GUIDANCE FOR ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Thank you for your interest in Research for All (RFA). We are delighted to welcome you as an associate editor and pleased that we can enrich our article reviewing process with your knowledge and experience. We hope you will enjoy working with us to promote and foster engaged research internationally in all areas of study.

This guidance aims to provide a clear idea of what is involved in being a Research for All associate editor. (If we fail, do come back to us with questions and comments so we can improve the document.) Before going into the nuts and bolts of the work, here is information about the journal’s guiding principles and its intended content, to underpin your decision-making.

JOURNAL AIMS AND SCOPE
RFA is a peer-reviewed, open-access journal focusing on research that involves universities and communities, services or industries working together. First published in 2017, it:

• highlights the potential of public engagement for robust academic study, development of involved communities and research that has impact
• features theoretical and empirical analysis alongside authoritative commentary to explore engagement with different groups and their cultures
• is for anyone, inside or outside universities, committed to research that makes a difference in society.

JOURNAL CONTENT
This is more flexible than for most academic journals. Our approach was designed to enable authors with varied experience, and we actively encourage contributions that are co-written by research partners. While we do publish recognisable academic articles that report on engaged research or reflect on engagement and knowledge democracy, RFA also includes less formal case studies, commentaries and learning from engaged activities, e.g. for the public understanding of science. We do not publish findings from engaged research unless they are specifically about engagement or are crucial to an understanding of the engagement work. Our primary interest is in engagement process and relationships. There are six main types of article, although there is some flexibility even in these definitions. Links to published articles are provided for some clarity.

Landscape features
Articles that analyse the thinking around an aspect of engaged research. These pieces draw on the wealth of writing, experience and thought from across different disciplines and practices involved in engaged research. They capture the breadth of the landscape while providing new insights around a specific theme or topic.

• Decolonization of knowledge, epistemicide, participatory research and higher education
• Terminology and tensions within evidence-informed decision-making in South Africa over a 15-year period
• Charting a course to an emerging field of ‘research engagement studies’: A conceptual meta-synthesis
**Practice case studies**
Stories of the practices of engaged research, told by those who have been involved. These are vivid accounts of practice, with reflection that leads to learning about the processes of engagement. They consider whether and how this learning affected those involved, the research, and wider society. They may or may not situate the practice in theory.
- **Overcoming the Venn diagram: Learning to be a co-passionate navigator in community-based participatory research**
- **Stroke through a lens: Exposing the challenges of establishing a visual arts project as a research engagement activity**
- **Engaging young children with climate change and climate justice**

**Research articles**
Papers that explore the relationship between theory and practice. These might be conventional academic research articles that generate, build and test theory. They might be sets of short case studies to explore how theory informs practice and how practice informs theory.
- **Cultural transfer in reading groups: From theory to practice and back**
- **Can the research impact of broadcast programming be determined?**
- **A ‘work in progress’?: UK researchers and participation in public engagement**

**Commentaries**
Shorter pieces (1,500-3,000 words) offering views about thinking, practices and debates in engaged research. These contributions offer the opportunity to share personal reflections, raise new perspectives and respond to someone else’s piece.
- **From crowdsourcing data to network building: Reflections on conducting research in the open**
- **A conceptual review of family involvement in acute mental health treatment: Methodology and personal reflections**
- **Somerstown Stories and the benefits of using a design charrette for community engagement**

**‘Who inspired my thinking?’**
Personal reflections (up to 1,500 words) drawing out key features of a book, paper or person and how they influenced the writer’s thought and practice.
- **Who inspired my thinking? – Young people, and teachers who encourage their creative thinking**

**Reviews of publications and resources**
- **Book review**

These categories, and more guidance for about the journal’s aims and scope, and notes for authors on submission, are available on the [journal website](http://www.researchforall.com).

