

PUBLISHING ETHICS



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Should publishers use online submission systems to harvest authors' responses to diversity, equity and inclusion?

J.A. Teixeira da Silva*Independent researcher, Kagawa-ken, Japan*✉ jaimetex@yahoo.com

Abstract. As companies advance policies pertaining to social reform, including diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), the issue of protocol, and how those objectives are being achieved, invites debate. In particular, methods that infringe on authors' rights or freedoms need to be scrutinized. Online submission systems (OSSs) are typically – and often exclusively – used by authors for submitting their papers. The present paper documents the use of OSSs by 33 journals published by Elsevier to harvest authors' responses to issues and policies related to DEI. This is achieved via a mandatory survey prior to accessing the OSS. Here, a major concern is the violation of authors' rights due to the presence of a barrier to entry to the OSS, which prevents them from submitting a paper and thus contravenes a core principle of DEI. Results of an investigation into the transparency of Elsevier's 33 journals with regard to the same DEI principles that they require of their contributing authors revealed four main findings with regard to the gender diversity of their editorial boards: 1) in only six journals (18%) did 100% of the editors indicate their gender; 2) in 14 journals (42%), the editorial board page of the journal did not carry any statistics related to gender; 3) in five journals (15%), some editors preferred not to disclose their gender (in the case of *Discourse, Context & Media*, 33% of the responding editors preferred not to disclose their gender); 4) in all journals for which gender statistics were supplied (19, or 58%), none of the responding editors indicated a “non-binary or gender diverse” status. This paper suggests that Elsevier needs to revisit and reform its DEI policies related to editorial boards, as well as to rethink the current mandatory survey for authors using its journals' OSSs.

Keywords: indexed journals, imposed mandates, mandatory requirements, social reform, reputable publisher

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Должны ли используемые издателями онлайн-системы подачи статей собирать данные авторов для обеспечения разнообразия, равенства и инклюзивности?

Х. А. Тейшейра да Силва

Независимый исследователь, Кагава, Япония

✉ jaimetex@yahoo.com

Резюме. Все чаще компании продвигают политику, связанную с социальными реформами и ориентированную на разнообразие, равенство и инклюзивность (DEI: diversity, equity and inclusion), при этом встает вопрос о протоколах и способах достижения этих целей. Особое внимание, в частности, необходимо уделить методам, которые могут ущемлять права и свободы авторов. Онлайн-системы OSS (online submission systems) в основном используются авторами для подачи статей на рассмотрение в журналы. В настоящей статье подтверждается использование систем OSS 33 журналами издательства Elsevier для сбора ответов авторов на вопросы, связанные с разнообразием, равенством и инклюзивностью (DEI), что осуществляется посредством обязательного анкетирования для получения доступа к системе OSS. Серьезную озабоченность вызывает нарушение прав авторов через создание барьера для доступа к системе OSS и, как следствие, невозможность подачи статьи, что противоречит одному из основных принципов DEI. Исследование прозрачности 33 журналов издательства Elsevier на предмет соблюдения тех же принципов DEI, которых они требуют от своих авторов, позволило сделать четыре основных вывода относительно гендерного разнообразия редакционных коллегий этих журналов: 1) только в шести журналах (18 %) 100 % редакторов указали свой пол; 2) в 14 журналах (42 %) страница редакционной коллегии журнала не содержала никаких статистических данных, относящихся к полу; 3) в пяти журналах (15 %) часть редакторов предпочли не раскрывать свой пол, а в журнале *Discourse, Context and Media* эта цифра достигла 33 %; 4) во всех журналах, для которых предоставлялась гендерная статистика (19 журналов, или 58 %), ни один из ответивших редакторов не выбрал в вопросе о гендерной принадлежности вариант «небинарный или гендерно-разнообразный». В настоящей статье высказывается мысль о том, что издательству Elsevier необходимо изменить свою политику в области DEI, касающуюся редакционных коллегий, а также пересмотреть существующее обязательное анкетирование авторов с использованием системы OSS.

