

Translational Issues in Psychological Science

Reviewer Training Program

Developed by the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students
(APAGS) Science Subcommittee

Authors and contributors

Kaley E. Davis

Science Subcommittee Chair (2025)
Science Subcommittee Vice-Chair (2023-24)
Science Subcommittee Member (2022-23)

Marianne Chirica

Science Subcommittee Vice-Chair (2025)
Science Subcommittee Member (2022-24)

Roksana “Roxy” Dobrin-De Grace

Science Subcommittee Member (2024-25)

Kasey Vigil

Science Subcommittee Member (2023-25)

Matthew Hutnyan

Science Subcommittee Member (2023-25)

Yexinyu “Yolanda” Yang

Science Subcommittee Member (2021-25)

Kayla Lacey

Science Subcommittee Member (2024-25)

Jingwen Zhou

Science Subcommittee Member (2023-25)

Lydia Rader

Science Subcommittee Member (2024-25)

Lamia Bagasrawala

Science Subcommittee Chair (2023-2024)

Randi Spiker

Science Subcommittee Member (2024-25)

Note: If you cite this training, please use the following APA Style citation:

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AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Background information

Translational Issues in Psychological Science (TPS) Editorial Coverage Statement

Translational Issues in Psychological Science® (*TPS*) is a critical issues translational journal, with each issue on a different topic representing multiple viewpoints on psychological science.

Each article reports or reviews research spanning quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches and concludes with an application section.

The format of *TPS* has four characteristics that make the journal unique:

- Each issue is based on a different theme within psychological science, broadly defined, that is edited by a different special issue editor.
- Each issue has a different guest editor working with a team of associate editors who are advanced predoctoral or early postdoctoral scholars.
- Each article will have at least one student author.
- Each article will focus on extending findings in psychological science to a broader audience including, but not limited to, public interest, practitioners, and scientific scholars.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Mission

As one of our central missions, this journal aims to elevate and honor the voices of academics, researchers, and practitioners, especially those who engage in scholarship and research about or have a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In doing so, we seek and promote experiential diversity among authors, peer reviewers, and editorial board members.

To that end, APAGS seeks to recruit a broad pool of qualified journal contributors. Such recruitment includes efforts inclusive of graduate students and early career professionals from minority-serving institutions, individuals whose native language is not English, organizations (including divisions) that represent psychology researchers, writers and scholars based on representation including but not limited to aspects (e.g., scholarship) of gender identity, race and ethnicity, disability status, nationality, age, sexual identity, religious/spiritual affiliation, and country.



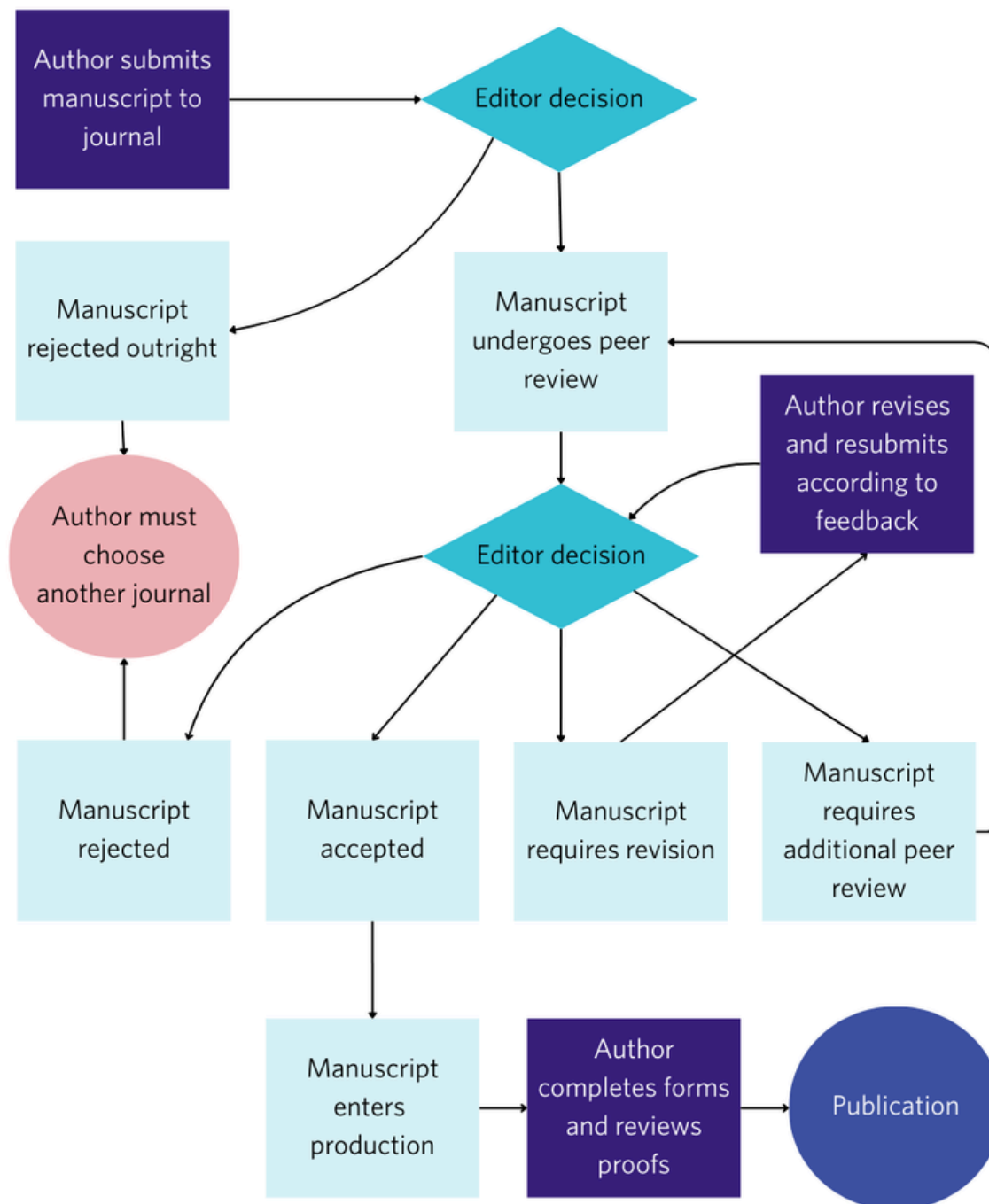
This mission is accomplished through both the content of what we publish and unique support we provide graduate students and early career professionals.

