

## **Aims & Scope**

The *Review of Religious Research* (RRR) journal aims to publish manuscripts meeting these six scope criteria: (1) reports empirical research; (2) attends to religiosity and spirituality topics; (3) identifies religious groups and their adherents; (4) engages in interdisciplinary social science research practices; (5) describes methods and analytical techniques; and (6) applies research with relevance for practitioners. These criteria are explained further in the journal [Aims & Scope](#).

## **Empirical Research**

Manuscripts meet the empirical social science research scope criteria by reporting on observable behaviors, actions, orientations, and more of social groups. The goal is to understand and analyze rather than seeking to propagate a religion, proselytize, evangelize, or in other ways directly represent a religious view. Valuing the goal of replicability and peer review, empirical research typically includes a methods section that explains how data were collected, why, using what procedures, under which conditions, and toward what types of analysis.

While literary analysis and theology can be informative in other outlets, these approaches are outside of the purview of this journal. Manuscripts meet the empirical social science research scope criteria by reporting on observable behaviors, actions, and orientations of social groups. The goal is to understand and analyze rather than seeking to propagate a religion, proselytize, evangelize, or in other ways directly represent a religious view.

Empirical research includes a methods section that explains how data were collected, why, using what procedures, under which conditions, and toward what types of analysis. Methods sections for this journal are usually several pages in length and include information about how sample was selected and recruited, what techniques and procedures were used to collect data, how distribution is shaped across research participants, which ethical standards were upheld in the research process, and why analysis techniques were implemented as the best way to represent what the data indicate about religion and spirituality.

## **Methods & Analysis**

1. Surveys
2. In-depth interviews
3. Ethnographies
4. Case studies
5. Quantitative analysis
6. Qualitative analysis
7. Content analysis
8. Mixed methods analysis

## **Applied Research**

The journal is particularly interested in publishing applied research with implications for practice.

## **Editorial Decision-Making Process**

The journal [Aims & Scope](#) are crucial to assessing fit of a manuscript. These aims and scope are evaluated at the outset by the editor, throughout the peer review process by a diverse set of relevant researchers, and in many cases also by the editorial board. Read this editorial for more about the RRR editorial decision-making process: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0034673X241306080>.

Manuscripts are submitted through ScholarOne™: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rrr>.

Journal inquiries should be addressed to the editor: Patricia Snell Herzog, PhD at [relig@iu.edu](mailto:relig@iu.edu).

## **Manuscript Types**

### **Original Research Articles**

Original research articles present scholarly and methodologically rigorous empirical analysis. Sections: Introduction, Literature Review (typically labeled by topical headings), Data and Methods, Results, Discussion (including limitations, implications, conclusions). Before submitting a manuscript, authors should read the journal's Aims & Scope for more information. Maximum 10,000 words, 40 double-spaced manuscript pages, including references.

### **Research Notes**

Research notes are similar to original research articles in presenting scholarly and methodologically rigorous empirical analysis. Notes are briefer than articles and typically provide less theoretical framing and literature reviewing than articles. The focus is on the study design and results. Sections: Introduction, Data and Methods, Results, Discussion (including limitations). Maximum 7,500 words, 30 double-spaced pages, including references.

### **Review Articles**

Review articles provide a comprehensive summary of relevant existing studies, including a synthesis of their relevant theory, methods, and findings on topic(s) of interest to the journal (see Aims & Scope). Sections: Introduction, Background, Data and Methods (describe sources, inclusion and exclusion criteria), Results, Discussion (limitations, implications, conclusions). Maximum 10,000 words, 40 double-spaced pages, including references.

### **Applied Research Abstracts**

Applied research abstracts briefly present the results of an applied study. Sections: Background, Purpose, Methods, Results, Conclusions, and Implications. Applied abstracts are 350-550 words and should include a footnote explaining to readers how to access the report, data, or additional information on the study.

### **Contexts of Religious Research**

Contexts include commentaries from authors that provide context for religious research, describe emergent research areas, provide profiles of research or faith-based organizations, or offer published versions of invited addresses (e.g., the Religious Research Association's H. Paul Douglass Lecture). Max 1,000 words for unsolicited submissions.

### **Book Reviews**

Book reviews provide a summary of a scholarly book that identifies the purpose and central themes, highlights important claims or contributions, and offers critical evaluation of the theories, methods, approach, or limitations (about 800 words). If you would like to review a book for the journal, contact the Book Review Editor, David Eagle, PhD [david.eagle@duke.edu](mailto:david.eagle@duke.edu).

