A Community Model for Rigorous and Inclusive Scholarship: Inaugural Editorial of Replication Research (R2)

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ABSTRACT. Reproducibility and replicability are vital for trustworthy, cumulative research, yet remain undervalued in most areas of academic publishing. Replication Research (R2) is a Diamond Open Access journal dedicated to publishing high-quality reproductions, replications, and related methodological work across disciplines. With robust standards for transparency, open peer review, and social responsibility, R2 offers practical guidance and support for authors. We aim to rebalance research culture by valuing diligence and robustness alongside innovation, thereby increasing confidence in research findings. We invite researchers to contribute to and benefit from an open, community-driven journal designed to elevate the status and impact of replications (repeated studies of published findings with different data) and reproductions (repeated tests of published findings with the same data). In this editorial, we introduce the aims, policies, and scope of Replication Research, outlining how the journal will operate and the values that guide it.

"And what we find today we shall strike out from the record tomorrow, and only write it in again when we have once more discovered it." (Brecht, 1974)

Scientific knowledge rests on trust, yet the foundations of that trust are often overlooked. For science to be both reliable and cumulative, its claims must be continuously revisited and reexamined. While innovation and novelty are indispensable drivers of discovery, excessive emphasis on them has led to the neglect of systematic evaluation of existing findings (Makel et al., 2012). We believe that greater recognition and support should be given to researchers who engage in repeated investigations of prior results—what we refer to as repetitive research (Schöch, 2023). When novelty is rewarded at the expense of repetition, false-positive results can persist, scientific accuracy may be compromised, and public trust in research erode. This imbalance also leads to inefficient allocation of resources, as scholars build upon findings with insufficient evidential support. Although calls for greater scientific rigor and reform of academic incentives are widespread (e.g., King, 1995; Munafò et al., 2017), and proposals for replication journals have emerged (Grunow et al., 2018), there remains no cross-disciplinary venue dedicated to publishing replications and reproductions. *Replication Research* (R2) seeks to fill this critical gap.

Building a Community Infrastructure for Rigorous and Inclusive Scholarship

With R2, our goal is to foster a culture of rigor and transparency in all disciplines and methodological traditions. Our journal provides a platform for researchers conducting replications, reproductions, and other forms of repetitive or confirmatory inquiry. R2's tenets include:

Providing an interdisciplinary dedicated outlet for repetitive research: Despite growing recognition of the importance of reassessing existing findings, few journals explicitly welcome such work. A dedicated venue focused on rigor—irrespective of novelty—facilitates the visibility and accessibility of replication and reproduction studies (Reed et al., 2025). Existing outlets that do support this type of work (e.g., the *Journal of Comments and Replications in Economics*) are often domain-specific. As an interdisciplinary journal, R2 offers a home for scholars from any field to publish rigorous re-examinations of prior research.

Increasing the number of replications: The proportion of replication studies in published research remains very low (e.g., Perry et al., 2022; Pridemore et al., 2018), and only recently have structured methods for evaluating replicability and reproducibility been developed (e.g., Heyard et al., 2025). Nevertheless, replication rates are rising (Clarke et al., 2023; Reed et al., 2025). R2 aims to accelerate this mainstreaming trend by increasing the recognition, visibility, and credibility of repetitive research across disciplines.

Incentivizing high-quality replications and reproductions: Publications remain the primary currency of academic recognition, yet the criteria for what counts as publishable often privilege novelty over rigor. R2 seeks to balance these incentives by rewarding diligence, transparency, and methodological integrity, regardless of the approach or outcome. We invite contributions that exemplify careful reasoning, openness in design and analysis, and clarity in communicating methods and evidence. Authors are supported in meeting field-specific standards for transparency, whether this involves sharing data, materials, and code, or providing reflexive accounts of analytic and interpretive processes. Quantitative submissions undergo reproducibility checks, while qualitative and mixed-methods work is evaluated for coherence, transparency, and rigor in documenting analytic pathways. To foster accountability and learning, all accepted manuscripts are accompanied by openly published peer review reports. In line with DORA, R2 rejects journal-level metrics in evaluation and instead credits concrete research

contributions (e.g., data, code, reflexive analytic memos, reviews, replications).[1]

Supporting transparency: At R2, transparency is treated as a cornerstone of trustworthy scholarship, promoting openness at every stage of the research process. R2 requires preprints before submission and adopts open peer review, in which correspondence between authors, reviewers, and editors is publicly accessible. Moreover, R2 adopts a contributorship-first approach and requires a CRediT-based Author Contributions statement (Holcombe, 2019) (preferably exported from *tenzing*) and encourages authors to reflect on authorship rationale & equity, inviting authors to be transparent about their decision regarding authorship ordering and conventions used (e.g., contribution-based, alphabetical, joint first/last)