- In our commitment to EDI, we welcome submissions that are grounded in a strengths-based framing that is inclusive and humanizes individuals and communities. In addition, our goal is to publish beyond Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) perspectives. We also encourage submissions that use diverse methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. Our selection of special issues each year reflects our commitment to promoting the translation and application of psychological science to diverse, pertinent topics, including those related to social justice.
- As our journal's mission is to offer a platform for students and early career professionals to develop skills in publishing and the editorial process, we are actively engaged in mentoring the next generation of psychological scholars. We strive to promote junior scholar's perspectives, experiences, and work.

Through these actions, we are committed to applying psychological science to the creation of a more equitable and just society.



The Peer Review Process



Flowchart of Manuscript Progression from Submission to Publication. From American Psychological Association (2025). Copyright American Psychological Association. Reprinted with permission.

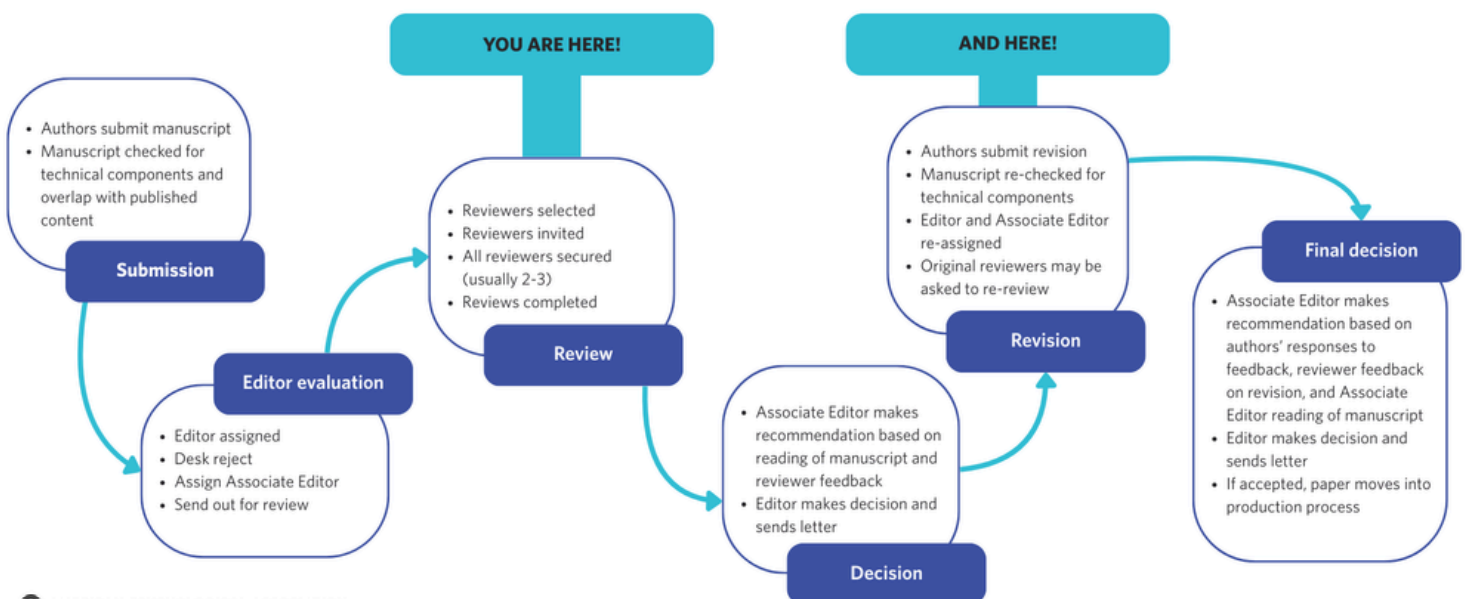


The Importance of Peer Review

Serving as a reviewer for a scientific journal is both a privilege and an excellent opportunity to serve the field. Peer review is a formal step in the writing process whereby other experts in an author's field critically assess and review a manuscript, providing feedback on areas for improvement or identifying inconsistencies.

