



COLLABORATIVE OF
**GENDER & SEXUAL
HEALTH EQUITY**

RESEARCH EDUCATION RESOURCES

Gender & Sex in Methods & Measurement

Research Equity Toolkit

Tool #8: Before & After: Funding, Ethics & Publications



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Introduction

The other resources in this Gender & Sex in Methods & Measurement Research Equity Toolkit focus on research design and conduct. Here, we turn our attention to various elements of the research process that occur before and after a study is undertaken. We detail guiding principles and questions to ask yourself if you are applying for funding, engaging with an ethics review committee or institutional review board, and when preparing a manuscript for publication. We also offer guiding principles and questions to ask yourself, if you are tasked with adjudicating funding applications, determining whether a project meets ethical standards, and conducting peer reviews and making editorial decisions about manuscript publication.

Funding

Personal identity disclosures

Increasingly, funding applications include a survey requesting that research team members disclose personal identifiers such as gender identity and sexuality. In considering whether, when and how to participate in voluntary personal identity disclosures as part of funding applications, here are some things to think about. When taken together, they remind us that navigating personal identity disclosures is complicated and should be undertaken with consideration of some of the costs and benefits.

Communicating diversity

Personal identity disclosures represent an opportunity to share that your research team is comprised of people who have diverse identities, experiences, and perspectives. Nondisclosure can hinder the ability of adjudicators to assess and evaluate the diversity of teams, including where that diversity might be present but rendered invisible. If a team is homogenous in some ways, it is important for funding adjudicators to be made aware of that homogeneity as it might impact their evaluation of a study's potential to do community-engaged, ethical, work that represents the diversity of the study population.

Power dynamics

Researchers not only hold positions of power and privilege over their research participants, but there are also power dynamics within research teams. The decision not to disclose your personal identifiers, especially for team members whose identities are majoritized, can work to obscure and perpetuate power inequities and reinforce the marginalization of minoritized team members and study participants alike. However, having minoritized team members is, on its own, insufficient for ensuring that power is equitable and ethically distributed. Additional work beyond disclosing one's identity is needed, to address these power inequities.

Assumptions & biases

Nondisclosure can lead to funding application adjudicators making assumptions about who is, and who isn't, part of a research team, which can potentially introduce and reinforce stereotypes and biases into that process. However, disclosure can also introduce bias into the process, as adjudicators may have implicit biases and prejudices against study team members who report certain identities.

Questions to ask yourself

If you are applying for funding

1. What are the potential impacts of non/disclosure on minoritized research team members?
2. What are the potential impacts of non/disclosure on majoritized research team members?
3. What is at stake when majoritized team members do not disclose their identities? What reasons might someone have for not disclosing a majoritized identity? How are those reasons being balanced against the potential negative impacts of nondisclosure?
4. How does non/disclosure render lived experience expertise in/visible?
5. How am I balancing the potential negative impacts of disclosure for minoritized research team members, with the benefits that their involvement may bequeath to the study?
6. What is the value of disclosing whether research team members share identities with prospective participants? Where research team members and participants do not share identities, what is at stake? Where research team members and participants do share identities, is shared identity sufficient to ensure that research is carried out ethically, respectfully and in ways that attend to power inequities?



Questions to ask yourself

If you are adjudicating an application for funding

1. What is the relevance of personal identity details to the criteria for evaluating the research proposal? Is this information being collected generally to understand the diversity of applicants across submissions, to ensure gender parity of research teams within a single proposal, or to determine whether any given research project includes team members with lived and living experience relevant to the proposed research?
2. Am I adjudicating applications involving minoritized applicants more harshly than those by majoritized applicants? Am I being attentive to the ways that my own biases and prejudices with regards to research team members' identities might be impacting my evaluation of research projects?
3. Am I considering shared identities between research team members and prospective study participants as sufficient to ensure that research is community-engaged, ethical and representative of diverse study populations? What else is factoring into my evaluation?

Sex & gender relevance

Increasingly, funding applications require a brief statement as to whether and how sex and/or gender are relevant to the research being proposed, including with regards to who the prospective study participants are, any planned analyses, aspects of experimental design, as impacting the generalizability of findings, etc. In considering how to communicate the relevance of sex and gender as part of funding applications, here are some things to think about, which when taken together, remind us that careful attention to and the intentional selection of specific facets of sex and gender lead to more robust, inclusive and impactful research.