Ключевые слова: индексируемые журналы, навязанные требования, обязательные требования, социальная реформа, авторитетное издательство

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Для цитирования: Тейшейра да Силва Х.А. Должны ли используемые издателями онлайн-системы подачи статей собирать данные авторов для обеспечения разнообразия, равенства и инклюзивности? *Научный редактор и издатель.* 2022;7(2):210–220. <https://doi.org/10.24069/SEP-22-43>

Introduction: DEI policies in wider society

The world in general, and academic publishing in particular, is currently in a highly transformative state. Since not all members of a group or society are necessarily in agreement with certain transformative policies, excessive or radical social reforms or transformations introduce the risk of conflicts, resulting in possible backlash or polarization [1]. Therefore, a mindful mentality is needed to accommodate sometimes sensitive or radical social policies [2]. One of the most socially polarizing issues in recent years, which pits socially left-leaning liberals against right-leaning conservatives, is commonly known as social diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) [3]. This debate is particularly acute in the US, where such liberal race- and gender-related policies may clash with conservative cultural values [4]. While proponents in the former group may advocate for the rights of minorities using DEI policies, the latter group may argue that such policies are excessive, aggressive, or coercive, i.e., that they might infringe upon their own rights and/or freedoms of choice or expression. Thus, one reason for the clash of social values caused by DEI policies results from an inability of such advocates to accommodate divergent views [5; 6].

DEI policies in academia

While the present paper does not claim to resolve these social issues, nor does a detailed consideration or debate of DEI policies fall within its scope, the debate can be noted as already being firmly entrenched within the realm of academic publishing [7]. Efforts to find organizational solutions to establish DEI principles in science and medicine, as well as education and research generally, are being actively sought and proactively implemented [8]. One of the reasons why this is so is because many of the most prestigious scientific publishers, including for-profit publishers, tend to be based in the US, UK or EU. Consequently, they are under pressure to exercise DEI policies as part of their socially-responsible commitments and business structure, as well as collectively agreed procedures in place to achieve them. This is suggested by a Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) initiative to which 53 organizations have aligned themselves, including at least 15,000 journals [9].

Many, if not all, of these journals and publishers are members of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) [10]. However, despite COPE having a diversity policy for journal editors [11], its senior management does not seem to apply those principles to itself [12].

In academia, the literature related to DEI is increasing, with some journals even dedicating special issues to this topic. Thus, it appears that journals are serving as vehicles for social reform policies that their publishers and/or financiers (such as stock-holders) would like to implement. By association, editors do the bidding of publishers, suggesting that they might not be aware of the extent of their active participation in a social experiment or objective whose scope is more significant than a mere exploration of an academic theme. Finally, at the lowest end of the feeding chain, and yet the most populous group, are the authors, who are desperate to survive in an academic culture that is increasingly defined by its “publish or perish” paradigm [13]. Consequently, many authors are likely to be happy to oblige editors' or publishers' requests, especially the DEI initiative [9], even if some of those requests may in fact be demands, i.e., mandatory clauses that might infringe on their rights or their freedoms of choice, or that might clash with their own moral or value systems, especially aspects related to culture, race, gender and/or beliefs [14].

Online submission systems in the academic publishing workflow

It is within this context, in this paper, that the issue of online submission systems (OSSs) is raised. The most prominent and largest (by volume and annual profit) publishers, many of which are COPE members [10], tend to use an OSS for manuscript submission, but also as a centralized platform for peer review and editorial handling of manuscripts [15]. Typically, in such OSSs, authors, as well as peer reviewers and editors, create an account, sign in, then complete their desired tasks. There are typically two main such tasks for authors: 1) submitting a manuscript (initial submission or revisions); and 2) confirming authorship. When editors and publishers create accounts on behalf of authors, for whatever purpose (the most likely being to register them as potential peer reviewers), this

may represent not only a violation of authors' privacy and rights, but such actions may even involve an unethical or unprofessional element, since prior permission and/or approval was not explicitly obtained from authors for this purpose [16]. Despite this, to the author's knowledge, no such debate by COPE or its members exists. This may be due to the tendency for authors to function as an exploited essential element of the publishing ecosystem within the realm of non-remunerated peer review [17].