As a method of monitoring and controlling the dissemination of research, peer review aims to hold authors to a certain standard of research and reporting, ultimately resulting in objective decision making. Authors who directly benefit from the peer review process are strongly encouraged to serve as peer reviewers. As curators of knowledge within the field, authors should strive to review at least one manuscript for every manuscript submitted, and scholars should consider this contribution to their field as an honor and ethical responsibility. Other benefits to becoming a peer reviewer include honing critical thinking and writing skills, being exposed to emerging research, and gaining the opportunity to be invited to join an editorial board in the future. Above all, reviewers are essential to our field in that they are responsible for quality control in the dissemination of research and provide critical feedback to enhance manuscripts. Reviewers are encouraged to help promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in published research by being aware of individual and group biases, and seeking the inclusion of all in psychological science. Good reviewing is similar to good mentoring – reviewers are not just “gatekeepers,” but educators and promoters of knowledge.

Responsibilities of a Reviewer



General reviewer professional guidelines

Some important professional guidelines are listed below:

- Respond to review requests as soon as you can. The handling editor should know within one week whether you are able to accept the review assignment.
- Say yes to all review requests that you are qualified and capable of completing. If a handling editor calls on you several times and you say no more than once, they may stop considering you for future reviews. You also want to avoid taking on a review that you are not qualified to do and be aware of potential “reviewer burnout” (i.e., it’s okay to say no to an article if you are currently already working on a review for the same journal).
- You may be asked to review a paper for various reasons, such as familiarity with the topic, methodology, or specific population of interest (American Psychological Association, 2020).
- If you have agreed to review a paper but there are still some aspects to the field of study with which you are unfamiliar, it is important to communicate that in the review itself or to the handling editor directly (American Psychological Association, 2020).
- Be timely with your reviews. Always turn in your reviews early, if possible, and no later than the original requested deadline. If you follow deadlines, handling editors will view you as a professional and reliable reviewer and will be more likely to select you for reviews in the future. If you are unable to meet the deadline, e-mail the handling editor to request an extension or to state that you are no longer able to complete the review. Editors appreciate knowing that you are unable to assist any longer so that they can select additional reviewers as necessary. Extensions are available in most cases.
- Write thorough, constructive, and professional reviews, keeping your audience in mind. When reviewing for *TPS*, your review will not only be seen by other graduate students, but by the journal’s Special Issues Editors and Editor-in-Chief. Additionally, co-authors (who may be leaders in their field) on all papers will have access to your reviews.



- Communicate openly and frequently with the handling editor assigned to your paper. If you have an extenuating circumstance and the review may be a few days late, let the handling editor know in advance. If you are uncertain about a particular aspect of the manuscript, write this in your comments to the editor so they can evaluate this area themselves. If you are going to turn down a reviewing request, provide the handling editor with a thoughtful rationale – show that you are thinking about the review responsibly and have a reason for saying no at this time. The more you can communicate, the better.

Closely adhering to professional guidelines as a reviewer can set oneself up for future opportunities in publishing. Reviewers that provide high-quality feedback and reviews will likely continue to get reviewing requests. As one continues along their career trajectory, embodying these qualities and gaining these experiences can lead to opportunities to serve on editorial boards or even one day becoming an Editor-in-Chief. In contrast, providing reviews without following these guidelines may negatively impact your chances for being selected for additional reviews and, ultimately, may impede attainment of future editorial roles.

Confidentiality

One of the advantages to being a reviewer is having the first look at new and upcoming work in the field. This is a privilege that should not be exploited; articles you review represent sensitive intellectual property. Confidentiality is therefore a critical priority when working on reviews.

These documents should be treated as private – they or their ideas are not to be distributed or shared prior to publication. Upholding confidentiality is an ethical responsibility in our field, and this applies to the peer-review process as well. When serving as a peer reviewer, you may wish to work with a professional mentor, such as a faculty advisor, for help in completing your review. In this case, please notify the journal that the review was complete with an additional individual by selecting this choice in the EM portal upon submission and indicating the name of the mentor.

To maintain confidentiality and respect the authors' privacy, reviewers are asked to follow best practices, such as ensuring that all documentation related to the manuscript is kept in electronic form on password protected computers, rather than printed on paper. This can avoid even accidental breaches of confidentiality.

Reviewers may not enter materials from submitted manuscripts into generative AI tools as this violates the confidentiality of the peer review process – when information is entered into generative AI, the organization that runs the generative AI will likely have access to these data.



