



Author Instructions for the Axis Community Research Journal (ACRJ)

Submission Overview

The Axis Community Research Journal (ACRJ) invites original scholarly submissions that align with our interdisciplinary focus on community engagement, public health, social sciences, and applied humanities. We prioritize research that demonstrates tangible community impact, employs participatory methodologies, and addresses real-world problems. We accept the following manuscript types: Original Research Articles, Comprehensive Review Articles, Case Studies, Short Communications, and Perspectives/Commentaries. All submissions must be original, not previously published, and not under active consideration by another publication.

Submission Process

Manuscripts must be submitted exclusively through the online submission system on the ACRJ website at <https://acrj.axisacademics.com>. The corresponding author must register for an account or log in to an existing profile to complete the structured submission process. To ensure the integrity of our double-blind peer review, the manuscript file must be fully anonymized. All author names, affiliations, acknowledgments, and identifying references must be removed from the main text and provided separately in the designated metadata fields during submission. Supplementary files, such as community engagement protocols, interview guides, or data-sharing statements, can be uploaded as separate documents.

Language and Formatting

- **Language:** Manuscripts must be submitted in clear, academic English. Authors may use either British or American English conventions, but usage must be consistent throughout the document.
- **Font and Spacing:** The manuscript text should be prepared using Times New Roman, 12-point font, with justified alignment and single line spacing.
- **Tables and Figures:** All tables, figures, and images should be embedded within the text at their appropriate points of discussion. They must be of high resolution and include a concise, descriptive legend.

Manuscript Types and Structural Requirements

1. **Original Research Article (2,500–4,000 words):** Must present complete findings from a substantive study. Includes a structured abstract (max 250 words: Background, Methods, Results, Conclusion).
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Conclusion), Introduction, Methods (with explicit detail on community engagement processes), Results, Discussion, and Conclusion. A minimum of 20 references is required.

2. **Review Article (3,000–4,500 words):** Should provide a comprehensive, critical synthesis of a defined topic relevant to the journal's scope. Requires an unstructured abstract (max 250 words). Systematic and scoping reviews are encouraged.
3. **Case Study (1,500–2,500 words):** Focuses on an in-depth analysis of a specific community project, intervention, or partnership. Includes Abstract, Introduction, Case Description, Analysis/Discussion (highlighting lessons learned and transferable insights), and Conclusion.
4. **Short Communication (1,000–1,500 words):** For preliminary findings, methodological innovations, or focused commentaries. Includes an unstructured abstract (150 words max), a concise narrative, and up to 10 references.
5. **Perspectives / Commentary (800–1,200 words):** For opinion pieces, policy analyses, or reflective essays on contemporary issues in community-engaged scholarship. No abstract is required; a succinct reference list is expected.

Title, Keywords, and Abstract

- **Title:** Must be concise, informative, and clearly reflect the manuscript's content, including key variables, population/community context, and geographical setting where relevant.
- **Keywords:** Provide 5-8 keywords that accurately represent the manuscript's core themes. Terms should reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the work (e.g., participatory action research, community-based participatory research, health equity, social determinants, collective impact).
- **Abstract:** As specified per manuscript type above. For Original Research, the structured abstract must clearly state the community's role in the research.

Ethical and Methodological Reporting

- **Ethics:** For research involving human participants, a statement confirming approval by a relevant Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Ethics Committee, along with details of informed consent, is mandatory. Manuscripts based on community partnerships should include a statement describing the nature of the collaboration and how benefits and credit were shared.

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- **Units and Abbreviations:** Use the International System of Units (SI). Define all non-standard abbreviations at first use. Use generic names for all interventions; proprietary names may be included in parentheses if necessary.

Tables, Figures, and References

- **Tables and Figures:** Each must be numbered consecutively, cited in the text, and include a self-explanatory legend. Authors are responsible for securing and providing proof of permission to reproduce any copyrighted material.
- **References:** Please adhere strictly to the **Vancouver reference style** (numbered, sequential citation). References should be numbered in the order they first appear in the text. For journal titles, use standard abbreviations as listed in Index Medicus/PubMed. For articles with more than six authors, list the first six followed by 'et al.'