Excluding Open Journal Systems [18], the two most prominent or widely used OSSs or workflow management systems currently in use by a wide swathe of COPE member journals and publishers are Editorial Manager®, owned by Aries Systems Corporation [19], and ScholarOne, owned by Clarivate [15; 20]. Both companies are based in the US where they are subjected to federal regulations or corporate laws related to company-related DEI policies [21].

It would therefore not be surprising if publishers and journals associated with these two companies came under pressure to fulfill company policies, including socially oriented ones related to DEI. It is at this specific junction that authors enter the cross-hairs of corporations' socially-responsible corporate policies. If one considers the powerful global portfolios of these companies and their investors – for example, Clarivate's shareholders [22] – then it is easy to appreciate that the potential author base, which would number in the tens of millions, if not more, would allow these companies and their shareholders to access a massively unique market, either for profit-making purposes, or for other forms of use or exploitation, including the promulgation of DEI policies. The receptivity to such policies can be (and typically is) established via surveys and questionnaires [23].

Evidence of abuse of online submission systems to advance DEI policies

The present paper presents some evidence to support the author's claim that OSSs can be abused by journals or publishers to advance DEI policies. In recent times (roughly in a four-month period between July and October of 2022), the author noted, either when trying to submit a paper or when requested to confirm authorship

(in a case where a co-author had submitted a paper), that login to Elsevier journals' OSSs was impossible without completing a survey related to DEI. Of note, this was not an active search for Elsevier journals that associated their OSS with this DEI survey, but was merely a passing observation associated with submissions by the author to these journals in this four-month period. The presence of such a compulsory survey was observed in 33 Elsevier journals (Table 1). In other words, it was mandatory (i.e., the author was forced) to complete this DEI-related questionnaire (Fig. 1), which was identical for all 33 journals, in order to complete submission to these journals (most common), to renew an access password, or to confirm authorship. In essence, whether an author wants to or not, irrespective of whether they agree with the Elsevier DEI policies, they are forced to complete this survey in order to complete the submission process associated with their paper (or other functions that require access to the journal's OSS). In my opinion, this comprises a somewhat imposed and coercive means of obtaining authors' opinions about DEI. It is also a highly invasive way of freely harvesting data through these Elsevier journals' OSSs. I also believe that authors' fundamental rights are being violated with this OSS-based DEI campaign. Of note, the head office of Elsevier's parent company RELX PLC (formerly Reed Elsevier) is based in London, UK.

In order to investigate the transparency of the journals with regard to the same DEI principles that they require of their contributing authors, I sampled 33 journals published by Elsevier with regard to the stated (or not) gender diversity of their editorial boards.

The following results of the sample are detailed in Table 1: 1) In only six journals (18%) did 100% of the editors indicate their gender; 2) in 14 journals (42%), the editorial board page of the journal did not present any statistics related to gender; 3) in five journals (15%), some editors preferred not to disclose their gender (in the case of Discourse, Context & Media, 33% of the responding editors preferred not to disclose their gender); 4) in all journals for which gender statistics were supplied (19, or 58%), none of the responding editors indicated a “non-binary or gender diverse” status.

A

Registration Questions

Required Questions

Please respond to any questions below and click Continue:

Help us to advance gender diversity, inclusion, and equity in research. **Your response is required.** Click the link to record your answer.

* [Elsevier's Diversity Data Collection](#)

<< Logout Continue >>

B

Elsevier is deeply committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive scientific community.

Your responses to these 3 questions will help us establish action plans and measure progress towards greater diversity, inclusion and equity. This data may be used to improve diversity across editorial processes but is otherwise analyzed and reported in aggregate. Your responses will not be visible or used when evaluating journal submissions.

i With which gender do you identify most?
Choose one option.

- ☐ Woman
☐ Man
☐ Non-binary or gender diverse
☐ I prefer not to disclose

ii What are your ethnic origins or ancestry?