Sustainable Diamond Open Access: R2 operates as a Diamond Open Access journal—free to publish in, free to read, and with authors retaining full copyright to their work. All content is released under a CC-BY licence to ensure unrestricted reuse and dissemination. Sustained through institutional infrastructure rather than commercial models, R2 is designed for long-term accessibility, with all articles permanently archived. Our Diamond model is not only cost policy; it is an equity policy aligned with the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science (UNESCO, 2021), which calls for fair, inclusive, capacity-building approaches across regions and methods. R2 lowers financial and prestige barriers that disproportionately exclude under-resourced scholars and qualitative traditions.[2]

Community-governed journal: Conceived through open deliberation among a diverse group of scholars and practitioners, R2 embodies a model of participatory governance independent of commercial and institutional control. The journal's constitution publicly delineates its ownership, decision-making, and review processes (Röseler, Wallrich, Adler, et al., 2025), reflecting our commitment to participatory governance, community, and shared responsibility (Röseler, Moser, et al., 2025). We have pledged to maintain R2 as a community-run service at least until early 2028, after which its continuation will be evaluated against pre-defined success criteria (Röseler, Wallrich, & Azevedo, 2025).

Contributing to the creation of a sustainable, non-commercial publishing ecosystem: Much of today's scholarly publishing remains constrained by commercial imperatives that often conflict with scientific values. Indeed, global Article Processing Charge (APC) spending to six publishers alone is estimated at $8.97B (2019–2023), with hybrid fees exceeding gold, while median OA fees and long turnaround times persist (Haustein et al., 2024). Moreover, pressures to meet journal-level impact metrics irrespective of research quality (Brembs, 2018), escalating costs for open-access publishing (Grossmann & Brembs, 2021), and the proliferation of predatory journals (Beall, 2017) illustrate how profit motives can undermine equitable access to knowledge. In contrast, R2 is part of a growing movement to realign scholarly publishing with the public values that sustain it. Indeed, our constitution guarantees that R2 is—and will remain—a Diamond Open Access journal. R2 demonstrates that publishing can be community-owned, transparent about its processes and costs, and oriented toward service rather than competition. By prioritizing accessibility, accountability, social responsibility, epistemic inclusion, and equity over *profit*, we aim to contribute to a sustainable model of scholarly communication—one that treats knowledge as a shared global good and values diverse contributions to its creation.

Beyond publishing as a bottleneck: R2 treats publication as the outcome of open community

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[1]The incentive to prioritize eye-catching novelty over verifiable claims is itself a by-product of institutional selection pressures; we design against that selection.

[2]In 2021, UNESCO's Member States adopted a non-binding Recommendation on Open Science that recognizes science as a global public good and urges states to advance open, equitable science. This Recommendation draws on UDHR Art. 27(1) and the binding obligations in ICESCR Art. 15, but only for the States that have ratified the ICESCR (currently 173), not all 193 UN Member States (i.e., the United States, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Cuba, for example, did not ratify ICESCR).

curation, not the precondition for scholarly legitimacy. A work is shared first (preprints) by the author and then evaluated transparently (open, field-appropriate review) by R2. By adopting these practices in a Diamond Open Access community-run venue, R2 centers scholarly discourse over publisher status.

Epistemic inclusion: R2 seeks to reduce structural barriers that exclude under-resourced scholars, methods, and geographies. We welcome submissions in all methodological traditions and encourage inclusive citation practices (Sauvé et al., 2025) and accessibility-first materials. Aside from serving as a venue for rigorous research, R2 aspires to model a publishing ecosystem grounded in openness, community, and equity. We envision a future in which confirmatory and critical research receives the same recognition as novelty-driven studies; where transparency and reflexivity are integral to all methodological traditions; and where scientific communities (not markets) determine the values that guide scholarly communication. In this spirit, R2 invites researchers, reviewers, and institutions to join in building a culture of collective responsibility for the credibility and accumulation of knowledge.

What does R2 publish?

