

## Organization Science Special Issue Policy

Organization Science publishes six issues each year containing papers submitted and evaluated on a rolling basis. Occasionally, the journal will publish “special issues” (SI) that center around a topic or phenomenon of great importance to policy, practice, and theory. In exceptional circumstances, these special issues might center around a particularly important and emerging empirical method, as is the case with the Volume 34 Issue 6 on field experiments in organizational theory. The key characteristic of special issues is that they tackle a problem of exceptional importance.

Special issues have historically emerged as various forms of proposals that were informally evaluated by the editorial leadership team. Although the evaluation of these proposals was careful and well-informed, this document seeks to clarify and make transparent a formal process through which special issue proposals will be evaluated. We intend for this to produce a fair process for authors to develop proposals and for the editorial team to evaluate them. We also intend to alert all scholars to this opportunity and reduce any reservations they might have in asking for the evaluation of a proposal.

### Submission Process

The team of deputy editors at Organization Science will evaluate all proposals on a quarterly basis, with deadlines of December 1, March 1, June 1, and September of each year. Any submissions missing the deadline will be pushed to the next three-month evaluation. Proposals should be a maximum of 5 pages (12-point font, double-spaced) independent of references, figures, and tables. Although the editor-in-chief (EIC) will make the final decision on special issue proposals, they will collect feedback from all deputy editors as well as any senior editors with special expertise on the topic. The EIC may request clarification or additional information from submitting authors and will endeavor to return decisions within 30 days from the deadline.

Proposals will either be rejected or invited to make revisions under which the special issue proposal will be approved. Submitters may choose to withdraw proposals if these revisions are not acceptable to them. Given limited capacity, the EIC will accept no proposals in most three-month cycles and one in some cycles. In exceptional circumstances, two proposals might move forward. The journal does not intend to publish more than one SI per year, and potentially less than that.

### Criterion for the Evaluation of SI Proposals

Special issue proposals will be evaluated based on multiple criteria, of which each proposal will have relative strengths and weaknesses. Submitting parties should consider and recognize these criteria in their proposals. They are:

1. Is this a topic that is highly relevant for current and emerging challenges facing organizations?
2. Is this a broad enough topic that it will attract the many submissions needed to create a high-quality SI of at least 10 papers?
3. Is the topic not so broad that it will feel incohesive?
4. Is the topic one that will engage a broad range of readers and potential authors?
5. Is the topic one where new work can significantly improve what we already know through theory, empirics, or setting? Is the topic fully saturated in the literature, or is there instead an opportunity to make major advances through the SI?

6. Does the editorial team have sufficient experience, knowledge, and diversity to conduct a fair and efficient process that identifies and develops the highest potential submissions?
7. Does the special issues primarily advance a specific theoretical arguments or editor interests? Proposals focused on a specific theoretical lens are unlikely to be successful.

### Special Issue Requirements and Principles

*Organization Science* has specific requirements for successful SI proposals and the process through which the issue is constructed. The requirements are set forth to ensure a fair, transparent, and efficient process through which paper submissions are evaluated and revised. These rules and requirements are:

1. Each SI will have a standing senior- or deputy editor as part of the team to ensure consistency with the principles and processes of the journals. Proposals do not need to identify this editor prior to submission but should indicate a set of editors that might be appropriate for this role.
2. The SI will have at maximum six editors, including the standing editor. Exceptions will be considered in cases where a very diverse set of expertise is required.
3. The SI paper review process will not run as a tournament, where papers compete with each for a space in the issue. Papers will be evaluated independently. Special issues might range from 10 to 20 papers, with that size dictated by the journal's quality standards and the discretion of the special issue editors.
4. Since SIs are not tournaments, the editorial team will issue decisions on a rolling basis and will not wait for all decisions to come in before deciding any submission. Similarly, initial submissions within three months of the deadline will be evaluated on a rolling basis. This will accelerate the review process and prioritize the interests of authors.
5. SI editors will detail a decision-making process for their team if a proposal is accepted (e.g., individual editor autonomy, team decisions). Each SI will have a "lead editor" that coordinates all submissions in the review process to ensure that the review process proceeds at an efficient pace. SI editors should endeavor to distribute papers to the team member with the appropriate expertise to evaluate the paper, instead of through random assignment. SI editors are free to consider load balancing as they deem appropriate, so long as no editor handles more than 40% of the manuscripts.
6. Papers submitted to special issues will follow standard *Organization Science* submission guidelines.
7. SI editors will not submit their own papers to the special issue, with the exception of one introductory piece from all the editors. Journal conflict-of-interest policies apply as with regular submissions. Special issues should not reflect the network of the editors, but strive for the best papers from diverse set of authors.
8. SI editors will follow the basic review process principles of the journal:
  - a. Target review times are within three months, and only rarely exceed four months.
  - b. SI editors should seek three reviews from scholars with no conflict of interest with authors.
  - c. SI editors should strive to only seek reviews for the first two rounds, with rejections rarely occurring in the third or fourth round. Invited revision letters should strive to clearly detail one or more viable paths to publication, with the intent to avoid "very high-risk" revision requests except in unusual circumstances. Exceptions to this can be negotiated with the EIC based on differences across methodologies (e.g., ethnographic work).

- d. Editorial decisions are not based on reviewer “votes”. In cases where the decision unanimously conflicts with reviewer recommendations, the EIC should be consulted.
  - e. Papers will be evaluated in ways consistent with the editorial statement of the journal.
9. The EIC retains the right to intervene in extraordinary circumstances where the review process is clearly unfair or when the SI is being significantly delayed due to excessive review rounds.