Specificity & precision

Researchers need to be able to narrowly define which facets of sex and gender, if any, matter to their proposed research. The more specific and precise we can be about the biological, social, and behavioural mechanisms that may be involved in our research, the more nuanced our sex- and gender-based analyses will be. Instead of relying on broad sex and gender categories, specificity and precision can lend themselves to elucidate the underlying variables that ultimately impact observed intra- and intergroup differences between participants.

Questioning habituation & fostering intentionality

Researchers need to make sure that their data collection practices are purposeful and justified, rather than continuing to collect certain variables or information simply because it has been done in the past. Consider whether measuring gender and/or sex is necessary and relevant, or whether these are extraneous to your proposed research – as the collection of irrelevant information can be just as damaging as not collecting relevant information.

Acknowledging question priming

By asking researchers whether sex and gender are relevant to their proposed research as a standard practice, this may inadvertently suggest that sex and gender are both *necessarily* relevant, regardless of whether this is true. Consider whether you are approaching discussions about the ir/relevance of sex and/or gender in ways that are neutral and unbiased, and where an evaluation of relevance is grounded in the evidence and informed by the specific research study under consideration.



Questions to ask yourself

If you are applying for funding

1. Does my research justify collecting participants' sexes – and if so, is there some more specific facet of sex that ought to be measured outright rather than relying on the unreliable proxy of binary sex assignment? For example, instead of assuming study participants' estrogen and testosterone hormones levels based on their sex assignments, can I measure sex steroid hormones outright? If I determine that sex is ultimately irrelevant to the proposed research, can I clearly articulate why it is not relevant?
2. Does my research justify collecting participants' genders – and if so, is it gender modality, identity and/or expression that is relevant to my project?
3. Am I attending to the fact that neither sex nor gender are binaries, and that intersex and trans people of all genders exist?
4. Am I inadvertently conflating some facet of sex (including physiology, anatomy, hormones, enzymes, genetics, and neurobiology) with some facet of gender (roles, norms, relations, stereotypes, identities, modalities, expressions) in my research?
5. Are both biology-related factors and sociocultural factors relevant? If so, how am I articulating their relevance and potential interconnectedness?

Questions to ask yourself

If you are adjudicating an application for funding

1. Does the relevance statement inadvertently conflate sex with gender?
2. Have the researchers used sex assignment at birth as a proxy for a specific facet of sex that ought to be measured and evaluated outright? If the research invokes male and female in its discussion of sex relevance, are the researchers overlooking some more precise variable, the identification of which would advance the science in this area?
3. Have the researchers attended to the fact that sex development is a spectrum, that sex-based factors express themselves in different ways, that various facets of sex are bimodal rather than binary, and that intersex people exist?
4. Have the researchers attended to the fact that gender identity is not a binary, and attended to how nonbinary people will be included in their project?
5. Does the proposed research allow for disaggregation across axes of gender identity and gender modality in ways that would be appropriate based on their research questions, hypotheses, planned analyses, and to describe the participant sample in sufficient detail?
6. Are the researchers over or understating the relevance of sex and/or gender, and were they inadvertently primed towards a particular line of thinking based on how the question about relevance was asked?

Meaningful engagement of experts

Increasingly, funding applications ask you to identify one or more research team member who possess expertise specific to sex and gender-based analyses. These team members may or may not also share minoritized identities with the proposed study participants. In considering whether, when and how to engage sex and gender subject matter experts, here are some things to think about, which when taken together, remind us that naming sex and gender experts on a funding application is an insufficient practice on its own.

Recognition of expertise

Researchers need to ensure that engaged experts are acknowledged, valued, and respected as essential contributors to the research team. This can involve providing paid opportunities for them to lead and collaborate on all facets of research, including in ways that move beyond their expertise in sex and gender-based analyses. Doing so can ensure that these experts are not tokenized and can showcase their multidimensional knowledge.

Clear communication & expectations

Researchers can ensure that experts are meaningfully engaged as part of the research process, by establishing clear communication channels and outlining all responsibilities, goals, and expectations in advance. In this way, a funding application represents an opportunity to not only acknowledge that a relevant expert has been engaged, but to communicate to adjudicators that the research team has proactively considered how that engagement will occur throughout the research.

Questions to ask yourself

If you are applying for funding

1. Where sex and gender experts are named on a funding application, how are these individuals going to be compensated for their time and expertise? Is some portion of the budget being set aside for their engagement?
2. What constitutes relevant expertise? What are my expectations for what these experts will have, in terms of education, work experience, lived experience, certificate program and training completion?
3. What authority is being granted to these experts? How are these individuals being empowered to guide and advise the project?
4. What are the power dynamics and political priorities of the team, and how will the experts be meaningfully and systematically included in the research structure and associated processes? How will the research team address sex and gender-related inaccuracies, imprecision, or exclusion, if these are identified by the experts?