Reviewer Ratings and Incentives

To ensure quality in reviews, reviews for most APA Journals undergo a process of rating. During this process, handling editors will judge the quality of reviews and may provide feedback to reviewers in an effort to a) educate students in best practices of peer review, and b) ensure quality feedback to authors. If needed, handling editors will provide feedback and guide reviewers through a revision of feedback. If this second attempt is still not satisfactory, the handling editor may decide not to distribute the review to the authors and may not invite the reviewer back for subsequent manuscripts. Incentives for high quality reviews include:

Thoughtful completion of three reviews with collegial tone that are considered of good quality warrants inclusion on the journal masthead.

Upon completion of one good quality review, the individual will be listed as an “ad-hoc” reviewer on the journal masthead. All eligible reviewers will be entered into the reviewer pool for TPS. If selected to review a manuscript, you will be credited within the journal, and we encourage you to indicate your service on your CV.

Open Research and Contributor ID (ORCID) Reviewer Recognition provides a visible and verifiable way for journals to publicly credit reviewers without compromising the confidentiality of the peer-review process. TPS has implemented the ORCID Reviewer Recognition feature in Editorial Manager, meaning that reviewers can be recognized for their contributions to the peer-review process if they link their ORCID to their Editorial Manager account.

Additionally, you may opt to register with the Clarivate Web of Science (WoS) platform. The Web of Science platform provides a central location to track not only publications and citations, but also general service to the academic community. Editorial positions, reviews, and grants can all also be tracked at WoS. We encourage you to make use of this service.



Using the Online System

When you are invited for a review, you will receive an email with the submission title, abstract, due date for your review, and links to accept or decline the invitation (below is an example, with (*) in place of links).

Dear [REDACTED]

We are hoping that you will be able to review this submission to Translational Issues in Psychological Science titled "[REDACTED]". I will be serving as action editor for this paper. We recognize that there is a lot going on in the world and your life right now. Reviewer contributions are integral to the continuation of science, but please let us know if you cannot review or need more time. Stay well and best wishes.

I would appreciate receiving your review by Nov 13, 2025. If you know that there will be a problem reviewing the paper within this time-frame, please let us know as soon as possible by reply e-mail. Please decline the review if you feel there is a conflict of interest with this paper.

The editorial review process is a confidential one. You have a confidential copy of a manuscript that we are asking you to review. If you are unable to serve as a reviewer for this manuscript, please delete the attached file and destroy any print copy you may have created.

Below you will find the "Agree" and "Decline" links for responding to the invitation. Please click on agree or decline to register your response in the system within the next week.

Thank you for considering this manuscript for review. If you have any further questions, please contact me or the Peer Review Coordinator at the Translational Issues in Psychological Science editorial office.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Melina R. Singh, PhD
General Topics Associate Editor
Translational Issues in Psychological Science

The manuscript reference is TPS-2025-[REDACTED].

To download the paper now, please click this link:



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***** *

This is the abstract:

How do moments of intense gratitude and intense happiness differ? We address this



If you agree to review this paper, please click this link:

***** *

If you wish to decline this review invitation, please click this link:

***** *

If the above links do not work, please go to <https://www.editorialmanager.com/tps/>.
Your username is ***** and *****.

You may submit your comments online at the above URL. There you will find spaces for confidential comments to the editor, comments for the author and a report form to be completed. Please note that you may also confirm or Authenticate your ORCID ID by clicking here *****.

You may respond to the invitation via the email links, or you can log into your Editorial Manager reviewer menu to see the invitation there. To see the manuscript before responding to the invitation, click 'View Submission.' Then, once you've decided, click 'Agree to Review' or 'Decline to Review.'





TRANSLATIONAL ISSUES
IN PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE

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Translational Issues in Psychological Science

a journal of the American Psychological Association

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New Reviewer Invitations for [REDACTED]

You have been invited to review the following manuscripts. Please Agree to review or Decline to review the manuscript.

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Action	Manuscript Number	Article Type	Article Title	Current Status	Date Reviewer Invited	Days Invitation Outstanding	Editor's Name
View Submission View Abstract Agree to Review Decline to Review Send E-mail	TPS-2025-[REDACTED]	General Topics	[REDACTED]	Under Review	Oct 09, 2025	7	Melina R. Singh, PhD

Once you agree to review, the review assignment will appear in your reviewer menu. If you have not already, click 'View Submission' to download the manuscript file. Once you have read it and prepared your review, log back in and click 'Submit Recommendation' to begin your review. You can save your review form and come back to it again later if you need to continue working on the review before turning it in to the journal office.



 Translational Issues in Psychological Science

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Action	My Reviewer Number	Manuscript Number	Article Type	Article Title	Current Status	Date Reviewer Invited	Date Reviewer Agreed	Date Review Due	Days Until Review Due	Editor's Name
View Submission Submit Recommendation Send E-mail	3	TPS-2025-[REDACTED]	General Topics	[REDACTED]	Under Review	Sep 23, 2025	Sep 24, 2025	Oct 23, 2025	7	Jason Frydman, PhD

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Expectations of a *TPS* Article

As you are conducting your review, it is important to be thoroughly versed in the expectations of a manuscript that would be suitable for publication in *TPS*. By understanding this, you will be better prepared to provide an effective review.

