

## **Multi-Journal Special Issue (MJSI) “Advancing the Interface between Research and Practice in Sustainable Development”**

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In a world threatened by existing problems like working poverty, income inequality, racial injustice, human rights violations, political instabilities, gender inequities, pandemics, and housing water and food shortages, academic silos are a luxury/vanity that none of us can afford. This is especially true as climate change threatens to exacerbate these issues. Psychology, Political Science, and many other disciplines and professions are relatively fragmented, and not yet focused on sustainability in the deeper sense of this concept.

This project calls for journals to enter an alliance where they all agree to produce a Call-for-Papers, oriented towards articulating advances in the interface between research and practice in their area, tailored towards the aspects of Sustainable Development most relevant for that journal and its constituency. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its Common Agenda (see <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> and <https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda>) for achieving these are used as the framework for integrating area specific advances into a more comprehensive global network of communication and collaboration. The 10 (out of 17 total) SDGs defined as relevant to social protection systems (see page 29 of Common Agenda, extracted as a graphic below) form a good starting point of SDGs to be emphasized for the CFPs. But individual journal may use any of the SDGs if they so choose.

We recommend that each journal select at least one (or two) SDGs plus SDG 17, “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development” in its tailored Call for Papers (CFP).

Each journal decides what SDG(s) to focus on (and at what level of detail), and they set their own deadlines, generally oriented towards producing a Special Issue (SI) in late 2024 or early 2025, but with considerable latitude in details of content and scheduling. The coordinators will facilitate communications between the various editorial teams to ensure the project has overall cohesion and coordination. Once a journal agrees in principle to join the alliance, it should begin working on its CFP and a timeline. Initial launch of CFPs is July 2023, but this will be an on-going process as more journals join the alliance. SI journal editors will be expected to meet online (or in person should chance allow it) as required (around 3 total) for optimal coordination and for relationships building/information sharing between editors.

All CFPs should frame an attempt to go beyond “business as usual” and highlight innovative, effective, and/or aspirational/inspirational interfaces between research, theory, and practice. We are aware that it may be difficult for some of the CFPs to attract submissions, so we encourage the SIs to center on the articulation of practices. They could also emphasize what types of relationships work best between practitioners and researchers. Non-conventional papers are encouraged (e.g. interviews and dialogues, websites, etc) but not required. Cutting edge evaluations that bring something new to the table theoretically or practically are also encouraged (but not required).

Given that most journals these days are highly electronic in their publishing practices, using early view and sharing early acceptances across journals will be encouraged to enhance information sharing and relationships building. In the event a given journal does not receive enough submissions to produce a SI, a smaller Special Forum would be fine. If there is even one good publication

accepted for a given journal, it could still be impactful through promotion via the alliance and its communication and coordination as described below.

Three devices are proposed to generate atypical outcomes. First, we will include both international journals and local journals in this alliance, with a goal to facilitate conversations between academics, especially journal editors and those at the forefront of interfacing between theory and practice in both developing and developed countries. For local journals, we support submissions in either English or the national language (we consider dual language submissions a positive, not a negative), with the expectation that the journal SI editors would write an English language introduction to the SI enabling international audiences to partake of the outputs. Second, the coordinators plan to put together a podcast series where we interview featured researchers and practitioners. We hope to have the support of the journal SI editors in this- all that is required is a good microphone and willingness to invest some time and effort. We aim to do this as early as possible in the publication process, thus accelerating conversations and sharing of results. Third, we anticipate using social media to link the SIs, thus using digital infrastructure to enhance interconnectedness between sponsoring organizations. How to do this best will be a topic of discussion between the editors. Finally, all SI journal editors would be expected to contribute to a final summary paper highlighting and synthesizing inputs from all the alliance journals.

Each journal should adhere to its own standards in reviewing submissions for the SI. To signal the urgency of highlighting innovative practices in the CFP, we propose that the following paragraph be added as guidance to all reviewers for papers in the MJSI: “You are reviewing a paper for Multi-journal Special Issue (MJSI) on Advancing the interface between research and practice in sustainable development. We ask that you focus more attention on evaluating whether there are innovative, effective, and/or aspirational/inspirational interfaces between research, theory, and practice in this paper, rather than focusing more on traditional academic details.”

Page 29, Our Common Agenda (United Nations publication, 2021)

**SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS ARE CRITICAL TO ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

