

**Call for Submissions for a Special Series for *Research in Special Education*  
Open Science Practices and the Early Career Researcher: A Push to Advance Special  
Education Research**

[\*Research in Special Education\* \(RiSE\)](#) is a Diamond Open Access journal promoting rigorous and high-quality scholarship that enhances the educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities. We aim to address the challenges of traditional journals by embracing open science principles, including data sharing, open access, and open peer review. *RiSE* covers diverse topics in special education and is inclusive of all research methods. All articles undergo a rigorous double-blind peer review process. As a Diamond Open Access journal, all articles are freely accessible worldwide, and our continuous publishing model ensures prompt dissemination of impactful research. We actively promote our publications to maximize visibility and reach.

**Special Series on Using Open Practices to Advance Special Education Research**

In recent years, members of the special education research community have increasingly embraced the open science (OS) movement, which seeks to enhance the credibility of research by promoting openness, transparency, and reproducibility (Cook et al., 2018; Nosek et al., 2015). Researchers can incorporate OS at various stages of their work through practices such as pre-registration, registered reports, data sharing, material sharing, and open-access publishing (Cook et al., 2022). In the field of special education, widespread adoption of OS practices in research can directly impact policy and legislation concerning the education of students with disabilities.

While many special education researchers recognize the importance of OS, there is a need for more knowledge about how to adopt these practices across the diverse research methods used in the field (Fleming et al., 2024). Compounding this issue, research highlights a scarcity of publications in special education that reflect OS practices (Cook et al., 2023; Kittelman et al., 2018; Lemons et al., 2016; Therrien et al., 2018). While special education studies regularly include conflicts of interest statements (66%) and funding support (64%), special education studies rarely include other OS practices including explicit replication (4%), preregistration (2%), and open data (1%; Cook et al., 2023). Kittelman et al. (2018) found that submission of null results is not widely encouraged in special education journals, and the publication of null results is relatively uncommon, with only 0.4% of studies reporting solely null findings. Similarly, Lemons et al. (2016) found that only 0.5% of articles in special education journals were replication studies. Special education researchers, including early career researchers (ECRs), view OS favorably, yet, though there remains a dearth of research and guidance on ECRs' experiences with OS practices (Fleming et al., 2024).

The literature shows that ECRs generally hold positive attitudes toward OS, sometimes more favorable than those of senior colleagues and mentors (Abele-Brehm et al., 2019; Houtkoop et al., 2018; Soderberg et al., 2020; Toribio-Florez et al., 2021). For example, Abele-Brehm and

colleagues (2019) found that ECRs in psychology expressed more favorable views of OS than senior researchers. Similarly, Soderberg et al. (2020) surveyed 3,759 researchers across disciplines and found that graduate students and postdoctoral researchers were the most supportive of preprints, while full professors were the least supportive. In special education, Fleming et al. (2024) reported that ECRs are more likely than tenured faculty to engage in OS practices. Collectively, these findings suggest that ECRs are often enthusiastic advocates for greater openness and transparency in research (Franham et al., 2017; Pownall et al., 2021).

OS practices offer numerous benefits for ECRs (Cook et al., 2022). For instance, preregistering studies encourages ECRs to critically assess their study design, analysis, and expected outcomes before conducting the research (Fleming et al., 2023). Moreover, adopting OS signals a commitment to transparency, which can help set ECRs apart from their peers. Open-access articles tend to receive more citations and downloads (Fu & Hughey, 2019; Piwowar et al., 2018), and many journals feature OS badges on manuscripts for open data, open materials, and preregistration (Kidwell et al., 2016). Engaging in OS practices can also facilitate collaborations with other researchers. For example, sharing data from one's study may prompt follow-up studies or new research questions, leading to future partnerships.

Despite these advantages, many ECRs, as well as more established researchers, in special education do not fully engage in OS practices (Cook et al., 2023; Fleming et al., 2024). This gap between attitudes and practice highlights an area for growth, but also underscores the existence of barriers to adoption. OS practices can be time-consuming and often require additional training or expertise (Cook et al., 2022). Researchers also worry that the extra effort invested in these practices may not be fully recognized by promotion and tenure committees, which might not value diverse, open outputs (Pontika et al., 2022). These concerns are particularly relevant for pre-tenure researchers navigating a publish-or-perish culture.