Select all geographic areas from which your ancestors first originated.

- ☐ Western Europe (e.g., Greece, Sweden, United Kingdom)
☐ Eastern Europe (e.g., Hungary, Poland, Russia)
☐ North Africa (e.g., Egypt, Morocco, Sudan)
☐ Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa)
☐ West Asia / Middle East (e.g., Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia)
☐ South and Southeast Asia (e.g., India, Indonesia, Singapore)
☐ East and Central Asia (e.g., China, Japan, Uzbekistan)
☐ Pacific / Oceania (e.g., Australia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea)
☐ North America (Canada, United States)
☐ Central America and Caribbean (e.g., Jamaica, Mexico, Panama)
☐ South America (e.g., Brazil, Chile, Colombia)
☐ Self describe
☐ I prefer not to disclose

iii How would you identify yourself in terms of race?

Select all groups that apply to you.

- ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ Black
☐ Hispanic or Latino/a/x
☐ Indigenous (e.g., North American Indian Navajo, South American Indian Quechua, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander)
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ White
☐ Self describe
☐ I prefer not to disclose

C

Registration Questions

Required Questions

Please respond to any questions below and click Continue:

Help us to advance gender diversity, inclusion, and equity in research. **Your response is required.** Click the link to record your answer.

* [Elsevier's Diversity Data Collection](#)

<< Logout Continue >>

Fig. 1. Elsevier mandates that authors wanting to submit papers to some (33 in this case study) of its journals via their online submission systems (OSSs) first complete a mandatory questionnaire related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). Although “entry” is labelled as “Registration Questions” on the journals’ OSSs, this barrier to entry was observed when: a) registering for a journal to complete the submission of a paper; b) signing in to an already established account to complete the submission of a paper; c) signing in to an account (new or established) to confirm authorship of a paper submitted by a co-author. In all cases, the format and questions were identical, so only representative screenshots are provided. (A) The initial OSS barrier, where entry to the journal is barred unless the DEI questionnaire is completed, as evidenced by the inability to press the “Continue” button (red rectangle); the Elsevier “Non Solus” logo [24] – meaning not alone – appears momentarily (screenshot not included for proprietary reasons). (B) The survey essentially consists of three questions (i, ii, iii) in which a response must be provided in order to advance to the next question, and to eventually complete the questionnaire. (C) After receiving a note of thanks, authors then finally gain freedom to complete the submission of their paper (“Continue” button becomes activated (green rectangle)).

Discussion

The apparent use of OSSs by Elsevier for the purpose of gathering authors' opinions regarding DEI policies suggests it has expanded these platforms beyond their purported original purpose, namely to complete tasks associated with, or related to, manuscript submission and/or peer review. It is, nonetheless, a “smart” kill-two-birds-with-one-stone approach, since other methods, such as direct email campaigns, might appear more invasive or be equated with spamming. In order to obtain the same information, publishers could feasibly partner with established platforms such as ResearchGate to offer account-holders the possibility of completing similar surveys. However, in this case, in order to avoid raising a separate set of ethical questions and possible objections, participation should be voluntary and not interfere with authors' freedoms, nor hinder their ability to submit their academic papers.

As its currently stands, the present use by Elsevier of journal OSSs to fulfill corporate social responsibilities related to DEI seems invasive and thus academically inappropriate. Moreover, since such use may be seen to infringe on authors' rights and choices, it could cause reputational damage if a sufficient mass of academics disagreed with or protested this abuse of OSSs. Finally, even though the corresponding messaging may seem kind and invitational (“Help us to advance gender diversity, inclusion and equity in research”), or even noble-sounding (“Elsevier is deeply committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive scientific community”), a contrasting statement in boldface that appears on the top page of the OSS is somewhat abrupt, indicating that this participating is not optional (“Your response is required”) (Fig. 1), thus reducing the pleasant effect. This type of coercive language is additional evidence that points towards the gradual “militarization” of science and research by journals and publishers, in which rights and freedoms are either degraded or sacrificed for a stated “noble” cause (in this case, advancing knowledge about DEI policies), even in cases where the mental and psychological states of authors may be at risk [25]. In this particular case, authors are made to believe that their completion of this survey is contributing to a good or noble cause and/or socially responsible goal, when in fact, they are being forced to complete an unpaid