Questions to ask yourself

If you are adjudicating an application for funding

1. Is it enough to have sex and gender experts named on an application? Should the research proposal also articulate the specific role those individuals will have and how they will be empowered to guide and advise the project?
2. By naming experts on their application, are the researchers satisfying an administrative requirement in a tokenistic way? Or have they articulated the ways in which they are striving towards equitable and reflexive research by way of the meaningful engagement of experts?
3. What constitutes relevant expertise? How am I weighing the named experts' relevant education, work experience, lived experience, certificate program and training completion?

Ethics & institutional review

Assessing vulnerability

As part of an ethics or institutional review application, you will be asked to evaluate whether the prospective participants are vulnerable, and detail how you will attend to those vulnerabilities as part of the research methods and design. In considering whether prospective study participants are vulnerable, here are some things to think about, which when taken together, remind us of the stakes of this assessment.

Avoiding paternalism

Framing minoritized or marginalized groups as vulnerable owing only, or primarily, to their marginalization can reflect paternalistic attitudes, deeply rooted in historical and ongoing systemic power imbalances. A paternalistic assumption of vulnerability has the potential to reify stereotypes, limit participant autonomy, and increase the risk of exploitation. It also has the potential for minoritized and marginalized groups to be systematically excluded from research, in ways that are not justified, and which result in their ongoing subordination.

Consider the source

Some vulnerabilities are inherent and shared by all humans; others are situational and result from specific economic, social, or political contexts, including those that occur because of adversities, injustices, etc. Further, when a minoritized group is understood as vulnerable, that vulnerability is rarely homogenous. Using a typology of vulnerability and being attentive to its various sources, researchers are better positioned to understand their obligations to their participants including those that relate to procedural ethics before, during and after the research is conducted.

Tailored & adaptive safeguards

Framing participants as vulnerable signals that extra care must be taken when including them in research studies. Effectively attending to those vulnerabilities, will require careful consideration of their sources or roots. Research can and should be designed in ways that mitigate and eliminate vulnerabilities wherever possible, which requires a tailored and adaptive approach.

Questions to ask yourself

If you are applying for ethics/institutional review approval

1. What are the potential risks, harms, or consequences of including these participants in the research? What are the potential risks, harms, or consequences of excluding them?
2. Am I assuming that certain minoritized participants (e.g., intersex, trans, Two-Spirit, queer people) are inherently vulnerable simply because they are marginalized? Does this framing have the potential to pathologize these participants? Where situational vulnerability does exist, how am I understanding the social, economic, and political contexts that shape and contour that vulnerability?
3. Do vulnerable participants have adequate access to resources and support services to protect their interests and wellbeing? Are there resources and support services that I can provide to them at no cost and in accessible ways?



Questions to ask yourself

If you are adjudicating an application for an ethics/institutional review application

1. What are the potential risks, harms, or consequences of including these participants in the research? What are the potential risks, harms, or consequences of excluding them?
2. Are minoritized participants vulnerabilities overstated, or based in bias, stereotypes or pathologization? Where situational vulnerability of minoritized participants is occurring, how are researchers describing the social, economic, and political contexts that shape and contour that vulnerability, including how that context is informing their proposed response?
3. Where participants are justifiably framed by researchers as vulnerable, how am I assessing whether safeguards are sufficient and accessible?
4. Can I use contextual information from the rest of the ethics/institutional review application to compose a nuanced assessment of prospective participant vulnerability? For example, am I considering researcher positionality and requisite knowledge, and the research team's meaningful engagement with minoritized communities (or lack thereof) as relevant to prospective participants' potential vulnerabilities?

Arbiters of recommended ethical approaches

Sometimes, an ethics/institutional review process requires that we manage tensions between what researchers and ethics/institutional review boards understand as the best, recommended practices with regards to ethical research involving sex and gender as concepts and involving participants who are marginalized and minoritized based on sex, gender, and/or sexuality. In considering how to manage these tensions, here are some things to think about, which when taken together, remind us of the importance of dynamic and flexible ethics guidelines and standards.