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR ROLE**
We ask RFA associate editors to provide us with expert advice on the suitability of any content submitted to us for publication. We match a contribution with an associate editor at first expression of interest and aim to keep that association through to the end of the reviewing process. There is a step-by-step timeline for associate editor involvement below.
RFA features contributions from researchers in any area of study, carried out in any part of the world and with any community, organisation or industry. That’s a huge undertaking, so...
it's vital that we can call on experts with a very broad range of knowledge and experience in order to judge the quality of content submitted to us. We will aim to match you with contributions that fall within your areas of interest, but submissions can be surprising and we may ask you to take a view on something that is a little unusual for you. In these instances, we hope they will be of interest and will offer you insight into a new area of work; your knowledge of engagement will enable you to judge them and their reviews.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDANCE for associate editor (AE) involvement

A. DRAFT ARTICLE SUBMITTED TO THE JOURNAL
1. Most submitted articles will have been invited on the strength of an abstract originally provided to the editors.
2. On receipt of the draft paper, please take a quick look and provide Laura with a list of 4 or 5 recommended reviewers – either confirming any provided earlier, adding new names, or providing names for the first time if the paper is entirely new. The journal editors may also offer names at this point.
3. Laura will then approach prospective reviewers and will continue to contact new names until she has secured two promised reviews. This can sometimes prove difficult (we might have to go to 8 or even more), so Laura may come back to you during this period for more possible reviewers.
4. Reviewers are given a deadline that is a month from the date they accept the work. Depending on how many prospective reviewers Laura has to contact, this means the review process can last between 4 and 8 weeks (or even more if Laura is really struggling to find people).
5. When Laura has received the reviews, she will send them to you so you can prepare your feedback. Give Laura a clear indication at the top of your email about whether you wish to encourage or to reject the project. If the former, does the paper need minor or major revision? She will pass your recommendations on to the editors who may add comments of their own.
6. If the reviews lead you to encourage a revised paper, please address all substantive comments to the author, as at point A6, above, although we would of course welcome any comments for the editors in your email to Laura. We would like you to provide the following in your author feedback:
   i. A short overview of your own thoughts about the paper.
   ii. Your opinion of the reviews against the paper. Do you agree with the reviewers? Is one making more valid points than the other? Are there particular suggestions in the reviews that the author should pay attention to? Or some they might ignore?
   iii. Are you recommending minor or major revisions? If the latter, please give a clear indication of the most urgent points to deal with. If you are recommending changes to the structure or direction of the paper, it would be very helpful if you could offer clear advice on what a new version should look like.
7. If the reviews lead you to reject the paper, please just let Laura know and she will pass the information on.

B. REVISED ARTICLE SUBMITTED TO THE JOURNAL
1. Laura will send you the revised paper along with author responses to the reviews.
2. Don’t feel that you need to read the paper in detail again; you should be able to see fairly quickly whether the expected work has been done. We ask authors to mark their revisions or track their changes, so you should be able to find them quickly (although they sometimes forget). The response document should also give you clear directions.

3. Please let Laura know as soon as possible after receipt of the revised document whether you are now able to recommend it for publication or if it is still falling short. If the latter, does it need further revision, or is it time to reject the paper.

CONTACT US
You are welcome to contact us at any point in the process, with questions and comments or if you want to talk ideas through.

- **Laura Morley** ([ioe.reviews@gmail.com](mailto:ioe.reviews@gmail.com)). Laura manages the submissions and reviewing for RFA. She will be your primary and most knowledgeable contact and is also in direct contact with authors and reviewers.

- **Pat Gordon-Smith** ([p.gordon-smith@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:p.gordon-smith@ucl.ac.uk)). Managing editor for RFA. Happy to help at any time.

- **Sandy Oliver & Sophie Duncan**, RFA editors. There may be occasions where you would like to talk over ideas about a contribution with Sandy or Sophie. Many of you know one or both of them and may have your own way to contact them. However, it would be very helpful if you could make contact through Laura, or let her know that you are in contact with the editors, to help her to track progress on the articles you are involved with.

THANK YOU