



## Editorial policy

*Behavioral Science & Policy* (BSP) is an international, peer-reviewed publication of the Behavioral Science & Policy Association and Brookings Institution Press. BSP features short, accessible articles describing actionable policy applications of behavioral scientific research that serves the public interest. Articles submitted to BSP undergo a dual-review process: For each article, leading disciplinary scholars review for scientific rigor and experts in relevant policy areas review for practicality and feasibility of implementation. Manuscripts that pass this dual-review are edited to ensure their accessibility to policy makers, scientists, and lay readers. BSP is not limited to a particular point of view or political ideology.

Manuscripts can be submitted in a number of different formats, each of which must clearly explain specific implications for public- and/or private-sector policy and practice.

External review of the manuscript entails evaluation by at least two outside referees—at least one in the policy arena and at least one in the disciplinary field.

Professional editors trained in BSP's style work with authors to enhance the accessibility and appeal of the material for a general audience.

Each of the sections below provides general information for authors about the manuscript submission process. We recommend that you take the time to read each section and review carefully the BSP Editorial Policy before submitting your manuscript to *Behavioral Science & Policy*.

### Manuscript Categories

Manuscripts can be submitted in a number of different categories, each of which must clearly demonstrate the empirical basis for the article as well as explain specific implications for (public and/or private-sector) policy and practice:

- **Proposals (≤ 2,500 words)** specify scientifically grounded policy proposals and provide supporting evidence including concise reports of relevant studies. This category is most appropriate for describing new policy implications of previously published work or a novel policy recommendation that is supported by previously published studies.

- **Reports ( $\leq 3000$  words)** provide a summary of output and actionable prescriptions that emerge from a workshop, working group, or standing organization in the behavioral policy space. In some cases such papers may consist of summaries of a much larger published report that also includes some novel material such as meta-analysis, actionable implications, process lessons, reference to related work by others, and/or new results not presented in the initial report. These papers are not merely summaries of a published report, but also should provide substantive illustrations of the research or recommendations and insights about the implications of the report content or process for others proposing to do similar work. Submitted papers will undergo BSP review for rigor and accessibility that is expedited to facilitate timely promulgation.
- **Findings ( $\leq 4,000$  words)** report on results of new studies and/or substantially new analysis of previously reported data sets (including formal meta-analysis) and the policy implications of the research findings. This category is most appropriate for presenting new evidence that supports a particular policy recommendation. The additional length of this format is designed to accommodate a summary of methods, results, and/or analysis of studies (though some finer details may be relegated to supplementary online materials).
- **Reviews ( $\leq 5,000$  words)** survey and synthesize the key findings and policy implications of research in a specific disciplinary area or on a specific policy topic. This could take the form of describing a general-purpose behavioral tool for policy makers or a set of behaviorally grounded insights for addressing a particular policy challenge.
- **Field Reviews ( $<5,000$  words)** practitioner-focused review of field tested studies - also clears the empirically-based rigor hurdle - on a particular actionable issue. Address whether there are new actionable implications for organizational policy makers (in other words, do they know all of this already?), new insights you can mine from the data, a new way of organizing the literature that is aimed at practice implications?
- **Other Published Materials.** BSP will sometimes solicit or accept *Essays* ( $\leq 5,000$  words) that present a unique perspective on behavioral policy; *Letters* ( $\leq 500$  words) that provide a forum for responses from readers and contributors, including policy makers and public figures; and *Invitations* ( $\leq 1,000$  words with links to online Supplemental Material), which are requests from policy makers for contributions from the behavioral science community on a particular policy issue. For example, if a particular agency is facing a specific challenge and seeks input from the behavioral science community, we would welcome posting of such solicitations.

### Review and Selection of Manuscripts

On submission, the manuscript author is asked to indicate the most relevant disciplinary area and policy area addressed by his/her manuscript. (In the case of some papers, a "general" policy category designation may be appropriate.) The relevant Senior Disciplinary Editor and the Senior Policy Editor provide an initial screening of the

manuscripts. After initial screening, an appropriate Associate Policy Editor and Associate Disciplinary Editor serve as the stewards of each manuscript as it moves through the editorial process. The manuscript author will receive an email within approximately two weeks of submission, indicating whether the article has been sent to outside referees for further consideration. External review of the manuscript entails evaluation by at least two outside referees. In most cases, Authors will receive a response from BSP within approximately 60 days of submission. With rare exception, we will submit manuscripts to no more than two rounds of full external review. We generally do not accept re-submissions of material without an explicit invitation from an editor. Professional editors trained in the BSP style will collaborate with the author of any manuscript recommended for publication to enhance the accessibility and appeal of the material to a general audience (i.e., a broad range of behavioral scientists, public- and private-sector policy makers, and educated lay public). We anticipate no more than two rounds of feedback from the professional editors.

