



The Open Science of Religion (OSR) Project Call for Proposals

The [Open Science of Religion \(OSR\) project](#) aims to advance the use of Open Science Practices and Registered Reports in the psychology of religion/spirituality field. *Open Science Practices* are “practices that promote openness, integrity, and reproducibility in research” (Banks et al., 2019, p. 257), including openly sharing data/materials and preregistering study hypotheses and analytic plans. *Registered reports* are a publishing format in which “[studies] are thoroughly reviewed and revised [by expert peers] before researchers collect data... [and] then offered in-principle acceptance, in which the journal agrees to publish the results regardless of [the research outcomes]” (Chambers et al., 2015, p. A1). This outcome is fully dependent on the author closely adhering to the agreed-upon plan and providing an acceptably crafted report.

Across scientific disciplines, Open Science Practices and Registered Reports are becoming increasingly common. This advancement is helping enhance research quality and curb questionable research practices such as *p-hacking* (e.g., exploring different analytic alternatives until something yields statistical significance; Simmons et al., 2011) and *HARKing* (hypothesizing after the results are known; Kerr, 1998). Registered Reports also help reduce the selective reporting of variables and results, including the *file drawer problem* (suppression of nonsignificant results; O’Boyle et al., 2017). However, Open Science Practices and Registered Reports are currently underutilized in the psychology of religion/spirituality field.

Thanks to generous funding from the [John Templeton Foundation](#), the Open Science of Religion (OSR) Project is conducting an Award Competition to support psychology of religion/spirituality research that uses Open Science Practices and a Registered Report format. Eighteen awards of \$20,000 will be awarded to projects that are selected and receive in-principle acceptance for publication in one of three journals in the psychology of religion/spirituality field:

<i><u>Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (PRS)</u></i>	<i><u>The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion (IJPR)</u></i>	<i><u>Archive for the Psychology of Religion (APR)</u></i>
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Applicants must propose a project that advances theory within mainstream psychology of religion/spirituality by conducting a study (or multiple studies that are coherently related conceptually, methodologically, etc.) that utilizes quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, or meta-analytic methodologies. Typically, all studies except meta-analyses will involve human participants. Religion/spirituality (R/S) must be the *primary* focus of the project—not a secondary or tertiary focus (e.g., religion is used as a vehicle for obtaining insight in a social-psychological phenomenon). The appropriate theoretical scope for projects are topics considered within recent authoritative texts in the psychology of religion/spirituality field, such as: (a) [*The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Approach*](#) (5th ed.; Hood, Hill, & Spilka, 2018); (b)

[*Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*](#) (2nd ed.; Paloutzian & Park, 2013); (c) [*APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*](#) (Vols. 1 and 2; Pargament, 2013); or (d) [*An Introduction to the Cognitive Science of Religion*](#) (White, 2021).

Interested teams will prepare Stage 1 of a Registered Report, as described on the [Open Science of Religion’s project website](#). In brief, this report will provide an introduction, clearly stated hypotheses, and a plan for methods and data analysis that follows Open Science Practices and will produce meaningful results, regardless of the research outcomes.

The Core Project Team (Editors from the cooperating journals: Edward [Ward] B. Davis, Jordan LaBouff, and Michiel van Elk) will review the submitted Registered Reports, select the highest-quality projects, and identify which of the three participating journals will handle each selected submission. An action editor will be assigned, and a first decision will be made on the proposal’s potential, based on the standards of the journal and the feasibility of the study. If the proposal is deemed acceptable, peer reviewers will be identified and will be compensated (\$200 per review) for providing feedback and recommendations on the proposed plan of research. If the reviewers and editor ultimately agree that the proposed plan of research will make an important contribution to the scientific community—regardless of the research outcomes—then the project will be given in-principle acceptance.

The first 18 projects that receive in-principle acceptance through this process will be awarded \$20,000 to support their research and its dissemination. Part of the award must be earmarked for the Principal Investigator to present findings during at least one professional conference prior to September 15, 2024.

Please view the [Open Science of Religion project website](#) for information about the participating journals, eligibility requirements, how to prepare a Registered Report application for this project, and how to submit your proposed Registered Report. Submissions will be accepted beginning on January 1, 2022 and will be permitted until December 31, 2023—or until the competition is ended because all available money has been awarded.