Important Notes

- ACRJ adheres to the ethical principles outlined in the ICMJE Recommendations.
- The journal operates under an Open Access model using a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license, allowing for broad sharing and reuse with appropriate attribution.
- Authors retain copyright of their published work.
- For any submission queries, please contact the editorial office at acrj.axisacademics@gmail.com.

Manuscript Structure and Formatting Guidelines

Structured Abstract:

All Original Research Articles must include a structured abstract of no more than 250 words, divided into the following sections: **Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusion**. The Methods section should briefly indicate the study design and the nature of community participation. For Review Articles and other submission types, please refer to the specific abstract requirements in the "Manuscript Types" section of the full Author Instructions.

Main Text (IMRAD Format for Original Research):

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- **Introduction:** Clearly state the research problem, its significance to the community or field, and the study's specific objectives. Provide a concise review of the relevant literature, highlighting the gap the research aims to fill.
- **Methods:** Describe the study design, setting, and participants/community partners in detail. Explicitly outline the community engagement approach or participatory methodology. Detail data collection and analysis procedures with sufficient clarity to permit replication. A statement on ethical approvals (including from community review boards, if applicable) and informed consent/assent must be included.
- **Results:** Present the findings in a logical sequence using text, tables, and figures. Report descriptive and inferential statistics appropriately. Highlight the most significant data related to both research outcomes and the process of community engagement.
- **Discussion:** Interpret the results, avoiding repetition of data. Compare and contrast your findings with existing literature. Discuss the implications of your research for community practice, policy, and future participatory scholarship. Acknowledge the study's limitations, including any challenges related to the community partnership.
- **Conclusion:** Provide a succinct summary of the key findings, emphasizing their importance and potential impact for community stakeholders and the interdisciplinary fields ACRJ serves.

Ethical Considerations:

Manuscripts must comply with international ethical standards for research involving human or animal subjects. Evidence of approval by an authorized Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Ethics Committee is mandatory. For community-engaged research, authors should describe how ethical principles of respect, reciprocity, and justice were upheld in the partnership. All authors must disclose any potential conflicts of interest in a dedicated section.

References and Citations:

ACRJ uses the **Vancouver (numbered) citation style**. References must be numbered consecutively in the order they first appear in the text. The reference list should be comprehensive, accurate, and complete. Journal title abbreviations should conform to Index Medicus/PubMed style.

Additional Requirements:

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- **Figures and Tables:** Each must be numbered, cited sequentially in the text, and accompanied by a descriptive title and legend. Ensure all are of high quality and editable.
- **Supplementary Materials:** Files such as extended methodologies, community advisory board terms of reference, interview guides, or large datasets may be submitted as supplementary files for online publication alongside the article.

Review and Decision Process:

ACRJ employs a rigorous **double-blind peer-review process**. Manuscripts are evaluated based on their scholarly merit, methodological rigor, relevance to the journal's scope, clarity of presentation, and demonstrated community impact or engagement. Editorial decisions include Accept, Minor Revision, Major Revision, or Reject.

Publication Ethics:

ACRJ adheres to the highest standards of publication ethics as outlined by committees like COPE and the ICMJE Recommendations. We expect all authors to comply with policies on authorship, originality, data integrity, and conflict of interest disclosure.

Article Processing and Publication Fee Policy

Article Processing and Publication Fees:

The Axis Community Research Journal (ACRJ) is committed to disseminating research without financial barriers during submission. Therefore, **there are no fees for submission, editorial assessment, or the peer-review process.**

To support the sustainable operation of our open-access journal and cover essential costs associated with professional copyediting, XML typesetting, digital preservation, and online hosting, a **Publication Fee is applied only after a manuscript has been formally accepted.**

The fee structure is as follows:

- **Authors based in Pakistan:** PKR 25,000
- **International Authors:** USD 120

This fee is invoiced solely upon acceptance. If a manuscript is rejected at any stage, no charges will be incurred by the authors.

Open Access & Subscription Charges:

ACRJ is a fully **Open Access journal**. All published content is immediately and permanently freely

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available online for anyone to read, download, copy, and distribute under the terms of the **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license**. We do not charge any subscription or pay-per-view fees to readers.