## **Manuscript Submission Guidelines**

### **Title** (10-15 words)

Titles are typically around 10-15 words. Ensure the main key phrase for the topic is in the manuscript title. Make sure the title is descriptive, unambiguous, accurate and reads well. People search on key phrases not just single words e.g., 'faith-based organizations' not only 'organization.' Also include the topic as close to the start as possible. If authors are using a 'creative' title, make this a subtitle to a more descriptive title. A descriptive title is also good for making an article more searchable journal databases: Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar.

### **Abstract** (150-200 words)

Abstracts should further describe the contents of the manuscript. Begin the abstract by stating the central purpose or aim of the paper. Next, describe the objective and approach of this particular study. *The majority of the abstract should summarize the methodological design.* Name whether the data were collected through a survey, interview, experiment, ethnography, or other mode. Provide an overview of the sample size and characteristics. It is common to use the notation  $n=x$  to indicate the sample (n) equals size (x). Specify that the analysis techniques were quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, or some other type. Briefly state the primary results. Interpret the contributions for theory, research, and/or practice. The readership of RRR is particularly interested in applications for practice, especially for the practitioner sets in the [Aims & Scope](#).

### **File Uploads**

Manuscripts should be submitted with the following required set of documents:

1. **Title Page** with the following required details:
  - a. Title of the manuscript in less than 15 words.
  - b. Name of all authors in the order of their contributions (see more information below).
  - c. Affiliations for all authors including institution, department, city, (state), country.
  - d. Corresponding author identified and with contact information for mail and email.
  - e. ORCID for each author.
  - f. Keywords: 4 to 6 keywords used for indexing purposes. At least 1 from [Aims & Scope](#).
  - g. Acknowledgments section.
  - h. Declaration of any conflicting interest or statement that there are none.
  - i. Funding statement or statement that no funding was received.
  - j. Ethical approval and informed consent statements.
  - k. Data availability statement or explanation as to why the data are not available.
  - l. Brief bio statements for each author.
2. **Main Document** that is de-identified to remove all author names, affiliations, contacts, and self-cited references to be prepared for anonymous peer review.
  - a. Literature review followed by Methods section, then Results, followed by Discussion.
  - b. Reference list formatted as [ASA reference style](#). Include all DOIs (Digital Object Identifier), especially for journal articles. Remove hyperlink/url portion (<http://www.doi.org>).
  - c. End Notes (or when possible incorporated into the main body). No Footnotes.
3. If the manuscript includes **tables** and **figures**, upload in as a separate document labeled Tables or Figures. In the text, include callouts such as [Table 1 About Here].
4. **Cover Letter** with required author declarations and submission fee statements (see page 8). Cover letter should be submitted in cover letter section, not uploaded in documents section.

### **Submission Fee**

Confirm that at least one author is either a member of the Religious Research Association or has paid the submission fee to the Religious Research Association. Authors who are not members of the association are required to pay a manuscript processing fee before their manuscript undergoes peer-review. The submission fee includes a year of free membership to the RRA.

### **Number of Figures, Tables, Words**

Authors need to enter the number of figures, number of tables, and number of words. The word count needs to include all the words in the manuscript, including references, table and figure captions, and all the text in the main body. Refer to word count maximums for each type of manuscript and ensure the manuscript is edited to fit within these guidelines before submitting.

### **Open Research Data Policy**

Some funders require, and SAGE strongly recommends, that authors provide a statement on how any underlying research materials related to the paper (data, samples, models) can be accessed. If authors upload any 'Research Data' file(s), please be aware that if the manuscript is accepted, the files will be published on the Figshare repository platform with a CC BY license, permitting unrestricted use of the data. A link to the data on the Figshare repository will be placed alongside the article on SAGE Journals. Authors are encouraged to include a data accessibility statement in the manuscript file if uploading research data, or if choosing to host research data elsewhere. For more information on SAGE research data policies and FAQs, visit the [SAGE author gateway](#).

### **Supplementary Material**

Optionally, additional files can be uploaded, including supplementary files or research data. Supplementary and data files are published online only and do not count toward word limits. If uploading a supplementary material file, refer to the guidelines on the [SAGE author gateway](#).

### **Preprint Identifier**

If this paper was posted to a [preprints server](#), enter its DOI (this will not be passed to reviewers).

### **Attributes**

Enter appropriate keywords for the manuscript. Keywords may be used by the journal to match the paper to appropriate reviewers, and if the paper is accepted for publication can [help readers find the article online](#).

