

## Authentic Interdisciplinarity: Anniversary Issue Call for Papers

*The key objective of this journal arises from Warwick's ambition to provide an intellectual gateway for research engagement at a regional, national and international level. Interdisciplinary research is an increasingly important part of our academic future and this publication seeks to provide a spot-light for non-traditional collaborations and those keen to push the barriers of their disciplinary activity. (Thrift, 2013: ii)*

### Context

*Exchanges* was founded in 2013 as an explicitly interdisciplinary journal, with a mission to further the communication between disciplines, and to encourage scholars to reach out and embrace thought and practice beyond their own disciplinary traditions. In this respect it resonates with the *Institute of Advanced Study's* mission to create 'synergies between traditional disciplines' (IAS, 2022). Consequently, *Exchanges* has over the past decade achieved this goal through the production of numerous volumes containing work from dozens of scholars around the world drawn from a myriad of disciplinary traditions. However, while these articles have offered unique insights, arguably few of them could be considered to specifically have unpicked, exposed or interrogated ideas and practices of interdisciplinarity.

As many authors have noted while scholarship within the academy was once dominated by disciplinary work, moves towards a greater interdisciplinary research culture have grown over the years (e.g. Marres, 2020; Robinson, 2008). Today, it has arguably become normalised as a mainstream activity by university leaders and funding agencies. Working in tandem with other significant sectoral bodies these actors have been keen to support the idea of how complex and problematic challenges can be best addressed through scholars working together across the disciplinary divide (Bothwell, 2020). Emerging scholars too are increasingly encouraged for the sake of their career, to embrace interdisciplinary working and thinking. Yet despite these moves, operationally many scholars continue to primarily work and self-identify with unitary disciplinary departments and schools.

As a consequence of these developments, aspects of the academic publishing field too has adapted to accommodate a framework of interdisciplinary discourse from scholars situating in collaborating fields. Many research journals, *Exchanges* among them, have capitalised on this by encouraging a greater interdisciplinary publishing culture through the provision of their diverse fora. Although, as disruptive challenges to a preeminent disciplinary publishing culture such titles may experience a varying degree of acceptance or face existential challenges (O'Brien et al., 2019).

However, while research may draw on differing or contrasting methods, methodologies and epistemologies, the degree to which such work can be perceived as 'authentically' interdisciplinary is questionable. In part some of the difficulties with seeking to publish what might be demarcated as 'authentic interdisciplinary' work, are disagreements over the definition of what interdisciplinary work actually comprises, as much as any resistance to move beyond traditional disciplinary realms. For some scholars, interdisciplinary work might today be perceived as a more natural occurrence within some disciplinary realms than others. Nevertheless, any personal desires to become a greater 'interdisciplinarian' may be countered with pragmatic or career necessities or others.

Yet, there are counters that work badged as interdisciplinary suffers from a ‘diminution’ of the rigor and focus witnessed were it to be situated entirely within a singular or closely related fields of study (**Bothwell, 2020**). Thus, the question might be posed, is interdisciplinarity research simply a prevailing trend rather than a genuine evolution of the scholarly research paradigm?

This gives rise to further questions concerning the definition of ‘interdisciplinarity’ and how we might differentiate ‘authentic’ from ‘inauthentic’ research practices. In turn, explorations of these synergistic themes may serve to better illuminate new insights into the state of cross-disciplinary research and research communications today. Not least with respect to whatever modest role *Exchanges* itself may have contributed.

### Call & Inspirations

*Interdisciplinarity is the coming together of two or more disciplines to formulate a research question and an innovative method of finding an answer to that question. The research question might arise from the relationship between these disciplines or from the problematic boundary where the research from two or more disciplines intersects, providing a new direction to explore. The combination of divergent considerations from these disciplines often creates a new way of thinking about a problem. (Grainger-Clemson et al., 2013: iii-iv)*

So, tying into the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue of *Exchanges: The Interdisciplinary Research Journal* we are seeking contributions which seek to celebrate, challenge or define ideas around **authentic interdisciplinarity**. Authors may wish to draw on their own research practices and activities or adopt a more holistic stance in engaging with the prior literature and activities within this broadly demarcated field. As is *Exchanges’* tradition, we will potentially consider any work which its authors choose to present which seeks to address the themes evident within this call.