Board diversity

Composed of members with academic and professional backgrounds, ethics/institutional review boards may not fully represent the wide diversity of research projects that they are tasked with reviewing. As a result, the standards they adhere to, and practices they recommend, may not take into account the specific needs, concerns, and values of those communities. Where board members are supported in their work by guidelines produced elsewhere (e.g., by the Tri-Councils or by their institution's Office of Research Ethics), it is important to consider who was involved in their development.

Bias towards established norms

Where the criteria used by ethics/institutional review boards may prioritize certain established methodological approaches, research designs, data collection techniques, etc., these may not always be appropriate for, or sensitive to, the needs of minoritized people. As such, researchers who propose approaches that are unanticipated by, or unfamiliar to, ethics/institutional review boards, may need to provide evidence to support their use. In turn, ethics/institutional review boards may need to be amendable to approving these proposals, if they are persuaded by the evidence to do so.



Questions to ask yourself

If you are applying for ethics/institutional review approval

1. If I am proposing the use of a methodological approach, research design, data collection technique, etc. that may be novel, what kinds of evidence am I providing to support its use? Am I detailing how it was developed in consultation with community organizations who work with and for the study population? Is there literature to support its applicability in particular contexts?
2. If I believe that recommendations provided during an ethics review process are genuinely problematic, how can I engage in an open and respectful dialogue with the ethics/institutional review board? What evidence will support my perspective?
3. What are the consequences of following the recommendations of the ethics/institutional review board versus taking a stand against them – for my professional reputation, the well-being of participants, and/or my ethical obligations to uphold the integrity of the research?

Questions to ask yourself

If you are adjudicating an application for an ethics/institutional review application

1. Do I have sufficient expertise to guide researchers on their approach to consent, confidentiality, privacy, conflicts of interest, recruitment, etc. when it comes to sex and gender variables, and intersex-, trans-, Two-Spirit-, and queer-inclusive research practices?
2. Am I prepared to ask researchers to include minoritized participants or provide sufficient justification for their exclusion?
3. Am I prepared to have an open and respectful dialogue with researchers who express concerns about, or disagree with, the recommendations I have made? What evidence do I expect them to provide if I'm going to approve their approach?

Publications

Publishing a dataset

Increasingly, journals are asking researchers to consider publishing their datasets alongside their manuscripts. On the one hand, there are potential benefits associated with dataset publication, including promoting transparency, reproducibility, and collaboration. On the other hand, the publication of datasets can raise concerns regarding issues of consent, privacy, data ownership, data quality and integrity, and the responsible use of those data. In considering whether to publish your raw data, here are some things to think about, which when taken together, remind us that the decision is complicated and needs to be carefully considered.

Consent

Publishing a dataset may align with or exceed the established informed consent parameters of a study. Participants must be informed in advance how their data will be used, and who will have access to it.

Deidentification

Even when consent is given, privacy and confidentiality need to be protected. Researchers must de-identify and anonymize data and assess and work to mitigate risks to the privacy of participants that might arise following its publication.

Data ownership

Publishing a dataset may align with or exceed established data ownership rights, agreements, and regulations.

Responsible use

Researchers may need to consider the potential risk of misuse that may arise if a dataset is published, especially where those data include measures that may be considered contentious. For example, researchers will need to be aware of current and potential future areas of public debate or controversy in which the published data may be misused to advance a political agenda that would have negative impacts on minoritized communities.

Questions to ask yourself

If you are preparing a manuscript for publication

1. Do I have the consent of participants to publish the dataset?
2. Knowing that other researchers may ask any number of questions and generate associated research outputs using these data, does its publication compromise my ethical obligations?
3. Will publishing the dataset render participants identifiable? Can the data be further deidentified prior to publication?
4. What is the risk of data misuse and potential for subsequent harm to participants and broader communities, if published? Are some of the variables and measures particularly at risk of misuse, considering relevant historical and ongoing public controversies or debates?
5. Can I include a footnote in the manuscript itself explaining why data has not been published? Am I prepared to defend this choice if peer reviewers, associate editors or editors-in-chief ask that the raw data be published?
6. Short of publishing the raw data, can I establish a process whereby interested researchers can request access to specific measures and variables? What are the administrative, logistical, and ethical considerations when maintaining a private dataset that is available upon request and only to those whose applications requesting access are approved? On what basis would access to these data be granted or denied?