DEI-compliant responsibility of the company, which simultaneously involves a suppression of rights and freedoms associated with the process of submitting manuscripts. Despite this, during the survey, Elsevier assures authors that their responses will only be used for the exclusive purpose of establishing “action plans and measure progress towards greater diversity, inclusion and equity”, further assuring them that “responses will not be visible or used when evaluating journal submissions” (Fig. 1B).

In such a situation, what choices do submitting authors have? If they have a fundamental disagreement with either this potential abuse of OSSs or with any of the content of the survey, their only choice is to turn to another journal and publisher to submit their paper. However, that might be a painful choice if submitting the article to a preferred target journal is not possible. Alternatively, they could ignore the issue, grit their teeth, and simply complete the survey, suffering only irritation in the process. Or they could, in extreme cases, protest, call for a boycott [26], resign en masse from editorial boards [27], or otherwise exercise their right to disagree on social media or on other platforms. Despite this latter possibility, the author has not detected any Tweets or social media posts or blogs associated with this forced DEI-related survey associated with Elsevier journals, suggesting that academia is either very satisfied with being exploited in this manner, and having their rights impeded, or they are simply too busy or disinterested to take action, speak out, or protest.

Regarding the survey itself, it is unclear how exercising the option “I prefer not to disclose” would effectively advance Elsevier's corporate DEI policies. In the author's case, the exact same responses to the survey were provided 33 times within these four months (July to October, 2022), so it is unclear how the responses were calculated, weighed and compared with other authors' survey responses to ensure consistency and to provide a meaningful data-set. Thus, the accuracy of Elsevier's statistics related to this DEI survey are already questionable even though the results of these surveys are yet to be published. The DEI-related statistics for some of the journals indicated in Table 1 are also questioned and challenged as indicated in the notes to the

table. Finally, Elsevier is a fervent proponent of open data policies. Will academics have access to anonymized raw data related to these surveys in the same way that Elsevier mandates data from authors, or will this be another case of ethical exceptionalism, i.e., one rule for authors, but a separate (and less stringent) one for editors, journals and publishers [28]? A similar double standard (one – typically mandatory – for authors, and another – apparently optional – for editors) has been observed for submission and/or publication policies related to ORCID [29] and photographs [30].

Surely, the current mandatory requirement to complete a DEI-related survey in order to submit a paper to an Elsevier journal ironically achieves the opposite of its purported objectives, i.e., by limiting authors' access to these OSSs, potentially reducing participation, and increasing bias. In order for DEI policies to work in a sustainable manner [31], and to avoid the appearance of neocolonialism in research and publishing, a culture of openness and transparency must apply to all parties, including authors, editors, publishers and their shareholders [32].

Conclusion and suggestions for future research

This study documents the mandatory requirement for authors using 33 Elsevier journals to complete a DEI-related survey before they can access the journals' OSSs, even after logging in. Although this sample only reflects the author's personal experience over a four-month period (July–October, 2022), it is reasonable to assume that all Elsevier journals have this mandatory requirement. It is further argued that such a mandatory requirement constitutes a violation of authors' rights and an unnecessary barrier to entry to these journals' OSSs. Finally, this paper shows how a large proportion (42%) of the 33 journals

have no statistics related to gender of the editors on the editorial board pages of the journals. This is a worrisome signal because it seems to contradict (or at minimum does not support) the messaging made by Elsevier in its DEI-related pages regarding the gender-balance of part this publisher's business model (i.e., pertaining to journals). For example, Elsevier claims to have robust gender-based policies, at least with respect to its *Lancet* family of journals (even if these are currently in an experimental phase) [33]. The evidence presented in Table 1 however suggests that there is much to be desired regarding the company's socially responsible DEI policies, at least those that pertain to publishing and the gender constitution of editorial boards. There is also uncertainty regarding whether mandatory DEI policies for authors are also in place for editors – i.e., it is unclear if this survey is mandatory for these journals' editors. When editors of these 33 journals log into the OSS, in their function as editors, are they also required to provide a response to the DEI survey or can they bypass it?