Authors may also wish to draw upon methods or methodological practices within a variety of field. Alternatively, they may consider explore if there are discrete or disparate audiences for interdisciplinary rather than unitary disciplinary work in academia today. Additionally, pieces considering, rationalising or amplifying cross-disciplinary discourse concerning centring on the concepts of authentic interdisciplinarity would be warmly received.

Authors looking for further inspiration to frame their articles may wish to look to ideas from among the following topics of potential interest:

- Authenticity and/or inauthenticity within interdisciplinary research and practice
- Becoming an interdisciplinarian – practical advice or critical reflections
- Conversations with interdisciplinary giants
- Creating, evolving and/or maintaining interdisciplinary research practice
- Critical reflections of *Exchanges*: then, now and tomorrow
- Defining boundaries between inter, multi and trans-disciplinary research
- In defence of the unitary disciplinarian in an interdisciplinary academy
- The interdisciplinary decade: key developments of the past ten years
- What lies beyond the fringes or overlaps of interdisciplinary thought?

However, authors are encouraged to develop their own ideas, thought and methodological approaches or insights, and need not only adhere to the above suggestions, provided as inspiration.

As a journal with an early career focus, *Exchanges* especially welcomes submissions in response to this call from scholars at an early or formative stage of their academic research careers. Papers authored by uniting scholars from disparate disciplines providing multiple viewpoints will be especially welcomed as responses to this call (e.g., scientists writing with humanities scholars). Additionally, as this call is tied into our anniversary issue, we would encourage submissions from authors who have previously published with *Exchanges* throughout its existence too.

## Formats & Deadlines

Manuscripts may be submitted for consideration as peer-reviewed pieces (academic papers or review articles) or as editorially reviewed shorter contributions (critical reflections or conversations), as desired by their authors. However, please note the format adopted will modify the submission deadline (shown below).

- **Peer-Reviewed Papers or Review Articles** **30th November 2022**
- **Critical Reflections, Conversations (interviews) or Essays** **30th June 2023**

For more on these formats, their respective requirements and word limits please see the open call below, or our online Guide for Authors ([Exchanges, 2022](#)).

Alternatively, contact the Editor-in-Chief via the address below. Manuscripts submitted beyond these dates may still be considered for publication in the anniversary issue, at the Editor-in-Chief's discretion. Authors should note that the anticipated publication date for work submitted for this call is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

## Manuscript Submission

All articles should be submitted via *Exchanges'* online portal. New contributors will be required to register for an account with the journal as part of the submission process.

- [exchanges.warwick.ac.uk/index.php/exchanges/submission/wizard](https://exchanges.warwick.ac.uk/index.php/exchanges/submission/wizard)

Authors should highlight in their submission note to the editor the format under which their manuscript should be considered. If authors are unsure if their manuscript proposal meets the requirements of this call, they are strongly advised to consult with the Editor-in-Chief ahead of submission. Submissions of sufficient quality but which do not sufficiently address the themes of this call, may be instead considered under the non-thematic, open call for papers at the Editor-in-Chief's discretion.

As with all our themed calls, papers deemed by the journal to be suitably scholarly, but falling outside this call's framing, may be instead considered under the non-thematic, open call for papers at the Editor-in-Chief's discretion.

Further guidance and advice on submission can be found here:

- [exchanges.warwick.ac.uk/index.php/exchanges/about/submissions](https://exchanges.warwick.ac.uk/index.php/exchanges/about/submissions)

## Contact Details

The Editor-in-Chief, Dr Gareth J Johnson, welcomes informal discussions with authors concerning their submissions to this call ([exchangesjournal@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:exchangesjournal@warwick.ac.uk)). However, a pre-submission discussion is not a prerequisite for the submission of a manuscript to be considered with respect to this call.

## References

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