Given these challenges, **this special series aims to achieve two goals**: first, to identify specific barriers to OS adoption among ECRs and document their experiences in implementing these practices; and second, to develop and disseminate resources that help overcome these barriers and increase the uptake of OS practices. ECRs include individuals currently engaged in doctoral studies, or who received a doctoral degree no earlier than April 1, 2017. These resources could include (a) guides for incorporating OS practices into dissertations and other research projects, (b) strategies for integrating OS into PhD training programs, (c) postdoctoral training programs focused on OS, (d) resources and support for mentors and advisors, and (e) exemplar ECR led research studies using OS practices.

In this special series, we seek submissions that speak to how scholars are engaging in concrete ways to contribute to OS literature in special education and support ECRs in adopting OS practices. Submissions that promote and/or model OS practices are encouraged.

Overall, this special series aims to explore key questions such as: **How has OS been used in special education research and practice? How can increased familiarity with OS drive the field forward, especially considering ECRs as a resource? How can OS practices enhance the quality, relevance, and longevity of special education research? How can OS practices be leveraged by ECRs when conducting research during and beyond their doctoral program?**

We encourage a variety of submissions, including:

1. **Guidance and resources** that establish quality indicators for OS research, especially for supporting doctoral students and ECRs in pursuing OS.
2. **Conceptual papers and calls to action** that address organizational changes (e.g., tenure and promotion guidelines incentivizing OS use) or advocate for integrating OS into funding mechanisms like graduate and postdoctoral training grants.
3. **Empirical studies** that use OS practices (e.g., registered reports, preregistration, open data, shared materials) and focus on OS practices or ECRs in special education, even if the study design itself does not incorporate OS. Examples include:
  - a. Research exploring how scholars have learned about and integrated OS into their work (e.g., interviews, surveys);
  - b. Reviews of OS or ECR literature in special education (e.g., meta-analyses, systematic literature reviews);
  - c. Analyses of OS usage patterns in special education research (e.g., a network analysis focused on the use of OS among researchers);
  - d. Studies exploring how OS is currently taught in doctoral programs (e.g., studies of syllabi, interviews, observational studies).
  - e. Analyses of policy statements and other guidance posted by publications (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) or organizations (e.g., CEC, IES, universities) related to the use of OS in special education research.
  - f. Exemplar ECR led (i.e., 1<sup>st</sup> Author) research studies using multiple OS practices (e.g., pre-registration, open data, open code, open materials).

We encourage proposals of research reports that use a range of methods (e.g., qualitative research, secondary data analyses, randomized control trials) relevant to special education.

### **Submitting Your Proposal**

We invite potential authors to submit a one-page single-spaced proposal that includes the following: (a) proposed title of the manuscript and names and affiliations of authors, (b) a brief statement about the overall topic that will be addressed, (c) a brief explanation of how the manuscript fits with the purpose of the special issue and how it advances theory into practice, and (d) a brief description of the research/theory/scholarship that will support any recommendations put forth in the manuscript. **Proposals are due by April 15th, 2025.**

## **Tentative Timeline**

February 17, 2025– Call for abstracts for the special series of *RiSE*

April 15, 2025– Due date for abstracts

May 15, 2025– Accepting/Rejecting Proposals

October 1, 2025– First drafts of papers due\*

November 2025 - June 2026– Peer Review and Revision\*

Fall 2026-Publication\*

\*Due to the open science nature of the journal, articles will be published online to *RiSE* on a rolling basis pending the completion of peer review. Authors are welcome to select an alternative due date for their first draft following acceptance of the proposal with permission from the guest editors.

Please submit your proposal via [this link](#) by April 15th, 2025.

Submission link (copy & paste in browser if above hyperlink does not work):

<https://forms.gle/hLXDUsXVmrvd7i2B6>

## **Guest Editors**

Tessa Arsenault - University of Texas at El Paso

Jesse Fleming - Arizona State University

Lindsey Kaler - Brown University

Lindsey Mirielli - Juniper Gardens Children's Project, University of Kansas

Anna Orlova - Stanford University

Graham Rifenshank - University of Wisconsin - Madison

Cherish Sarmiento - Utah State University

Christine White - Florida State University

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