

Author Submission Guidelines for Registered Reports

Stage 1 Manuscript Submission

Submission Requirements

Authors considering submission of a Registered Report are encouraged (but not required) to contact the editors regarding the suitability of a study under this mechanism, given that the Registered Report represents just one submission option at Stress and Health. Likely candidates for a Registered Report might include studies that have already been thoroughly reviewed as grant proposals or thesis/dissertation projects.

Registered Reports are submitted using the Stress and Health online portal at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/smi>. Authors using this mechanism should select “Registered Report” from the drop down menu of all manuscript types. Registered Report submissions must also be accompanied by a cover letter including the following details:

- 1) A statement identifying whether data to be used have been used in any other research study and if so how.
- 2) A statement confirming that all human participants approvals and other required support (e.g. funding, facilities) have been secured.
- 3) *For newly proposed original research*, a statement that data collection will commence immediately upon receipt of a conditional acceptance and an anticipated timeline for completion of the study. *For proposed research using archival data sources*, confirm that data analyses have not been and will not be conducted until receipt of a conditional acceptance.
- 4) A conflict of interest statement, detailing any financial or personal relationships that may bias their work, or a declaration that they have no conflicts of interest to disclose.
- 5) A statement confirming that, following Stage 1 in principle acceptance, the authors agree to register their approved protocol on the Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io/>) or other recognised repository, either publicly or under private embargo until submission of the Stage 2 manuscript. Accepted protocols can be quickly and easily registered using a tailored mechanism for Registered Reports on the Open Science Framework: <https://osf.io/rr/>

Review Criteria

The initial Stage 1 submission will be evaluated based on:

- 1) the significance of the research question(s) and potential contribution of findings to knowledge;
- 2) the logic, rationale and plausibility of the proposed hypotheses;
- 3) the rigor of the proposed methodology, design, and statistical analysis (e.g., considering relevant threats to internal, external, construct, and statistical conclusion validity);
- 4) the extent to which the methodology is sufficiently clear such that an independent investigator could replicate the procedures and analysis; and
- 5) whether the authors provide a sufficiently clear and detailed description of the methods to prevent undisclosed flexibility in the experimental procedures or analysis pipeline;

Possible Decision Outcomes

Following peer review, a Registered Reports submission generally has the same set of possible outcomes as a regular submission:

- 1) Reject (either via editorial ‘desk’ rejection or after external peer review);
- 2) Revise and resubmit; or
- 3) Conditionally accept.

Rejections may be based on a number of different factors, such as likely contribution of the proposed research to the field, clarity of proposed hypotheses and methodology, and relevance of the manuscript with respect to the aims of the Journal. A manuscript may also simply be deemed not competitive with other papers submitted to *Stress and Health* and this does not imply that the proposal is not appropriate or potentially important, or that the results would not be informative or potentially useful if published in a different journal.

Requests for *major or minor revisions* may occur if the reviewers and/or action editor feel the proposal has considerable scientific merit, but requires additional information to fully assess its potential contribution. This might include additional theoretical justification for proposed hypotheses; greater methodological detail to clarify the research design, measures, etc.; and/or a more robust power analysis or description of the proposed statistical analyses.

A *conditional acceptance* is guaranteed publication upon the authors carrying out the research protocol exactly as proposed and drawing appropriate conclusions about the findings (see below for Stage 2 manuscript submission guidelines). Should the enacted study methodology deviate from the originally accepted research protocol, authors must contact the action editor immediately (prior to completion of data collection) to notify them of the modifications, however minor. Depending on the extent of the deviation, two outcomes may occur. For minor deviations, the conditional acceptance may be preserved with the deviation from protocol reported in the final manuscript. For major deviations, the authors may be asked to resubmit the proposal as a new submission.

Stage 2 Manuscript Submission

Submission Requirements

Upon completing the research as originally proposed and approved, authors submit the Stage 2 manuscript incorporating their Results, Discussion, and any additional Tables or Figures to the Stage 1 conditionally accepted manuscript. The manuscript must contain the URL of the approved Stage 1 protocol on the Open Science Framework or other recognised repository. If the protocol was registered under a private embargo then the embargo must be released and the protocol made fully public at the point of Stage 2 submission.

Stage 2 submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter including the following details:

- 1) A statement confirming that the research was carried out according to the originally approved Stage 1 protocol.
- 2) Any deviations from the original approved protocol must be clearly outlined and justified in the cover letter and manuscript. This includes (but is not limited to) any deviations with respect to: research design, sample size, sampling strategy, and statistical analyses.
- 3) A clear statement of the page number of the manuscript containing the URL of the approved Stage 1 protocol on the Open Science Framework or other recognised repository.

Review Criteria

The completed Stage 2 submission will be evaluated based on:

- 1) Whether the data and sample actually collected and used provided a good test of the stated hypotheses (e.g., no major floor or ceiling effects).
- 2) Whether the introduction, rationale and stated hypotheses are the same as the initially approved Registered Report submission (this is required).
- 3) Whether the authors adhered to the registered experimental procedures. Any deviations must be clearly noted and justified.

- 4) Whether all pre-registered proposed analyses were conducted as originally proposed and reported.
- 5) Whether any unregistered exploratory analyses added by the authors are justified, methodologically sound, and informative. Note: authors are free to include additional *post hoc* data analyses that were not registered the original Registered Report submission. However, these must be reported in a separate sub-section of the Results entitled, "Post Hoc Analyses and Results".
- 6) The quality and appropriateness of the discussion section. A good deal of attention will be focused here.

Please note that the statistical significance, novelty, or perceived importance of findings will not factor into editorial decisions at this stage.

Possible Decision Outcomes

Following peer review, a Stage 2 Registered Report can have one of the following outcomes:

- 1) Reject;
- 2) Revise and resubmit; or
- 3) Accept.

Conditionally accepted manuscripts may be *rejected* for publication at this stage if the Editors consider any of the following conditions to be met:

- The results were unable to test the authors' proposed hypotheses by failing to provide a good test of the stated hypotheses (e.g., occurrence of major floor or ceiling effects)
- The authors altered the introduction, rationale, or hypotheses, as originally approved in the conditionally accepted submission
- The authors failed to adhere closely to the registered experimental procedures
- Any *post hoc* (unregistered) analyses were either unjustified, insufficiently caveated, or overly dominant in shaping the authors' conclusions.
- The authors' conclusions were not justified given the data obtained
- The discussion section is inappropriate or of poor quality.