Questions to ask yourself

If you are on the editorial board of a journal or conducting a peer review of a submitted manuscript

1. If requesting that researchers publish their datasets, am I being attentive to their ethical obligations to their participants?
2. If I am reviewing an article that analyzes secondary data published elsewhere, am I requiring that researchers have ethics approval to conduct those secondary analyses?
3. If I am reviewing an article that analyzes secondary data published elsewhere, am I attentive to the potential misuse of that data including associated harms if inappropriate, problematic, or unjustifiably controversial questions are asked and answered using those data?
4. If a manuscript submission does not include a publishable version of the raw data, what rationale do I expect the authors to provide if I'm going to approve the publication of their manuscript without data?

Describing participants

When research involves humans, we almost always describe our participants. We may provide the reader with information about the number and type of participants; clarification as to how we collected or deduced the number and type of participants; to whom the study findings apply; and whether, and to what extent, the findings are generalizable. Describing research participants requires sensitivity, accuracy and care. In doing so, consider the following:

Detail & nuance

Wherever possible, researchers should endeavour to include as many nuances and details as possible about their study participants. Providing detailed descriptions of samples ensures that research samples reflect the diversity of study participants, including in ways that address under/misrepresented minoritized communities. These descriptions also allow for intersectional perspectives, which can advance understandings of, and interventions to address inequities, injustices, and disparities.

Transparency in reporting methods

Wherever possible, researchers should endeavour to publish the survey questions, interview protocols, administrative record fields or other methods for ascertaining the sexes, genders, and sexualities (among other sociodemographic characteristics) of study participants. Transparently reporting the methods used will allow readers an opportunity to assess the efficacy and appropriateness of those methods, including where potential erasure or misclassification may have occurred as a result.

Flexibility in approach

In some instances, it may be appropriate to use a participant's own self-description in a manuscript. For example, where that description appears alongside a quote extracted from their interview. This approach prioritizes the rich complexity and specificity of each individual participant's identity. In other instances, researchers may need to describe participants as identifying in a fixed number of ways according to predefined categories, despite awareness that their participants' identities were more complicated than the fixed categories suggest.

Neither approach is inherently right or wrong, but each has its utility and may be acceptable alone, or in combination with, other reporting approaches. Selecting an appropriate approach depends on which one aligns with the specific objectives and aims of the research, and would be suitable in any given section of a manuscript.

Questions to ask yourself

If you are preparing a manuscript for publication

1. Am I describing my sample with as much nuance and detail as possible, including with regards to sex assignment, gender identity, gender modality, gender expression, sexuality, and other potentially relevant sociodemographic characteristics? For example, if my research only includes cisgender men and/or women, have I included the word 'cisgender' to signal that it was this specific subset of men and women that were included in the sample?
2. If my data allows, am I disaggregating based on gender modality, gender identity, gender expression and other relevant variables?
3. Am I including participants' self-identification (e.g. in qualitative or narrative descriptions)? In so doing, am I ensuring that every individual participant's identity is still sufficiently anonymized?
4. Were all participants aggregated into a small number of mutually exclusive categories during data collection, and/or did I need to categorize and aggregate them into categories following data collection? Have I provided a detailed rationale in the manuscript for how and why I undertook this aggregation including identifying any potential and associated limitations?
5. Have I provided information about the methods and measures used to ascertain participant sociodemographic details (including in supplements or appendices, where main text space is limited).
6. What empirical work have I done to ensure that I am describing participants in ways that are accurate and inclusive, and which avoid potentially problematic, offensive, ineffectual, or outdated language? For example, how will I know if the language I am using is accepted by the communities of people I am describing? Does my team include members with relevant expertise and lived experience to help inform those decisions? Are community partners involved in manuscript development? Am I amenable to feedback received during peer-review? Am I attentive to the potential of fluidity of language over time? Do I have a rationale for the identifiers I am using when describing study participants individually and as members of groups?



Questions to ask yourself

If you are on the editorial board of a journal or conducting a peer review of a submitted manuscript

1. Am I assessing how participants are described, to ensure that samples are described with as much nuance and detail as possible? For example, is it clear whether samples of men and women are cis-specific or trans-inclusive and am I asking researchers to add this specificity where appropriate?
2. Am I prepared to ask researchers to justify samples that are not inclusive of intersex, trans, Two-Spirit, queer and other participants who are marginalized and minoritized based on gender, sex and/or sexuality?
3. Am I expecting researchers to provide rationales for participant aggregation into sex, gender, and sexuality categories?
4. Am I expecting researchers to provide a description of methods and measures used to ascertain participant sociodemographic details?
5. Am I aware of problematic and outdated language used to describe intersex, trans, Two-Spirit, queer and other minoritized people, and am I prepared to ask researchers to change that language prior to publication? On what basis am I framing language used by authors as potentially problematic, and what evidence of empirical work would I need to see, in order to accept the language that they have elected to use?