### **Standards for Novelty**

BSP seeks to bring new policy recommendations and/or new evidence to the attention of public and private sector policy makers that are supported by rigorous behavioral and/or social science research. Our emphasis is on novelty of the policy application and the strength of the supporting evidence for that recommendation. We encourage submission of work based on new studies, especially field studies (for Findings and Proposals) and novel syntheses of previously published work that have a strong empirical foundation (for Reviews).

BSP will also publish novel treatments of previously published studies that focus on their significant policy implications. For instance, such a paper might involve re-working of the general emphasis, motivation, discussion of implications, and/or a re-analysis of existing data to highlight policy-relevant implications or prior work that have not been detailed elsewhere.

In our checklist for authors we ask for a brief statement that explicitly details how the present work differs from previously published work (or work under review elsewhere). When in doubt, we ask that authors include with their submission copies of related papers. Note that any text, data, or figures excerpted or paraphrased from other previously published material must clearly indicate the original source with quotation and citations as appropriate.

### **Authorship**

Authorship implies substantial participation in research and/or composition of a manuscript. All authors must agree to the order of author listing and must have read and approved submission of the final manuscript. All authors are responsible for the accuracy and integrity of the work, and the senior author is required to have examined raw data from any studies on which the paper relies that the authors have collected.

## **Data Publication**

BSP requires authors of accepted empirical papers to submit all relevant raw data (and, where relevant, algorithms or code for analyzing those data) and stimulus materials for publication on the journal web site so that other investigators or policymakers can verify and draw on the analysis contained in the work. In some cases, these data may be redacted slightly to protect subject anonymity and/or comply with legal restrictions. In cases where a proprietary data set is owned by a third party, a waiver to this requirement may be granted. Likewise, a waiver may be granted if a dataset is particularly complex, so that it would be impractical to post it in a sufficiently annotated form (e.g. as is sometimes the case for brain imaging data). Other waivers will be considered where appropriate. Inquiries can be directed to the BSP office.

## **Statement of Data Collection Procedures**

BSP strongly encourages submission of empirical work that is based on multiple studies and/or a meta-analysis of several datasets. In order to protect against false positive results, we ask that authors of empirical work fully disclose relevant details concerning their data collection practices (if not in the main text then in the supplemental online materials). In particular, we ask that authors report how they determined their sample size, all data exclusions (if any), all manipulations, and all measures in the studies presented. (A template for these disclosures is included in our checklist for authors, though in some cases may be most appropriate for presentation online as Supplemental Material; for more information, see Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011, *Psychological Science*, 22, 1359-1366).

## **Copyright and License**

Copyright to all published articles is held jointly by the Behavioral Science & Policy Association and Brookings Institution Press, subject to use outlined in the *Behavioral Science & Policy* publication agreement (a waiver is considered only in cases where one's employer formally and explicitly prohibits work from being copyrighted; inquiries should be directed to the BSPA office). Following publication, the manuscript author may post the accepted version of the article on his/her personal web site, and may circulate the work to colleagues and students for educational and research purposes. We also allow posting in cases where funding agencies explicitly request access to published manuscripts (e.g., NIH requires posting on PubMed Central).

## **Open Access**

BSP posts each accepted article on our website in an open access format at least until that article has been bundled into an issue. At that point, access is granted to journal subscribers and members of the Behavioral Science & Policy Association. Questions regarding institutional constraints on open access should be directed to the editorial office.

## **Supplemental Material**

While the basic elements of study design and analysis should be described in the main text, authors are invited to submit Supplemental Material for online publication that

helps elaborate on details of research methodology and analysis of their data, as well as links to related material available online elsewhere. Supplemental material should be included to the extent that it helps readers evaluate the credibility of the contribution, elaborate on the findings presented in the paper, or provide useful guidance to policy makers wishing to act on the policy recommendations advanced in the paper. This material should be presented in as concise a manner as possible.

### **Embargo**

Authors are free to present their work at invited colloquia and scientific meetings, but should not seek media attention for their work in advance of publication, unless the reporters in question agree to comply with BSP's press embargo. Once accepted, the paper will be considered a privileged document and only be released to the press and public when published online. BSP will strive to release work as quickly as possible, and we do not anticipate that this will create undue delays.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Authors must disclose any financial, professional, and personal relationships that might be construed as possible sources of bias.

### **Use of Human Subjects**

All research using human subjects must have Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, where appropriate.