IMPACT Journal

Reviewer Guidance

COMMENTARIES

Description of Commentaries

Commentaries are short, argument-driven pieces that engage a current question in the field, challenge a prevailing assumption, take stock of knowledge or understanding on a topic, or propose a new conceptual direction. These are agenda-setting pieces intended to deal with cutting-edge issues.

The goal of a commentary is to advance thought and actionable solutions, not simply to discuss a problem or summarize existing research. These pieces map solutions and explain why their argument matters for our understanding of when, where, and how research and research investments may, or may not, have an impact.

Commentaries are not intended to be blog posts or newspaper op-eds. While the author may clearly express an opinion, these pieces must be grounded in research and evidence. They are argument-based, not simply synopses or descriptions. Authors should explicitly state their argument at the beginning of the piece and support it with evidence throughout the piece.

Commentaries should deal with the impact on research beyond disciplines or sectoral boundaries. Commentaries should also be accessible to non-specialist readers, explaining the research in a clear and approachable way.

Commentaries should be 1,500–3,000 words.

Guidance for Reviewers

Please write a review of around a page (approximately 500 words). In your review, please assess the manuscript in relation to the criteria and guiding questions outlined below.

1. **Clarity of argument and writing:**
    - Does the commentary have a clear argument that is well-articulated and clearly written?
    - Do you have recommendations for improving the argument or its articulation?

2. **Substantiation with research or evidence:**
    - Is the argument, and each of its claims, supported by research and evidence? We want to ensure that commentaries do not advance unsubstantiated claims. Commentaries are not expected to include original research, although they may, but authors should substantiate all claims made in commentaries with research, descriptive evidence, or examples that support the argument. Commentaries should also address and substantiate counterarguments (whether counter factuals, alternative explanations, or alternative approaches).
    - Do you have recommendations for improving the research or evidence base of the manuscript?
3. **Cutting-edge topic:**
    - Is the manuscript concerned with a cutting-edge topic related to advancing and improving knowledge on the ways that research, evidence, research use, and research institutions and investments support broader impacts in the world?
    - Do you have recommendations for improving the relevance of the manuscript to cutting-edge topics?
4. **Grounded in existing scholarship and practice:**
    - Does the manuscript ground itself in existing scholarship and practice in its core area of focus?
    - Do you have recommendations for improving the way in which the manuscript builds on existing scholarship or practice?
5. **Interdisciplinary relevance:**
    - Is the manuscript relevant to a broader interdisciplinary audience?
    - Is it written in a way that is accessible to readers outside of the author's discipline or sector?
    - Do you have recommendations for making the manuscript more relevant to other disciplines and sectors?
6. **Actionable solutions and prescriptions:**
    - Does the manuscript present specific actions that should be taken because of its analysis, or new questions or considerations that result from the analysis?
    - Do you have recommendations for improving the broader implications or actions resulting from the manuscript's analysis?
7. **AI Assessment (include in feedback to the editor)**
    - Please include any concerns about the potential use of AI in generating the manuscript.

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Reviewer Guidance

TOOLS and RESOURCES

Description of Tools and Resources

The goal of "Tools and Resources" is to provide practical instruments that scholars, policymakers, philanthropists, or practitioners can use to strengthen research and evidence use and impact. Tools and Resources are not literature reviews or discussion pieces; they are instruments that practitioners and researchers can adopt and adapt across diverse contexts. This can include frameworks, guides, protocols, assessment tools, templates, methodological guides, or training curricula, among other options. Tools and Resources should have multi-disciplinary or multi-sectoral application.

Each tool or resource should be accompanied by a short description (2000 – 5000 words). The description should explain why the tool was developed (what problem did it seek to solve?); how it was tested and refined, with supporting evidence for both; the existing scholarship the methods on which the tool is based; how the tool is currently being used; the conditions under which the tool is likely to achieve the desired outcomes (supported by evidence); and how the tool could be expanded or just in conjunction with other tools/approaches. Authors should also identify the field or sector the tool relates to and its application across disciplines.

Guidance for Reviewers

Please write a review of around a page (approximately 500 words). In your review, please assess the manuscript in relation to the criteria and guiding questions outlined below.

1. **Broad relevance:**
    - Is the tool or resource of value across disciplines and sectors? If so, how? If not, why not?
    - Please indicate how the tool or resource could increase its broader relevance, if feasible.
2. **Grounding in existing scholarship and methods:**
    - Is the tool or resource grounded in existing scholarship or methods? Does it demonstrate its contribution to advancing this scholarship or methods?

- Do you have recommendations as to how the tool or resource could improve its grounding in existing scholarship or methods?

3. **Grounding in practice – tested and updated:**
    - Has the tool or resource been field-tested and improved?
    - Has the tool or resource been applied in the real world and is there evidence that it is a valuable tool or resource?
4. **Provides clear description of when, where, how, and why tool or resource is useful:**
    - Does the accompanying description adequately describe when, where, how, and why the tool or resource can be used and how this use will generate value?
    - Do you have recommendations as to how this added value could be more clearly articulated?
5. **AI Assessment (include in feedback to the editor)**
    - Please include any concerns about the potential use of AI in generating the manuscript.