Researcher positionality statements

Researcher positionality statements play an increasingly important role in academic discourse, as they can provide readers with relevant information about who was, and was not, involved in the research as published. Although the practice of including them in manuscripts and other publications varies across disciplines, these statements allow researchers to recognize and expose the roles of power and privilege within research relationships. In considering whether, when, and how to include a researcher positionality statement in a manuscript, or how to evaluate a manuscript for publication that does or does not include one, here are some things to think about, which when taken together, remind us that researchers bring their own identities, perspectives, biases and experiences to the research process no matter their discipline or study topic.

Acknowledging subjectivity & contextualizing interpretations

Researchers can increase transparency and reflexivity by acknowledging who they are, and how who they are matters to various aspects of the research design and analysis processes. These statements allow readers to evaluate whether, and how, researchers' identities may have influenced the research questions or hypotheses, data collection and recruitment techniques, survey measures or interview protocols used, analyses conducted, and interpretations of findings.

Acknowledging power & privilege

Researchers can acknowledge their relative power and privilege in relation to their study participants by disclosing who they are, and who they are in relation to their participants (i.e., whether they share identities with those participants, whether they have majoritized identities as compared to their minoritized participants or vice versa).



Beyond performativity

More than a checkbox exercise, effective researcher positionality statements genuinely grapple with how individual biases, perspectives, values, identities and experiences shape research; they also explore how broader social contexts shape the research landscape. Further, researchers who are marginalized or minoritized may feel pressured to foreground those identities by those who occupy positions of power on research teams. This may be especially pronounced if only minoritized team members are asked to disclose their identities or when minoritized research team members are only included in the research process in superficial or symbolic inclusion, but are then having their identities spotlighted in ways that advance the reputation of the study without appropriate reciprocity.

Ethical concerns

Researchers may face discrimination, harassment, violence, retaliation, or exploitation in professional settings, and their personal lives, due to the sensitive personal information included in a positionality statement, especially if they are disclosing minoritized and/or stigmatized identities. The wellbeing and safety of minoritized researchers should take precedence over any potential benefits to the research project that may arise from having these researchers disclose specific aspects of their personal identities in research outputs.

Questions to ask yourself

If you are preparing a manuscript for publication

1. Have I included a positionality statement in my manuscript, including acknowledging how research team positionality impacted recruitment, retention, data collection, power dynamics, analyses, etc.?
2. Am I aware of the potential vulnerabilities associated with self-disclosure, and how have I weighed these against the potential benefits? How am I working to mitigate any risks associated with disclosure and to promote the wellbeing, safety and resilience of researchers who are disclosing minoritized and/or stigmatized identities in these statements?

3. Where researchers do not share identities with their participants, have I discussed the implications of this outsider status, and detailed whether, when, and how people with lived and living experience were engaged to supplement researchers' lack of relevant lived experience?
4. Am I prepared to defend the inclusion of a researcher positionality statement, within research disciplines where it is not standard practice and where its inclusion may be perceived as undermining the credibility, validity, and objectivity of findings?
5. Am I prepared to defend the exclusion of a researcher positionality statement? Instead, have I considered including a brief reflexive statement that details why research team members have elected not to disclose potentially pertinent information about their identities, and which demonstrates that I have carefully considered, and weighed certain named risks and repercussions associated with disclosure?

Questions to ask yourself

If you are on the editorial board of a journal or conducting a peer review of a submitted manuscript

1. What are my values and attitudes about objectivity and subjectivity in research, and how are those impacting my perspectives on the potential appropriateness of researcher positionality statements in the manuscripts I am reviewing?
2. Am I aware of the potential vulnerabilities associated with self-disclosure and how am I weighing these against the potential benefits when thinking about the role and associated importance of researcher positionality statements in the research manuscripts I am reviewing?
3. Would I accept/reject for publication a research manuscript that includes no researcher positionality statement, regardless of research discipline or method?
4. Would I accept/reject for publication a research manuscript that includes a positionality statement, but where all involved in the research are outside of the community of study and where the manuscript does not discuss the associated impacts on recruitment, retention data collection, power dynamics, analysis, etc.?
5. Would I accept/reject for publication a research manuscript that includes a positionality statement, and where researchers who are outside of the community of study are attentive to the impact of their positionality on the study?




Additional reading

This list includes both additional recommended readings and items that were cited in this tool.

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