Authors need to select at least one attribute (and can add up to 5) from the following lists: *Relevant Topics*, *Religious Groups*, *Methods & Analysis*, and *Disciplinary Affiliation*. If more than five religious groups, authors can select: Comparative Across Multiple Religious Groups.

If relevant, authors can also select keywords from the *Applied Practitioners* list. Please review the journal [Aims & Scope](#) for a full description of each of these keyword sets.

### **Countries of Data Collection**

Select at least one country in which the data were collected that are reported in the manuscript. Multiple countries can be selected up to 5 entries. If there is no specific geographic area relevant to the manuscript, enter: No Specific Geography.

### **Sage Publishing**

*Review of Religious Research* is published by Sage. Authors are advised to review the [Sage Manuscript Submission Guidelines](#), as well as the [SAGE Peer Review](#) process overview. SAGE is a member of the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#). Review the RRR [Call for Papers](#) and [Aims and Scope](#) for more information about the journal.

### **Ethics & Responsibility**

SAGE is committed to upholding the integrity of the work we publish. The value of academic publishing relies on everyone involved behaving ethically. The following points are only intended to give a broad overview and are not exhaustive. Authors are encouraged to refer to the [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\) website](#).

### **Authors & Institutions**

List all author names and ensure that the full First and Last (Family, Surname) Names are spelled correctly, and if applicable a Middle Name or initial is included. Check that hyphenations and abbreviations are listed exactly as each contributing author wants. To bring the widest audience possible to the manuscript, it is important to aid search engines in author disambiguation. Represent each author's institutional affiliations and include contact information for the corresponding author. The corresponding author is responsible for confirming that all author names and affiliations are listed correctly before submitting the manuscript.

### **Authorship**

Authors should ensure that:

- their work is original and written by them
- their work has not been previously published and has been submitted only to the journal
- where material is taken from other sources (including their own published writing) the source is clearly cited and that where appropriate permission is obtained
- their work does not infringe on any rights of others, including privacy rights and intellectual property rights
- their data is true and not manipulated
- their data is their own or that they have permission to use data reproduced in their paper
- any real or apparent conflicting or competing interest is clearly stated on submission of their paper (this would include funding assistance)
- they adhere to all research ethics guidelines of their discipline, particularly where human or animal subjects are involved
- they contact the Editor to identify and correct any material errors upon discovery, whether prior or subsequent to publication of their work
- authorship of the paper is accurately represented, including ensuring that all individuals credited as authors participated in the actual authorship of the work and that all who participated are credited and have given consent for publication

Above all, authors should be transparent. For example, if an author is not sure whether their paper is original (for instance, whether it might constitute duplicate publication), they should inform the journal's editor. If the editor decides it is appropriate to publish, the paper itself should state clearly any potential overlap.

For more information, please visit the [SAGE Author Gateway](#).

### ***Why Authorship Matters***

Authorship confers credit and has important academic, social, and financial implications. Authorship also implies responsibility and accountability for published work.

The following recommendations are intended to ensure that contributors who have made substantive intellectual contributions to a paper or manuscript are given credit as authors, but also that contributors credited as authors understand their role in taking responsibility and being accountable for what is published.

Because authorship does not communicate what contributions qualified an individual to be an author, some publishers now request and publish information about the contributions of each person named as having participated in a submitted study, at least for original research. Such policies remove much of the ambiguity surrounding contributions but leave unresolved the question of the quantity and quality of contribution that qualify an individual for authorship.

The following criteria for authorship are provided as a combination of existing authorship criteria developed by [Sage Publishing](#), the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\)](#), [Nature Research journal](#), and [BioMed Central](#).

### ***Authorship Criteria***

Authorship should be based on the following 4 criteria:

1. Made substantial contributions to the concept or design or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; **AND**
2. Drafted the work or revised it critically for important intellectual content; **AND**
3. Provided final approval of the version to be published; **AND**
4. Agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved. In addition to being accountable for the self-contributed work, an author should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work.

All those designated as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, and all who meet the four criteria should be identified as authors.

Submission for publication is taken to mean that all the listed authors have agreed to all of the contents, including the author list and author contribution statements.

### ***Corresponding Author***

The corresponding author is the one individual who takes primary responsibility for communication with the publisher during the manuscript submission, peer review, and publication process, and typically ensures that all the publisher's administrative requirements are properly completed. The corresponding author should be available throughout the process to respond to editorial queries in a timely way and should be available after publication to respond to critiques of the work and cooperate with any requests from the publisher for data or additional information should questions about the paper arise after publication.

