

Special issue on open data - call for papers

Editor: Nick Rushby, Editor, BJET

The interest in open science continues to grow and although educational research (including research into educational technology) is lagging behind STEM subjects, *BJET* and many other journals in the area now offer hybrid open access.

Funding agencies, in the UK, North America and Australasia increasingly require researchers to make their data available to others through repositories. *BJET* is actively encouraging authors to make data available and asking for statements as to where and under what conditions data will be available.

Educational technology (and much of broader educational research) is characterised by small sample research and this limits the significance of the results. We need to move away from this situation and one solution is to support open data. Making data sets available to others makes it possible for others to repeat experiments with the aim of checking results, to build on the work of others, and to combine small data sets so that advanced statistical techniques can draw new and more significant conclusions.

A survey sent to over 8000 authors in *BJET* and other journals in the field indicated that interest in open data is increasing and that the majority of authors either place their data in a repository or would be prepared to make it available upon request. Most will make their data available if they are required to do so by their funding agency and we note that agencies are increasingly placing this requirement on projects.

This exciting special issue represents a new departure for *BJET*. Scheduled for mid-2015, it will give authors the opportunity of making their data sets more discoverable through the publication of a peer reviewed description in a major journal. These data papers *complement* the formal research paper that contains the novel analyses or ground breaking conclusions of your work. The benefits for authors will be:

- An additional citable reference from your work leading to increased citations
- Greater discoverability for your work
- Opportunities for future collaboration with others who wish to extend your work.

Readers of the special issue will benefit from

- Easier identification of relevant data sets that can be extended or aggregated for their own research.
- A better understanding of what has been done before so that they can avoid unnecessary repetition of research.

Data sets may be made openly available through your own institutional repository or via one of the international repositories such as:

- The Council of European Social Science Data Archives
- Figshare
- Data Research Australia
- Zenodo
- ResearchGate
- Repec
- Pittsburgh Science of Learning Data Shop

There are numerous other repositories

The format of a data paper

A data paper describes a dataset, giving details of its collection, processing, software, file formats etc, *without* the requirement of novel analyses or ground breaking conclusions. It allows the reader to understand when, how and why the data was collected and what the data-product is.

A typical educational research data paper will be around 1000-1500 words in length and might have the following sections:

- Abstract
- The dataset
 - Location and DOI
 - Creator
 - Date
 - Format
 - Restrictions to use (if any)
- Introduction
- Research method
- Ethical considerations
- Limitations
- Acknowledgements
- References (including references to the research papers)

You may find it helpful to look at some of the papers published in the Geosciences Data Journal (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/%28ISSN%292049-6060>). For example: Brunet, M., Gilabert, A. and Jones, P. (2014), A historical surface climate dataset from station observations in Mediterranean North Africa and Middle East areas. *Geoscience Data Journal*. doi: 10.1002/gdj3.12. Although these datasets are (clearly) not in the field of educational research, they can provide an indication of what your contribution might look like.

Please note that, unlike typical research papers published in *BJET*, the data papers in this special issue will not include a set of structured practitioners notes, or a statement of potential conflict of interest. The data paper itself gives the information about where and under what conditions the data can be accessed. But it will include the details of the ethical guidelines that were followed in collecting the data.

Key dates

Initial submission of manuscripts: 31st October 2014

Final versions to be received by: 1st March 2015

Publication in print form: 1st July 2015

Note that all submissions will be subject to peer review.

More information from: Nick Rushby bjeteditor@wiley.com