What lesson can Elsevier (and other publishers who wish to impose DEI policies on authors and editors using their journals' OSSs) learn from this exercise? Either reform is needed to ensure consistent DEI policies, with editors being required to declare their genders, ethnicities, etc., in much the same way as authors, or this two-level (author versus editor) approach to DEI corporate social responsibility policy needs to be rethought. Regarding the surveys themselves, in order to maintain the confidence of the academic community, Elsevier should consider offering some sort of compensation for time invested in responding to these surveys each time they login to an Elsevier journal OSS; either that, or scrap the abuse of OSSs in order to capture DEI-related information from an unsuspecting (and potentially very large) academic population.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

The author contributed to all aspects of the paper.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares no relevant conflicts of interest.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jaime A. Teixeira da Silva, Independent researcher, Ikenobe 3011-2, Kagawa-ken, 761-0799, Japan; ResearchGate <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jaime-Teixeira-Da-Silva>; e-mail: jaimetex@yahoo.com

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Elsevier journals (n = 33; listed alphabetically) that mandated the completion of an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) survey before accessing the journal's online submission system in order to submit a paper or revisions to the journal, renew an access password, or to confirm authorship

Journal title	% Responding editors ¹	Indicated gender ratio ²	Journal URL and editorial board URL*
<i>Agricultural Systems</i>	100	50% M; 38% F; 13% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/agricultural-systems https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/agricultural-systems/about/editorial-board
<i>BBA Proteins and Proteomics</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/biochimica-et-biophysica-acta-bba-proteins-and-proteomics https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/biochimica-et-biophysica-acta-bba-proteins-and-proteomics/about/editorial-board
<i>Behavioural Brain Research</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/behavioural-brain-research https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/behavioural-brain-research/about/editorial-board
<i>Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications</i>	82.9	86% M; 14% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/biochemical-and-biophysical-research-communications https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/biochemical-and-biophysical-research-communications/about/editorial-board
<i>Brain Research</i>	65	62% M; 39% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/brain-research https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/brain-research/about/editorial-board
<i>Current Problems in Cancer</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.journals.elsevier.com/current-problems-in-cancer https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/current-problems-in-cancer/about/editorial-board
<i>Discourse, Context & Media</i>	75	33% M; 33% F; 33% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/discourse-context-and-media https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/discourse-context-and-media/about/editorial-board
<i>Environmental and Experimental Botany</i>	100	50% M; 50% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/environmental-and-experimental-botany https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/environmental-and-experimental-botany/about/editorial-board
<i>Expert Systems With Applications</i>	86.7	76% M; 22% F; 2% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/expert-systems-with-applications https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/expert-systems-with-applications/about/editorial-board
<i>Heliyon</i> ** ³	0	Unknown	https://www.cell.com/heliyon/home https://www.cell.com/heliyon/agriculture/editors
<i>Industrial Crops and Products</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/industrial-crops-and-products https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/industrial-crops-and-products/about/editorial-board
<i>Information Processing & Management</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.journals.elsevier.com/information-processing-and-management https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/information-processing-and-management/about/editorial-board
<i>Information Sciences</i>	60.4	87% M; 7% F; 5% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/information-sciences https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/information-sciences/about/editorial-board
<i>International Journal of Educational Development</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/international-journal-of-educational-development https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/international-journal-of-educational-development/about/editorial-board
<i>International Journal of Law and Psychiatry</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/international-journal-of-law-and-psychiatry https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/international-journal-of-law-and-psychiatry/about/editorial-board
<i>International Review of Law and Economics</i>	100	75% M; 25% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/international-review-of-law-and-economics https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/international-review-of-law-and-economics/about/editorial-board
<i>Journal of Food Composition and Analysis</i>	100	78% M; 22% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-food-composition-and-analysis https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-food-composition-and-analysis/about/editorial-board
<i>Journal of Historical Geography</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-historical-geography https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-historical-geography/about/editorial-board

