



Editorial: Introducing New Reporting Guidelines to Address Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Antiracism, and Accessibility: Implementation at *The Journal of Pain*

In my opening editorial concerning my vision, goals, and priorities for *The Journal of Pain*, I described my goal to promote diversity and inclusion in pain science.⁸ I am ready to implement a key strategy beginning January 1, 2023, which involves new journal policies focused on conducting, reporting, and interpreting the science of pain in more equitable ways. I have had the privilege to collaborate with members of the Antiracism Coalition in Pain Research (ACTION-PR) and Mark Jensen (former Editor-in-Chief) around addressing inclusion, diversity, and antiracism in the journal.

As described in their companion editorial in this issue,³ ACTION-PR is committed to equity in reporting and developed a set of guidelines to promote equity, increase rigor, and transparency. For more information on the work of ACTION-PR and their predecessors, the reader is referred to their three-part series on Confronting Racism in Pain Research published in the journal last year.^{4,6,7} As part of ACTION-PR's efforts, they have developed the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Antiracism, and Accessibility (IDEAA) guidelines. *The Journal of Pain* will be the first journal to adopt these guidelines which provide a checklist of items to guide authors, reviewers, and editors in promoting equity and transparency in their reporting. The full reporting guideline and explanatory document will appear in a subsequent focus article in *The Journal of Pain*. The purpose of this editorial is to outline several new instructions and procedures for authors, reviewers, and editors that will support adoption of the IDEAA guidelines.

Authors should review our new author instructions for manuscript submission on the *Journal of Pain* website, <https://www.jpain.org/content/authorinfo>, which have been recently updated, and include a description of the IDEAA principles and link to the explanatory document. The ACTION-PR group is also working on supporting educational materials (eg, webinars) to increase understanding of specific IDEAA principles and how to optimally address them in manuscript submissions to increase

equitable and transparent reporting. Within the submission portal, authors will answer a series of questions concerning how they addressed IDEAA principles in their manuscript submission (eg, use language that minimizes bias, include representative samples, and report their characteristics). Most of these principles pertain to all submissions across all research types but there are several additional questions specific to eligibility, participation, and recruitment of human participants.

Reviewers should also become familiar with the IDEAA guidelines by reviewing the website and accompanying materials. After a reviewer accepts a review invitation, the email confirmation will include a reviewer checklist with recommendations for increasing fairness in peer review and promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and antiracism into the evaluation of manuscripts. Given our different backgrounds, training, and worldviews, certain biases (conscious and unconscious) may influence the scientific review process and are important to identify. Therefore, the first step in the checklist asks reviewers to think deeply about biases and assumptions that they may hold (eg, knowing the author's gender, racial identity, or country of origin) that can influence their evaluation of manuscripts. We include a link to a bias awareness tool to help reviewers understand and challenge common biases and assumptions (see, ¹ OpenReviewers Bias Reflection Guide).

When reviewers provide their manuscript review and evaluation, they will answer a new rating question about the quality of the equitable and transparent reporting in the manuscript. In their written critiques, we encourage reviewers to provide constructive feedback to help authors improve their reporting (eg, providing suggestions for how to make their language more inclusive, requesting inclusion of demographic variables in their reporting, or providing a statement of why they were not able to collect certain demographic variables). In evaluating manuscripts, we ask reviewers to consider representativeness and inclusivity of study samples and their influence on the interpretation of study findings and provide suggestions to authors. ACTION-PR hopes to offer future training opportunities to reviewers regarding implementing IDEAA principles at scientific meetings and through webinars.

Our team of Associate Editors will also undergo training in the IDEAA principles and how to weigh the quality of

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the equitable and transparent reporting in their editorial decisions. As a group, we will create strategies for screening manuscripts on these principles prior to peer review.

Several other journal and editorial strategies will support and promote inclusion, equity, diversity, and anti-racism. The journal has updated its manuscript classifications (keywords) to better reflect the science of pain inequities, disparities, and anti-racism, with an opportunity to now identify reviewer expertise in these areas and document articles focused on these topics. For the first time, the Journal has representation of women as editors, and has greatly expanded inclusion of women, people of color, and early career scientists on the editorial board. This increased representation provides a greater range of perspectives and helps promote inclusion and diversity in scholarship and publishing. We will also kick off our inaugural cohort of editorial fellows to promote diversity in the editorial leadership pipeline. These fellows start in January and will begin to shadow and receive mentorship from the editorial team on the roles of Associate Editor and Editor-in-Chief. The journal has also signed on to follow the International Committee on Medical Journal Editor (ICMJE,⁵) recommendations, <https://www.icmje.org/> for the conduct, reporting, and publication of scholarly work, which are also consistent with IDEAA principles.

As Editor-in-Chief, I am committed to following up on these initial actions and plan to conduct periodic reviews of metrics that will allow us to understand how implementation of the IDEAA guidelines is working and where improvements are needed. In early 2023, *The Journal of Pain* will be included in self-report diversity data collection about race, ethnicity, and gender for authors and reviewers as part of the larger efforts of The Joint Commitment for Action on Inclusion and Diversity in Publishing, <https://www.rsc.org/new-perspectives/talent/joint-commitment-for-action-inclusion-and-diversity-in-publishing/> in which Elsevier is a participating publisher. Soon, we will have data specific to the journal on diversity among authors and reviewers that

can help us better understand where change is needed and how our efforts at increasing diversity are working. We will also review adherence to IDEAA principles in manuscripts to understand where challenges lie. These periodic reviews may lead to revisions in the author guidelines and new strategies for implementation.

Not all authors and reviewers will see value in these guidelines, and some may view them as burdensome or unnecessary. For these individuals, I encourage an exploration of the history of pain science to learn about the longstanding racist, sexist, and exclusionary viewpoints that have led to profound inequities in pain care (see ^{2,6}). Without recognizing and being aware of this history, authors and reviewers may not appreciate and understand their own role to ensure that injustices are not repeated. Authors and reviewers should recognize that the IDEAA principles elevate the quality of their science and ultimately its impact. Our goal is to improve the rigor, significance, and impact of the research reported in *The Journal of Pain*, by helping to prepare, support, and equip authors, reviewers, and editors as they move toward adopting the IDEAA principles.

We are uniquely positioned for positive change in addressing pain inequities across the pain scientific community. Editors from multiple pain journals have banded together to promote equity, inclusion and diversity in pain science (see forthcoming editorial). *The Journal of Pain* will address conducting, reporting, and interpreting the science of pain in more equitable ways by adopting the IDEAA principles. We hope that other journals will also adopt the IDEAA principles. We look forward to collaborating closely with the entire scientific community to make monumental shifts in the equitable and transparent conduct and reporting of pain science.

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