection**	https://www.re3data.org/rep



Zenodo	No	Yes (search “restricted access)	50 GB per record	https://www.re3data.org/rep
Archived GitHub via Zenodo	No	Yes (search “restricted access)		

Information in this table is current as of December 2024.

*Many repositories have options for exceeding the data deposit size limit. Visit the webpage linked in this column to find out more.

**Source: Email communication with repositories, Dec. 18, 2024. 5 GB is a recommended maximum for these repositories; users who wish to deposit larger collections should contact the repository.

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Data citation

Authors must formally cite datasets in the body of the text and include them in the References section. Dataset citation ensures proper credit for data collectors and recognizes the value of datasets as first class research objects similar to scholarly publications. Dataset references should follow the [Datacite format](#) and include a permanent DOI identifier, repository name, and dataset version number (if applicable). For example:

Freese, Jeremy (2018): 2014-18 NCAA Women's Lacrosse Scores. figshare. Dataset. <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.6160451.v1>

Lundberg, Ian (2023): Class exercise: Predicting income mobility in PSID. PSID Public Data Extract Repository at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. Dataset. <https://doi.org/10.3886/E185941V2>.

Citations to author-generated datasets should follow SMR's [self-citation policy](#).

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Preregistration

SMR encourages authors of confirmatory empirical research to preregister their study and/or analysis plan with an independent institutional registry.

All manuscripts must include a preregistration statement, placed immediately before the Data, Code, and Materials availability statement, that states whether or not the study was preregistered.

SMR publishes both confirmatory (i.e., hypothesis-testing) and exploratory or inductive empirical analyses—often within the same manuscript. Preregistration helps distinguish confirmatory from exploratory analyses and can strengthen the credibility of confirmatory claims. Preregistration intends to curtail the misrepresentation of post-hoc hypotheses as ex-ante.

Preregistration involves registering the study design, hypotheses, coding of key variables, sample inclusion/exclusion criteria, and planned analyses prior to collecting or receiving the data and conducting the research.

Preregistration is especially helpful for confirmatory research that collects new data or uses administrative or restricted data that provide a verifiable record of time of first access. SMR recognizes the difficulty of credibly preregistering analyses of publicly available secondary data.

Major preregistration registries include [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov), the [American Economic Association's registry of randomized clinical trials](https://www.aeaweb.org/registries/randomized-clinical-trials), the [Open Science Framework registry](https://www.openscienceframework.org/registries), [Evidence in Governance and Politics' registry](https://www.evidenceingovernance.org/registries), and the [Registry for International Development Impact Evaluation](https://www.registryforinternationaldevelopment.org/registries).

Manuscripts presenting preregistered analyses may also include non-preregistered and exploratory analyses if these are transparently labeled.

Starting July 2026, SMR will require preregistration for all newly submitted manuscripts reporting randomized controlled trials, including field, lab, and survey experiments.

Preregistration statements and disclosures

- *For manuscripts not reporting empirical results:*
 - The preregistration statement states that the manuscript does not contain empirical results.
- *For manuscripts reporting empirical results:*
 - The preregistration statement states whether or not the study and/or analysis plan were preregistered.

- Manuscripts without preregistration may explain why, for example by noting that the presented empirical analyses are exploratory, inductive, or illustrative, or use publicly available data that already existed before the study was begun.
- *For preregistered studies:*
 - Manuscripts must report all preregistered analyses in the body of the manuscript or in an appendix, note all deviations from the preregistered analysis plan, and clearly distinguish analyses that were preregistered from those that were not.
 - At submission:
 - The preregistration statement must state when the study was preregistered (i.e. prior to the start of data collection, prior to the receipt of any data, or prior to the receipt of outcomes data).
 - Authors must provide an anonymized version of the preregistration materials as a supplementary document in the online submission system or via an anonymized link to an institutional registry.
 - Prior to acceptance:
 - preregistration statement must include a link to the time-stamped registration at the institutional registry.

Examples of preregistration statements

- This study/analysis plan was preregistered with [NAME OF REGISTRY] prior to the start of data collection/prior to the receipt of any data/prior to the receipt of outcomes data. The registration can be viewed at [LINK TO TIME-STAMPED REGISTRATION]. All analyses reported in the paper that were not preregistered have been clearly noted as such.
- This study was not preregistered.
- This study was not preregistered because it does not report empirical results.

Starting July 2026, SMR will require preregistration for all newly submitted manuscripts reporting randomized controlled trials, including field, lab, and survey experiments.

Considerations for qualitative studies

SMR's Open Science Policy applies to all studies. SMR recognizes that data sharing, data citation, and preregistration have a longer history in quantitative research. The [Qualitative Data Repository](#) has resources and best practices specific to sharing qualitative data. The Center for Open Science has [guidance](#) for the preregistration of qualitative studies.

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Data

Data refers to the cleaned analytic dataset, text corpus, interview transcripts, and field notes used to produce the results reported in the manuscript. (Alternatively, authors may provide the larger source dataset(s) from which the analytic dataset(s) was derived).

Code

Code refers to all user-written software programs, scripts, and coding schemes used to produce (a) the analytic dataset from the source data, and (b) all empirical, methodological, and simulation results, including all tables and figures, reported in the manuscript.

Materials

Materials refers to data collection and documentation materials, such as survey instruments, codebooks, interview guidelines, etc.

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