Waiver Policy:

We firmly believe that a lack of funds should not prevent the publication of high-quality community-engaged research. ACRJ offers a **partial or full waiver** of the publication fee on a case-by-case basis for authors with genuine financial constraints. Priority is given to early-career researchers, authors from low- and middle-income countries, and unfunded community-based projects. To request a waiver, authors should contact the editorial office at **acrj.axisacademics@gmail.com** after receiving the acceptance notice, providing a brief justification.

Source of Funding and Competing Interests Disclosure

Source of Funding Disclosure:

Transparency in research funding is critical for maintaining trust. ACRJ requires all authors to explicitly disclose all sources of financial support for the work reported in their manuscript. This includes grant numbers and the full names of funding agencies. If the research received no specific funding, this must be stated as well. Reasons for this requirement include:

- **Academic Integrity:** It allows readers to assess the context of the research and identify any potential influences on the study design, execution, or interpretation.
- **Proper Acknowledgement:** It ensures appropriate credit is given to the organizations that enabled the research.
- **Field Mapping:** It assists in understanding funding landscapes for interdisciplinary and community-based research.

Competing Interests Disclosure:

All authors must also declare any financial (e.g., employment, consultancies, stock ownership) or non-financial (e.g., personal relationships, academic rivalries, community advocacy positions) competing interests that could be perceived as influencing the results or their interpretation. A statement confirming the presence or absence of such interests must be included in the manuscript.

We urge authors to view these disclosures as integral components of ethical scholarly practice, enhancing the credibility and reproducibility of published work.

Manuscript Preparation and Submission Requirements for ACRJ

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1. Originality and Prior Publication

The Axis Community Research Journal (ACRJ) considers only original manuscripts that have not been previously published in any form, in whole or in part, and are not under active consideration by any other publication. Submission implies the work is original and that all authors agree to its submission.

Plagiarism, including self-plagiarism (redundant publication), is strictly prohibited and will be screened for using appropriate software.

2. Formatting and Technical Specifications

- **Language:** All submissions must be in English. Authors may use either British or American English conventions but must apply one style consistently.
- **Font and Layout:** Manuscripts must be prepared using Times New Roman, 12-point font, with single line spacing and justified text alignment. Use italics for emphasis; underlining should be reserved for hyperlinks (URLs).
- **File Format:** Submit the main manuscript file in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) format.

3. Types of Manuscripts and Length Specifications

To accommodate the diverse nature of interdisciplinary and community-engaged research, ACRJ accepts the following article types:

- **Original Research Article:** Maximum 4,000 words (excluding the structured abstract and references). Presents complete findings from a primary study.
- **Review Article:** Maximum 4,500 words (excluding abstract and references). Provides a comprehensive, critical synthesis of a specific topic. Systematic and scoping reviews are encouraged.
- **Case Study:** Maximum 2,500 words with an unstructured abstract (150 words). Focuses on an in-depth analysis of a specific community project, partnership, or intervention, highlighting lessons learned.
- **Short Communication:** Maximum 1,500 words including a brief abstract. Suitable for preliminary findings, methodological innovations, or focused project reports.
- **Perspective / Commentary:** Maximum 1,200 words. For opinion pieces, policy analyses, or reflective essays on contemporary issues in community-engaged scholarship.

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- **Letter to the Editor:** Maximum 400 words for general commentary on matters relevant to the journal's scope, or 250 words in direct response to an article published in ACRJ within the preceding three months.

4. Abstract and Keywords

- **Abstract:** For Original Research Articles, provide a **structured abstract** (max 250 words) with the headings: **Background, Methods, Results, Conclusion**. For Review Articles and Case Studies, an **unstructured abstract** (max 250 words) is required. Other article types should include a brief summary.
- **Keywords:** Provide 5-8 keywords that accurately capture the manuscript's core themes, emphasizing the interdisciplinary and community-focused nature of the work (e.g., participatory action research, social determinants, health equity, community development).