Journal title	% Responding editors ¹	Indicated gender ratio ²	Journal URL and editorial board URL*
<i>Journal of Pragmatics</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-pragmatics https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-pragmatics/about/editorial-board
<i>Journal of Second Language Writing</i>	50	67% M; 33% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-second-language-writing https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-second-language-writing/about/editorial-board
<i>Journal of Web Semantics</i>	51.9	50% M; 29% F; 21% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-web-semantics https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-web-semantics/about/editorial-board
<i>Journal of World Business</i> ⁴	71.4	73% M; 27% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-world-business https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-world-business/about/editorial-board
<i>Language & Communication</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/language-and-communication https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/language-and-communication/about/editorial-board
<i>Learning and Motivation</i>	100	50% M; 50% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.journals.elsevier.com/learning-and-motivation https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/learning-and-motivation/about/editorial-board
<i>Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders</i>	80.9	68% M; 32% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/multiple-sclerosis-and-related-disorders https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/multiple-sclerosis-and-related-disorders/about/editorial-board
<i>Neurobiology of Aging</i>	70.6	75% M; 25% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/neurobiology-of-aging https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/neurobiology-of-aging/about/editorial-board
<i>Neurocomputing</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/neurocomputing https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/neurocomputing/about/editorial-board
<i>Public Relations Review</i> ***	100	0% M; 100% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/public-relations-review https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/public-relations-review/about/editorial-board
<i>Research Policy</i>	64.7	64% M; 36% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/research-policy https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/research-policy/about/editorial-board
<i>Social Science & Medicine</i>	63.2	58% M; 42% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/social-science-and-medicine https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/social-science-and-medicine/about/editorial-board
<i>Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/studies-in-history-and-philosophy-of-science-part-a https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/studies-in-history-and-philosophy-of-science/about/editorial-board
<i>The Journal of Academic Librarianship</i> **	0	Unknown	https://www.journals.elsevier.com/the-journal-of-academic-librarianship https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/the-journal-of-academic-librarianship/about/editorial-board
<i>Thinking Skills and Creativity</i>	85.7	67% M; 33% F; 0% U; 0% O	https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/thinking-skills-and-creativity https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/thinking-skills-and-creativity/about/editorial-board

¹ This is the percentage of editors who indicated their gender, as confirmed on the editorial board URL.

² M, male (indicated as “man” by Elsevier); F, female (indicated as “woman” by Elsevier); O, other (indicated as “non-binary or gender diverse” by Elsevier); U, undisclosed (indicated as “prefer not to disclose” by Elsevier).

³ This open access journal (Elsevier imprint, Cell Press) has separate editor boards for different fields; only Agriculture was assessed.

⁴ Disclaimer: Curiously, an earlier version of this paper was rejected by this journal, which incidentally has a special issue on the topic of DEI (<https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-world-business/call-for-papers/a-special-issue-on-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-in-international-business>), to which the paper was desk rejected, without any solid academic reason. That special issue page was oddly deleted, but is archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20220113072021/>; <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-world-business/call-for-papers/a-special-issue-on-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-in-international-business>).

* Sampling dates: July–October, 2022 (last verified October 20, 2022); all journal online submission systems employ Aries Systems Corporation's Editorial Manager®

** No gender profile of the editor board is provided. None of the 33 journals carry any race- or ethnicity-related profile of editors.

*** The editorial gender profile indicates that 100% of all editors are female/women. However, at a glance, many of the Anglo-Saxon editors have first names that are typically associated with males/men, such as Donald, Joshua, Robert, Luke, Craig, Brian, Michael, Daniel, Jim, Charles, David, Brian/Bryan, Adam, Ian, Don, Dustin, Richard, etc., suggesting that this statistic is not accurate.