



HESI SDG Publishers Compact Fellows: Top Action Tips

Academic Journal Editors

Guidance offering practical advice for journal editors to help promote research on SDGs and make it accessible and searchable.

1. Editors should include an explicit statement in the journal's Aims & Scope and Submission Guidelines, indicating that the journal actively seeks submissions that align with one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, SDG-related research with a specific, actionable connection to challenges and opportunities in practice.
2. Specifically solicit SDGs and related practitioner-aligned content. Have the editorial board review practitioner literature to understand high priority topics for possible issue themes. Also encourage submissions of research that is co-created by academic researchers and practitioners.
3. Support authors to use appropriate keywords that correctly identify SDG-related themes impacted by the article. See [Top Action Tips](#).
4. Editors should include in author guidelines that authors are required to include any implications for practitioners and policymakers in the abstract.
5. Ask reviewers to check that authors included these implications for practitioners and policymakers in the abstract. Add a question about this on reviewer forms or include this guidance in reviewer instructions.
6. Ask authors to create a separate summary of outcomes for sharing, as appropriate, with practitioners and policymakers via plain language summaries and/or infographics. Use these helpful resources which were designed for this purpose and can be adopted and/or adapted by journal editors, as appropriate: [Communicating with Professionals and Practitioners](#), and [Communicating with Policymakers, Journalists and the Public](#).
7. Guard against systemic bias that may be inherent in systems and processes for peer

review and in the content being reviewed, taking steps to mitigate and avoid this, where necessary¹. [Top Action Tips for Equity](#).

8. Take steps to ensure that editorial boards are equitable, culturally and geographically diverse in composition^{2,3,4} (recognizing that someone can have more than one ethnicity and could be working in a country other than where they were born; data may be incomplete, and nothing be inferred simply from a person's name).
9. Be aware that authors may not be writing in their first language, which can affect all stages of the process, from research through to publication. This may mean taking additional steps to promote fairness and improve accessibility, including use of a balanced, transparent blend of human and automated processes and tools. Where Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are used, they should be checked for bias⁵.
10. Editors should appoint practitioner editors on journal editorial boards to provide practitioner perspectives and connections. These editors can: help the journal connect to practitioner organizations to hear from practitioners what are the urgent research questions for the SDG(s); help select content suitable for translation and dissemination to practitioners, policymakers and the public; help with the dissemination of relevant research outcomes.

¹ C4DISC: ['Guidelines on Inclusive Language and Images in Scholarly Communication'](#)

² Springer Nature (2022): ['Addressing diversity & inclusion in peer reviewer and editorial board recruitment'](#).

³ Elsevier Report (2022): ['Making progress towards a more inclusive research ecosystem'](#)

⁴ Taylor and Francis, ['Editor Resources on increasing diversity'](#), and Emerald Publishing, ['Indigenous Voices'](#)

⁵ 'GPT detectors are biased against non-native English writers'. Cell Press: [Patterns](#), 2023