Core Principles of a *TPS* Article

I. Coverage of evidence:

- a. **Capture the breadth and depth of knowledge** by thoroughly reviewing foundational and cutting-edge research.
- b. **Cite sources responsibly** and ensure a well-rounded discussion by including perspectives beyond your own work.

II. Integration:

- a. **Critically evaluate** the literature, providing a critical synthesis of ideas beyond the summary to connect ideas across psychology and other disciplines.
- b. **Highlight translational readiness**, bridging theory and practice for real-world application.

III. Dissemination:

- a. Write in accessible “lay-person” language to engage scientists, professionals, and the public. Avoid jargon and explain complex concepts simply without oversimplifying.
- b. **Visual aids** (e.g., tables, figures) are encouraged to enhance understanding.

IV. Translation:

- a. **Expand the definition of “translational”** beyond traditional models (e.g., animal to human behavior) to apply theoretical concepts across psychology and other disciplines.
- b. Highlight **real-world applications** and provide a “call to action” for professionals both within and outside the scientific community.



What should a TPS article be/include?

- Manuscript should follow most up-to-date APA Style guidelines
- Impartial and non-partisan in nature
- Inspire application and “action” by the end of every article
- Organized around reader’s perspective and potential questions
- Broad implications and interdisciplinary applications
- Consideration of the falsifiability of the theory (if it is, how would this be tested?)
- Consideration of the different types of validity (internal, external) in reviewed work
- Consideration of why the work hasn’t been translated previously (if applicable)
- Appreciation of the diversity of methods for studying a topic
- Acknowledgement of other review articles on the subject
- Emphasize the results without unnecessary focus on individual authors

What could a TPS article be/include?

- Inclusion of previous meta-analytic reviews on the topic
- Longitudinal reviews on topics that have already been “translated”
- Translation of lab-based work to real-world scenarios or human behavior
- Critical evaluation of methodology and replicability issues in previous work
- Evaluation of the readiness for application on the topic of interest
- Recommendations for additional research that is needed to make a specific application
- Introduce new research or data, when appropriate or necessary

What should a TPS article not be/include?

- Communicate in a way that is understandable only to other scientists
- Perspectives should not represent only one viewpoint or theory when others exist
- Conflicts of interest (e.g., financial motivations)
- Focus on creating new psychological theories; rather, articles should analyze existing theories



Article Organization

Consistent with the most up-to-date APA Style guidelines for publications, manuscripts should be formatted with the following sections in order: Title Page, Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, and References.

Article Examples

Each issue of *TPS* concentrates on a single important, timely, and/or potentially controversial theme in translational science that is of broad interest to scientists, practitioners, and the general public. Each article reports or reviews research spanning quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches and concludes with an application section. *TPS* also accepts reviews and meta-analyses.

The following examples represent potential article types within the journal's framework. However, articles that fall outside these categories but align with the journal's guidelines and contribute meaningfully to the literature are also welcome. Conversely, articles that fit these types but fail to meet journal guidelines or lack a significant contribution will not be accepted.

1. Evaluating Application Readiness:

These articles synthesize current research, identify potential applications, and assess readiness for translation. They should also address barriers to implementation and propose solutions to overcome them.

2. Novel Applications:

These articles integrate separate lines of research or theories to propose innovative applications, particularly in fields where the research has not been previously utilized. They should emphasize interdisciplinary connections and go beyond traditional “bench-to-bedside” approaches.

3. Evaluation of Current Applications (Progress Reports):

These articles critically examine existing applications in a specific field, functioning as “progress reports.” They should highlight strengths, weaknesses, translational successes, and barriers encountered during implementation. Contributions from professionals actively applying these methods in the field are encouraged.



Benefits of Reviewing for *TPS*

- Receive training and exposure to the peer review process
- Work with leading experts in the field on cutting edge topics
- Ensure that high quality and ethical scientific research is published
- Promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in published research
- Receive mentorship and valuable experience during the peer review process
- Add experience as an “Ad-Hoc Reviewer” to your CV or resume
- Opportunity to serve as an associate editor for the journal (for interested trainees that have successfully completed peer reviews for *TPS* in the past).



Reviewing a Manuscript

Deciding whether to accept or decline a reviewer invitation

You will be contacted via email by *TPS* if you are selected as a potential reviewer. In this email, you will be provided with the following:

- Manuscript information (i.e., title, abstract, and a link to download the submitted manuscript)
- Deadline for completed review
- Option to accept or decline the invitation

To determine whether to accept or decline the invitation, you will want to assess the following:

- Bandwidth to complete the review by the requested deadline
- Your knowledge and expertise fit
 - When determining whether you are a good fit, it is important to balance your own research interests and background with the understanding that you are still able to provide an effective review for a manuscript that may be slightly outside your wheelhouse. As you review the abstract and manuscript, consider your base of knowledge in this topic area. As a rule of thumb, if you can rate your knowledge of the manuscript subject at a B+ or higher, then you are likely a good fit to serve as a reviewer. That being said, serving as a reviewer is an opportunity to grow as a scientist and gain awareness of new subfields within psychology.
- Ability to conduct the review objectively by being aware of potential conflicts of interest.
 - Examples of conflicts of interest:
 - You personally know the authors of the manuscript;
 - The authors previously reached out to you to provide comments on a draft of the manuscript;
 - You have reviewed a version of the manuscript previously from a different journal. (Note, this does not necessarily mean you cannot review the manuscript again, but your experience with the manuscript should be disclosed to the Editor before you begin your review);



- The manuscript comes from scientists in a competing lab, and you feel you have preconceived biases.
- If you are unsure or have concerns, consult the handling editor that sent you the original request

Helpful questions to ask oneself before agreeing to complete a review are below. You do not need to answer “yes” to every question in order to be considered a good fit to serve as a reviewer.