Corresponding authors are responsible for ensuring that all listed authors have approved the manuscript before submission, including the names and order of authors, and that all authors receive the submission and all substantive correspondence with editors, as well as the full reviews, verifying that all data, figures, materials (including reagents), and code, even those



developed or provided by other authors, comply with the transparency and reproducibility standards of both the field and the publisher.

This responsibility includes but is not limited to: (i) ensuring that original data/original figures/materials/code upon which the submission is based are preserved following best practices in the field so that they are retrievable for reanalysis; (ii) confirming that data/figures/materials/code presentation accurately reflects the original; and (iii) foreseeing and minimizing obstacles to the sharing of data/materials/code described in the work. The corresponding author should be responsible for managing these requirements across the author group and ensuring that the entire author group is fully aware of and in compliance with best practices in the discipline of publication.

### ***Author contribution statements***

Transparency of author contributions is encouraged by publishing author contribution statements. Authors should include a statement of responsibility in the manuscript that specifies the contribution of every author. Author contribution statements are included in the published paper. The level of detail varies; some disciplines produce manuscripts that comprise discrete efforts readily articulated in detail, whereas other fields operate as group efforts at all stages.

### ***Non-Author Contributors***

Contributors who meet fewer than all 4 of the above criteria for authorship should not be listed as authors, but they should be acknowledged. Examples of activities that alone (without other contributions) do not qualify a contributor for authorship are acquisition of funding; general supervision of a research group or general administrative support; and writing assistance, technical editing, language editing, and proofreading.

### ***Acknowledgments***

Those whose contributions do not justify authorship may be acknowledged individually or together as a group under a single heading (e.g. "Clinical Investigators" or "Participating Investigators"), and their contributions should be specified (e.g., "served as scientific advisors," "critically reviewed the study proposal," "collected data," "provided and cared for study patients", "participated in writing or technical editing of the manuscript").

Because acknowledgment may imply endorsement by acknowledged individuals of a study's data and conclusions, authors are advised to ask for explicit permission to be acknowledged from all acknowledged individuals.

### **Cover Letter**

Authors must submit a cover letter with their submission that includes the following information:

1. A statement confirming that all the authors have read the final version of the manuscript and agreed to submit it to the journal. (Do not submit unless this is true.)
2. A statement confirming that the manuscript has not been published previously and that it is not currently being reviewed for publication by another journal. (Do not submit unless true.)
3. A statement explaining how the manuscript fits into the journal's Aims & Scope. This statement should also briefly identify at least one of the empirical research methods and analysis listed in the Aims & Scope, or specify one that is not listed.
4. The full name, institution, and email address of at least one author of the manuscript who is currently a member of the Religious Research Association, OR; A statement acknowledging the authors agree to pay the fee for the manuscript to be peer-reviewed (if it is initially assessed to be potentially suitable for publication), if no author of the manuscript is a member of the Religious Research Association. The fee is not waived for any other reason.

### **Sample Letter 1**

Dear Editor:

All the authors have read the final version of the manuscript and agreed to submit it to *Review of Religious Research*. The manuscript has not been published previously, and it is not currently being reviewed for publication by another journal.

The authors think the manuscript fits within the topical areas of Religious Leaders and Religion & Civics because it investigates the ways that people in faith-based organizations draw upon religious language in volunteer recruitment efforts. This is an empirical research study that utilized surveys to collect data for the quantitative analysis and in-depth interviews to inform the qualitative analysis.

[Name of Corresponding Author] of the [Affiliated University or Organization] (email@university.edu) is the corresponding author of the manuscript and a current member of the Religious Research Association.

Sincerely,

[Name of Corresponding Author]

### **Sample Letter 2**

Dear Editor:

All the authors have read the final version of the manuscript and agreed to submit it to *Review of Religious Research*. The manuscript has not been published previously, and it is not currently being reviewed for publication by another journal.

The authors think the manuscript fits within the topic area of Religious Beliefs because it reviews how scholars attend to Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religious texts in published research. Although the manuscript does not appear to fit into any of the methods listed in the Aims & Scope, the authors think the manuscript is consistent with the Aims & Scope because the study employs bibliometric techniques to inform a quantitative and qualitative analysis of existing publications.

As none of the authors currently belong to the Religious Research Association, [Name of Corresponding Author] agrees to pay the processing fee for the manuscript to be peer-reviewed if it is initially assessed to be potentially suitable for publication via the Religious Research Association [website](#) (payment will be confirmed with the RRA before proceeding with peer review).

Sincerely,

[Name of Corresponding Author]