We envision R2 as a hub for researchers who are interested in rigorous and robust repetitive research. We welcome **reproductions** (repeated investigation of previous findings using *the same* data), **replications** (repeated investigation of previous findings using *different* data), and **related contributions** such as methods for replication research, meta-analyses and meta-syntheses of replications, multi- or many-analyst studies, tutorials, comments, or reviews of replications. Submitted articles may also consist of single studies that have been part of meta-articles (e.g., Open Science Collaboration, 2015) as long as they have not been published individually, meet our standards for openness, and declare transparently that they have been included in a meta-article. At launch, we accept submissions from numerous disciplines such as quantitative and qualitative social sciences (an up-to-date list is available at replicationresearch.org). Submissions from other disciplines are welcome and may be considered depending on the availability of an ad hoc editor.

Transparency is the norm

R2 has high standards for transparency and openness. Studies should report whether they were preregistered and should disclose and reflect all differences between preregistered and final report. In addition, for quantitative works, analysis plans, materials, study protocols, code, and data should be shared and complete per disciplinary best-practices (e.g., PRISMA for meta-analyses; Page et al., 2021)[3]. We badge Open Data/Code/Materials, Preregistration, Computational Reproducibility and perform link checks prior to sending articles for review. For qualitative and mixed-methods work, transparency includes, for example, reflexive accounts of positionality, sampling/access decisions, coding/interpretive pathways, and audit trails.

Guidance for authors

For reproductions and replications, we expect authors to justify their choice of the target study, explain their decision for the type of reproduction or replication, disclose deviations from (or adjustments to) the original study, provide readers with a differentiated judgment of success or

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[3]If sharing certain materials is not feasible (e.g., due to ethical, privacy, or legal considerations), authors should clearly state the reasons and, where possible, describe how access requests or alternatives can be handled. Our editorial team is committed to supporting authors in addressing any challenges with data sharing.

failure, and discuss possible reasons for consistencies and discrepancies between the original and repetition's results in a constructive and factual manner. We recommend evaluation of reproduction or replication success based on a predetermined criterion (Heyard et al., 2025). Editors judge the manuscript based on its potential to meet R2's standards and see it as their and the reviewers' task to help the authors achieve that potential. We acknowledge that many disciplines do not yet have clear standards on what constitutes a good replication, which is why we provide guidance in multiple ways.

1. We convened a team of researchers who have conducted numerous reproductions and replications as part of their research, in collaborations, and as student projects, who have published an open handbook on conducting reproductions and replications (Röseler, Wallrich, Hartmann, et al., 2025, forrt.org/replication_guide). For robustness reproductions, we further recommend the protocol by Ankel-Peters et al. (2025) and the Guide for Accelerating Computational Reproducibility in the Social Sciences (Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences, 2020).

2. Based on multiple guides and our experience with the Framework for Open and Reproducible Research Training (FORRT) Replication Database (Röseler et al., 2024), we have created manuscript templates for reproduction and replication studies that authors can optionally use (Röseler, Hein, & Oppong Boakye, 2025; osf.io/brxtd).

3. Authors interested in replications from their field can use the FORRT Replication Database, with hundreds of replication studies, to search for examples from their field (forrt.org/apps/fred_explorer).

Social Impact & Responsibility

We criticize the lack of rigor in the current academic system and argue that replication and reproduction rates are too low. Calls for scientific rigor or *sound science* have in the past been used to block policymakers from regulating industry (Baba et al., 2005). While we have created R2 to support repetitive research and motivate researchers to conduct high-quality reproduction and replication studies, we refute the call to disregard research findings that do not meet a high standard since "demanding perfect evidence before action can be taken is often a way to avoid using evidence at all" (Center for Open Science, 2025, para. 9).

Conclusion

We invite researchers, students, and institutions to strengthen and revisit the foundations of scientific knowledge by submitting their replication and reproduction studies to R2. Together, we can reshape publishing practices and foster more robust and rigorous research. Looking ahead, we envision a research culture where confirmatory and critical work is valued alongside discovery; where transparency and reflexivity are routine across methods; and where communities (not markets or capital interests) set the standards of credibility.

Declarations

Author Contributions

✦ LR, LW, FA: Writing - first draft

✦ All authors: Writing - review and editing

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Potential conflicts of interest

All members of the R2 editorial board are actively engaged in repetitive research in various professional capacities (e.g., conducting, publishing, or advocating for such work). As such, they have professional and intellectual interests in the visibility and uptake of related research, and several authors' prior publications are cited in the reference list of this article. These relationships constitute non-financial competing interests that could be perceived as favoring the amplification of replication-related work. The authors declare no financial competing interests related to this editorial.

Declaration of AI use

Parts of the initial draft of the abstract had been AI generated from the text. Moreover, we used ChatGPT 5 to check for consistency of references, convert references from plain text to .bib format and to generate suggestions to improve the text.

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