Responding “yes” to one or two may be sufficient.

Am I familiar with the research topic? For example, do I do similar research? Have I read recent articles on these topics? Have I published on similar topics?

Am I familiar with the theoretical foundations of the research?

Am I familiar with the populations being studied?

Am I familiar with the methodology being used?

Am I familiar with the data analytic approaches being used?

To notify the handling Editor of your decision to review, follow the instructions provided in the email. If you accept the invitation, you will be guided to the reviewer portal through Editorial Manager, where you will be able to download the manuscript and submit your review. If you are declining the invitation, there will be an opportunity to provide an explanation.

Consider the assistance of a co-reviewer

If this is the first time you are formally reviewing a manuscript, you may find it helpful to enlist the assistance of a co-reviewer. This could be a faculty mentor, supervisor, or other professional who has formal reviewing experience. If you do choose to work with a co-reviewer, you may reach out to them to see if they would be able to aid you in the process of conducting and writing your review. Importantly, the co-reviewer should not be conducting the review for you but rather providing guidance and feedback as needed. When it comes time to submit your review in the portal, there will be an option to disclose whether you had the assistance of a co-reviewer.



Elements of a review

When reviewing a manuscript, it is helpful to divide critiques into **major** and **minor** categories.

Major critiques typically impact the reviewer's recommendation in a significant way, whereas minor critiques usually relate more to the readability of a manuscript than the content and scientific foundations of it. Notably, a **minor** critique may prove to impact the manuscript in such a way that a reviewer may consider it a major critique (e.g., if the organization of a manuscript is so poor that it obscures the argument being made, if numerous citations are not included in the reference list making it difficult to verify claims and sources of information).

Conducting the review

The following provides important points to consider when looking for major and minor critiques as well as some examples.

Major feedback

- The quality of the literature review, including but not limited to:
 - Adequate empirical resources and inclusion of key citations (foundational and contemporary)
 - Sufficient breadth and depth to contextualize the present study
 - The inclusion of alternate and/or conflicting evidence and/or perspectives.
 - It is helpful to explicitly identify gaps and to provide suggested literature to include when possible.
- The clarity of the central thesis/argument of the manuscript and how well the introduction and literature review support this thesis/argument.
- The quality of the methodology, including but not limited to:
 - Issues with sampling, reliability and validity of measures, study design, consideration of confounds, or statistical analyses.
 - It is also important that authors discuss the methodology of cited studies when relevant, especially if the manuscript is a review or commentary.
- Presentation of results (e.g., are results accurately reported and interpreted? Are they presented in a way that is understandable to the reader?)



- The interpretation of the findings and appropriateness of conclusions drawn from the literature review and results (e.g., Are the conclusions supported by the results and do they make sense in the context of the extant literature?).
- Sufficient and appropriately stated limitations, future research directions, and/or proposed applications.
- Any fundamental flaws or issues hindering publication along with possible solutions. For example:
 - What “must” be fixed for the article to be published?
 - Is there a “fundamental” flaw in the paper that cannot be fixed with revisions?
 - Is the manuscript internally consistent (i.e., does the literature, methodology, results, and conclusions “hang together?”)?
- The novelty of the manuscript. Do the authors present novel findings, use novel methodology, make a new argument, or otherwise provide a “fresh take?” Would publication of the manuscript advance psychological science?
- A determination of whether the manuscript has sufficient *translational* applications. Do the authors incorporate literature, perspectives, and/or methodologies from multiple fields (i.e., have a multi- or interdisciplinary bent)? Does the manuscript have clinical or practical applications? Would publication of the manuscript serve to bridge knowledge from one field to another or from one level (e.g., molecular biology, cognitive science) to another (e.g., clinical intervention, teaching methods)?

Minor feedback

- APA Style and formatting (layout, references, results, non-biased and neutral language).
- Writing issues (e.g., spelling, grammar, syntax problems, wordiness, redundancy).
- Consistency between in-text citations and reference list (“reference checking”).
- *TPS* formatting requirements, such as page limit.



Equity, diversity, and inclusion

When reviewing and writing the review, it is important to conduct an inclusive review by being aware of how biases may present in both the research and manuscript. Questions to ask yourself while reviewing include:

- Is reinforcement of stereotypes or contributions of bias avoided in the methods?
- Could the writing be used or misused to cause harm, especially to vulnerable populations?
- Has the participant sample been appropriately described—did the authors explain their sample and describe their sample inclusion efforts?
- Are the references inclusive?
- Is biased language present?
 - Refer to APA's [Inclusive Language Guidelines](#) and the [Journal Article Reporting Standards for Race, Ethnicity, and Culture \(JARS-REC\)](#) for support.