5. Manuscript Structure

For Original Research Articles, follow the standard IMRAD structure:

- **Introduction:** State the problem, community context, research objectives, and significance.
- **Methods:** Detail study design, community engagement process, participants, data collection, analysis, and ethical approvals. Sufficient detail must be provided for replicability.
- **Results:** Present findings clearly and logically using text, tables, and figures.
- **Discussion:** Interpret results, relate to existing literature, discuss implications for practice/policy, acknowledge limitations (including partnership dynamics), and suggest future directions.
- **Conclusion:** Provide a concise summary of the main findings and their importance.

6. References

Adhere strictly to the **Vancouver (numbered) citation style**. Number references consecutively in the order they appear in the text. The reference list must be complete and accurate. For journal titles, use standard abbreviations as per Index Medicus/PubMed.

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7. Figures and Tables

All figures (charts, graphs, photographs) and tables must be numbered sequentially, cited within the text, and embedded at the appropriate points. Each must include a concise, descriptive title and legend. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to reproduce any copyrighted material.

Online Submission Process

- **Submission Portal:** Manuscripts must be submitted electronically via the ACRJ online submission system at <https://acrj.axisacademics.com>. The corresponding author is responsible for the submission and must provide complete contact information.
- **Anonymization:** For double-blind review, ensure the manuscript file contains no identifying author information (names, affiliations, acknowledgments). These details must be entered separately in the submission system's metadata fields.
- **Ethical Statements:** The manuscript must include statements on:
 - Ethics approval (IRB/ERC) and informed consent for human subjects research.
 - The nature of community partnership and benefit-sharing, if applicable.
 - Disclosure of all potential conflicts of interest for all authors.
- **Data Sharing Statement:** Authors are encouraged to include a statement on the availability of supporting data, in alignment with ACRJ's commitment to research transparency.

Publication Fees and Waiver Policy

- **Submission and Peer Review Charges:** ACRJ charges **no fees** for manuscript submission, initial editorial processing, or the peer-review process.
- **Article Publication Fee (APC):** To support the sustainable operation of our open-access platform, a publication fee is levied **only upon formal acceptance** of a manuscript.
 - **Authors based in Pakistan:** PKR 30,000
 - **International Authors:** USD 150
- **Waiver Policy:** ACRJ offers a partial or full waiver of the APC to authors with genuine financial constraints, ensuring that economic barriers do not impede the dissemination of valuable research. Requests must be made to the editorial office

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(acrj.axisacademics@gmail.com) post-acceptance and include a brief justification. Priority is given to early-career researchers, unfunded community-based projects, and authors from low-income countries.

- **Review, Decision, and Publication Process**

- **Peer Review:** ACRJ employs a rigorous **double-blind peer-review process**. Manuscripts are evaluated by at least two independent experts based on originality, methodological soundness, significance, clarity, and ethical conduct.
- **Editorial Decision:** Based on reviewer recommendations, the editorial team will decide to: Accept, Request Minor Revisions, Request Major Revisions, or Reject the manuscript.
- **Publication:** Accepted manuscripts undergo professional copyediting and typesetting. Authors will review proofs before final publication. Articles are published online on a rolling basis and compiled into an annual volume.

- **Expenses And Financial Support**

The requested financial support is required to meet the essential operational and quality-assurance needs of the publisher's scholarly journals, which operate as open-access platforms managed through the Open Journal Systems (OJS). These funds are utilized to administer rigorous double-blind peer-review processes, including coordination and honoraria for independent reviewers, and to ensure professional copyediting, typesetting, and proofreading of accepted manuscripts in accordance with international publishing standards. Additional expenses include plagiarism detection and research integrity checks, website hosting, system maintenance, and ongoing technical support necessary for secure and uninterrupted journal operations. Financial resources are also required for editorial management and administrative handling by editorial boards, limited printing and dissemination for regulatory and institutional purposes, and routine operational costs such as banking, communication, and official correspondence. This financial support functions as a cost-recovery mechanism to sustain publication quality, ethical standards, and editorial independence while ensuring consistent operations and compliance with HEC requirements across all journals.

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These guidelines are designed to ensure a transparent, efficient, and standardized publication process. For further assistance, authors are encouraged to visit our website or contact the editorial office.

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