

AGU Advances

EDITORIAL

10.1029/2025AV001726

Key Points:

- We affirm our commitment to publishing evidence-based Earth and space sciences that is free from political interference
- We will continue to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive scientific community because it improves the quality of science
- We will continue to act on policies and programs that uphold the independence, integrity, and progress of Earth and space sciences

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Citation:

Xenopoulos, M. A., Beal, L., Caprarelli, G., Caylor, K., Destouni, G., Duan, Q., et al. (2025). Commitment to advance excellence and inclusion in the Earth and space sciences scholarly publications. *AGU Advances*, 6, e2025AV001726. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2025AV001726>

Received 8 MAR 2025

Accepted 13 MAR 2025

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Commitment to Advance Excellence and Inclusion in the Earth and Space Sciences Scholarly Publications

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Abstract Addressing global challenges and advancing knowledge in the Earth and space sciences requires an equitable, diverse, and inclusive scholarly community where researchers must be freely able to conduct, collaborate on, share, review, and discuss their research on important economic and societal topics such as climate change. The current Executive Orders in the United States focus on censoring research and researchers by banning specific words, removing access to data sets, or by restricting what type of research can be funded or published, therefore compromising the knowledge that researchers are able to produce. As Editors-in-Chief of AGU publications we stand by our mission to support the publication of evidence-based, rigorously vetted research without political pressure. Collectively, our peer-reviewed journals and books provide inclusive publication outlets for the global research community to advance Earth and space sciences and to strengthen the public's trust in scientific evidence.

The American Geophysical Union (AGU) is the largest nonprofit organization serving Earth and space science advocates and professionals worldwide. As Editors in Chief for the scientific journals of AGU, we oversee peer review and the editorial content of our respective journals, ensuring that the research that is published is evidence-based, rigorous, and meets high standards of scientific integrity. As such, we are gravely concerned about the harm to scientific excellence and integrity resulting from recent U.S. Executive Orders and directives.

Our journals cover topics that are relevant to economic and national security, including floods, water management, sea-level rise, wildfires, earthquakes, extreme weather, mineral and metal resources, drought forecasting, water and air pollutants, space weather and solar storms, near Earth asteroids, tsunamis, tornadoes, glacier loss, and soil erosion. The security of American and global urban and rural infrastructure, water and food systems, energy supplies, and public health all depend on the Earth and space sciences knowledge published in our journals. For over 100 years, our publications have provided the crucial evidence to inform public policies that make the world safer and more resilient (e.g., Filippelli et al., 2021).

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To ensure the development of sound policies that benefit humanity, science must remain objective, unbiased, actionable, and independent of political pressures. Further, scientific excellence and integrity thrive through collaborations among, and debates between, a diverse community of scientists whose broad array of perspectives and experiences favor greater advancements and more effective applications of new knowledge and understanding.

As scientists cross geopolitical borders and cultures and share approaches, educational materials, and techniques, the formation of knowledge and intellectual creativity blossom. Advancing scientific knowledge is critical to protect our societies and the environment from novel threats and ensure security, well-being, and a vigorous global economy.

The Earth and space sciences-related challenges to our economic and national security are so great as to require all possible minds available to design solutions to them, with no communities excluded. Therefore, we reiterate and renew our commitment to fostering inclusive, equitable, and diverse participation in the Earth and space sciences and in our publications:

- We strongly oppose mandates to undo or reduce programs that provide opportunities for underrepresented groups, including under-resourced communities, to participate in our publications as authors, reviewers, editorial board members, or readers. Broadening participation in science increases the depth, scope, and reach of the research and enhances the benefit to society.
- We will continue to advocate for publication policies and programs that uphold the independence, integrity, and progress of Earth and space sciences. These policies include rigorous peer-review (AGU Editorial Network, 2024), open data and science (Desai, 2018; Wilkinson et al., 2016), equitable global research collaborations (Xenopoulos et al., 2024), diverse editorial boards (e.g., Beal et al., 2022), and mentoring programs (e.g., Xenopoulos & Nguyen, 2024).
- We stand by the Committee on Publication Ethics' position statement (COPE Trustee Board, 2025) and condemn efforts to ban or retract publications that include specified terminology for any reason, including those promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion, or such scientific themes as climate change or public health. Further, retractions of articles must not be used as a form of censorship. Article retractions and exclusions of authors are triggered by breaches in ethical standards, usually in the form of scholarly misconduct, and are not based on political viewpoints or other demographic characteristics such as career stage, race, or gender.
- We condemn any form of censorship or coercion that attempts to limit or condition the activity and output of Earth and space scientists, including removal of data, curtailing of research funding, and restrictions to research activities. Results of scientific inquiry are fact-based and may not align with personal or political beliefs but must be published without political impedance and made available to everyone.

As Editors-in-Chief that oversaw more than 20,000 scientific manuscript submissions in 2024 from over 120 countries, we are proud to stand by the programs and publication policies that elevate and celebrate this work. Truly innovative science—from discovery science to solutions science—comes from an unfettered and inclusive community of participants who support each other, even as we hold each other and ourselves to high standards of rigor and peer-review in grantsmanship, research and publication. Ideological or partisan constraints on who gets to do science, what science is funded, or whose scientific voice is silenced is more than antithetical to the scientific approach; it dampens learning, slows a sustainable economy, and ultimately threatens free and fair society. We remain resolute in our mission to advance Earth and space sciences and support our community of authors, reviewers, and readers in their scientific pursuits.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest relevant to this study.

Data Availability Statement

No data were analyzed in this editorial.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to Kevin Jewett for providing us with the submission and country numbers.

AGU Editorial Network. (2024). Challenges facing scientific publishing in the Earth & space sciences. *AGU Advances*, 5, e2024AV001334. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2024AV001334>

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