At the same time, it is important to consider your own biases as you review. Questions to ask yourself to maintain objectivity include:

- If I feel that these effects are not novel or noteworthy, is this because they are derived using a sample of individuals dissimilar to my own identity?
- Am I considering the utility of this research in samples that have not previously been examined?
- Am I taking into consideration the strengths of other types of methodologies, other than those I am most familiar with?
- If prior research is lacking on a particular issue, is this because of societal and/or systemic issues? Are such issues making progress on this particular research topic difficult?

If you have concerns about the inclusivity of the submitted manuscript, you may indicate so in the “Comments to the Editor” section of the review form (see below).



Special considerations when conducting your review

Type of manuscript

Although the majority of manuscripts reviewed for publication in *TPS* are quantitative empirical studies, there are an increasing number of qualitative studies, mixed-method studies, reviews, and meta-analyses. Reviewing each of these types of manuscripts requires evaluation of unique aspects. For example, qualitative studies often have different designs, smaller sample sizes, minimal statistical analyses, and lengthy results sections compared to quantitative studies. Reviews and meta-analyses typically contain specific tables and figures needed to convey search processes and key information about included studies. As is true with all reviews, it is crucial to reflect on whether you are familiar enough with these types of manuscripts before accepting an invitation to review one. When reviewing these types of manuscripts and writing your review, keep in mind the particularities of the manuscript and be sure to comment on issues particularly relevant to the given methodology.

Artificial intelligence in the peer review process

In the rapidly evolving technological landscape, artificial intelligence (AI) tools are becoming increasingly prevalent in psychological research. While there are many benefits to using these tools, there is much to consider from an ethical standpoint. Thus, reviewers are strongly encouraged to be up to date on [APA's AI policies](#) and [guidance on AI disclosures](#) on both manuscript production as well as the peer review process. As a reviewer, there are appropriate uses and inappropriate uses for AI, with subtle distinction between the two. Most importantly, it is never appropriate to feed any elements of a manuscript into an AI tool such as ChatGPT. While such tools can be helpful on micro-levels (such as asking for a synonym of a word or assisting with the formatting of a piece of feedback), they should under no circumstances be used to generate feedback to integrate into a review.

Writing your review

Now that you have read through the manuscript carefully and have taken notes on the manuscript, it is time to begin writing your review. Your review will ultimately consist of three parts: manuscript rating, comments to the author, and comments to the editor. Note that while both the editorial team and the authors will see comments to the author, only the editorial team will see the manuscript rating and comments to the editor.



Comments to the author

The comments to the author will be the written result of your review (as conducted above). This will include all of your comments, questions, and suggestions for revisions that will be read by the authors of the manuscript for incorporation into a revised manuscript. This will include three components:

1. A brief summary of the manuscript;
2. major strengths and weaknesses (i.e., Major Critiques); and
3. minor points for the authors to consider (i.e., Minor Critiques).

We suggest that you write your comments in a Word document. When you are done with the review and ready to submit your decision, you can copy and paste into the online submission form.

Summary of manuscript

Effective reviews begin with a brief summary of the main points of the manuscript as to orient both the reviewer and handling editor to the content matter. This summary also helps the authors to see what main points the reviewer took away from their reading the manuscript. If these main points were not what the authors intended, then revisions may be necessary.

Although manuscript summaries may vary widely depending on the nature of the manuscript and the reviewer's style, the following order is a helpful template: begin by summarizing the aim(s) of the manuscript and relevant contextualizing aspects of the literature review, then provide a summary of the main points, which will often include information from the methods and results section, and finish with a summary of the conclusion and translational impact of the manuscript. Remember, you are writing a summary of a brief review. It should be short. No more than one paragraph.

Major critiques

After your summary of the manuscript, you will then write out your comments, questions, and suggestions. You may begin with a summary of your overall impression of the manuscript and then write about the strengths and weaknesses of the paper. There are two general organizational approaches you can employ:

1. Organize based on section of the manuscript (i.e., Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion);
or
2. Organize based on importance, listing comments that you feel are most important to be addressed by the authors first.



If you took notes on the manuscript, look those over and decide which are major points. It is standard practice to order critiques in terms of implications with the most important issues mentioned first. Your comments should include suggestions for revision and improvement, including any “required” changes in order for the manuscript to be publishable. It is helpful to provide references within the manuscript (e.g., page numbers, paragraphs, or manuscript sections) to clarify your critiques and reduce the potential for confusion. Also be sure to include positive impressions or encouragement where appropriate. Remember, you want the authors to know what the strengths are, as well as weaknesses and areas for improvement.

Minor critiques

Finally, an effective review concludes with a summary of minor critiques. If you noticed stylistic or grammatical/spelling errors, these may be addressed here. Pointing these out will likely help the authors during the revision process. Again, it may be helpful to use page numbers and paragraphs to identify stylistic or grammatical/spelling errors. However, be careful not to copyedit the manuscript. Your primary concern should be assessing the content and effectiveness of the manuscript. Note, these may be general (e.g., “The authors are encouraged to review the entire manuscript closely for occasional grammatical errors”) or specific (e.g., “The sentence on page 3, line 10 is not clear. The authors are encouraged to revisit the wording of this sentence to promote clarity of their points.”).

Comments to the editor

These are confidential comments that will only be read by the editorial team. This section should be about one paragraph and should be a frank assessment of the manuscript. If any of your major concerns include fundamental flaws that render the manuscript unpublishable, you should reiterate them here. In addition, if the manuscript does not provide a contribution to TPS, keeping in mind the mission of the journal (interdisciplinary impact, translational applications), then make this explicit for the handling editor in this section.

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Your review will be entered in the online portal via the Manuscript Rating Form. To complete the form, please follow these steps:



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2. Rate the manuscript on a scale of 0-100
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5. Select "Submit Recommendation to the Editor" or "Save" if you are not yet ready to submit.

The next images show screenshots of the online review form you will be asked to fill out. We recommend that you write your review (author narrative and comments to the editor) in a word document that you save. When you have completed the review, copy and paste the information into the online review form and answer the additional questions.

Reviewer Recommendation and Comments for Manuscript Number TPS-2025-0

Original Submission

(Reviewer 3)

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Appropriateness for this journal.

☒ N/A
☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5

Significance of the issue.

☒ N/A
☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
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☐ 5



Manuscript Rating

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Appropriateness for this journal.

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Significance of the issue.

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Interest to Readership

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Quality of Research (Design and Analysis)

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Adequacy of the Data

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Data Interpretation

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Quality of Writing (clarity, style)

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Coverage of Topic

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Relevance/Adequacy of Literature Reviewed

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Contribution of New Knowledge

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Utility of Tables/Figures

☒ N/A ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

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Key elements of a professional review (Tips for TPS)

The golden rule of reviewing: **Never submit a review that you would not sign your name to.** If you would feel uncomfortable with the authors knowing who you are, revise your tone and approach in the review.

Always

- Write with a professional tone – Be collegial, respectful, and helpful.
- Be honest and thorough – Your evaluation should aid authors in revisions and uphold the integrity of the literature.
- Offer specific suggestions for revision – Feedback should be constructive and actionable.
- Acknowledge strengths – Find at least one positive aspect to highlight and try to end with this point.

Never

- Include your personal opinions or biases – Focus on the quality of research, not your opinions on specific theories.
- State your final publication recommendation to the author directly – This is for the editors to decide.
- Provide any harsh, critical, or counterproductive comments – Aim to guide, not discourage.
- Copyedit the manuscript – Concentrate on the content and contribution of the research.



From critical to constructive feedback

The following examples may assist in translating your impressions into constructive comments:

You think: I don't know what the point of this paper is.

You write: It is unclear if this paper makes a novel contribution to the literature. Can you provide more information about how it is different from ____?

You think: This is the worst literature review I have ever read.

You write: The literature review seems relatively sparse. I would encourage the authors to include more sources, and specifically believe they should include ____ and ____.

You think: This paper is just terrible. I just don't understand how someone submitted this.

You write: I am not sure that this article is suitable for publication in its current form. Some of my concerns are ____ and ____.

You think: The figures don't make any sense.

You write: I think the figures could be clearer by improving labeling and including further explanation in the figure legends.



Review Checklist

When your review is complete you should have all of the following things:

☐ **Comments to the Author (1-2 pages)**

- Summary of manuscript
 - Main points of the manuscript
- Summary of major points:
 - Overall impression of the manuscript
 - Major strengths and weaknesses
 - Advice for required revisions
- Summary of minor points:
 - Advice for stylistic or grammatical/spelling error changes

☐ **Comments to the Editor (1 paragraph)**

- Frank assessment of the manuscript
- Does the manuscript provide a contribution to *TPS* and its mission?

☐ **Answers to form questions in online system**

- Recommendation for publication (Accept, Major Revisions Required, Minor Revisions Required, or Reject)
- Answer the manuscript rating questions
- Copy and paste the comments to the author and comments to the editor in the relevant sections



Recommended further reading

- American Psychological Association. (n.d.). APA Style. <https://apastyle.apa.org/>
- American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>
- American Psychological Association. (2020). Ch 12. Publication process. In Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Ed.). (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>
- APA Style Journal Article Reporting Standards (APA Style JARS). (n.d.). <https://apastyle.apa.org/jars>
- American Psychological Association. (2025). Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Toolkit for journal Editors. In APA JOURNALS (SECOND EDITION). <https://www.apa.org/pubs/authors/equity-diversity-inclusion-toolkit-journal-editors.pdf>
- American Psychological Association. (2023). Inclusive language guide (2nd ed.). <https://www.apa.org/about/apa/equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines.pdf>
- Guidelines for students - peer review. (n.d.). Peer Review. <https://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/peerreview/tips.html>
- Peer review. (n.d.). <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/resources/peer-review>

