

Call for Papers

“Hotspots in Psychology 2026”

A Topical Issue of the *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*

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Focus of the Topical Issue, Aims, and Scope

The topical issue “Hotspots in Psychology 2026” is devoted to research addressing methods and applications of research syntheses (including systematic reviews and meta-analyses), as well as machine learning methods in psychology and related areas. Both approaches are particularly suitable for identifying and investigating hot topics: Since research synthesis techniques are established tools to aggregate primary findings from thematically related research, they may decisively contribute to shape and/or resolve hotspots debates in psychology and related fields. On the other hand, machine learning applications and analyses extend the methodological portfolio in psychology, for instance, through the inclusion of new data sources (e.g., social media, activity tracker, etc.) or the application of statistical techniques capable of analyzing massive amounts of data.

The overall aim of this topical issue is to address hotspot topics in all subfields of psychology and related areas with the aid of research synthesis and/or machine learning applications. The topics covered may address (but are not limited to):

- Systematic reviews and meta-analyses aimed at identifying hotspots topics
- Research syntheses on topics currently being debated
- Methodological advances in research synthesis methods relevant for any subfield of psychology, such as meta-analytic structural equation modeling (MASEM), individual person meta-analysis (IPD), and network meta-analysis, to name a few
- Quality appraisal approaches and instruments for primary and meta-analytic studies
- Applications of machine learning approaches with a theoretical focus (i.e., exploratory or confirmatory)

- Intensive longitudinal data analysis (e.g., with sensor data, ambulatory assessment)
- Causal search with machine learning and big data (e.g., large number of variables or individuals)
- Applications of large language models highlighting capabilities and use-cases for psychological research
- AI tools for meta-analysis (e.g., screening automation, data extraction, *living reviews*)
- Critical evaluation of ML procedures including their potential and especially limitations (e.g., in advancing theories)
- Tutorials on the use of new and innovative meta-analytic or machine learning techniques.

How to Submit

There is a two-stage submission process. Initially, interested authors are requested to submit extended abstracts of their proposed papers. Authors of the selected abstracts will then be invited to submit full papers. All papers will undergo blind peer review.

Stage 1: Structured Abstract Submission

Authors interested in this special issue must submit a structured abstract of the planned manuscript before submitting a full paper. The goal is to provide authors with prompt feedback regarding the suitability and relevance of the planned manuscript to the special issue.

The deadline for submitting structured abstracts is December 1, 2024.

Feedback on whether or not the editors encourage authors to submit a full paper will be given by December 31, 2024.

Submission Guidelines for Structured Abstracts

Structured abstracts should be within four pages and may encompass information on each of the following headings: (a) Background, (b) Objectives, (c) Research question(s) and/or hypothesis/es, (d) Method/Approach, (e) Results/Findings, and (f) Conclusions and implications (expected).

Structured abstracts should be submitted via the following website: <https://www.editorialmanager.com/zfp>

Stage 2: Full Paper Submission

For those who have been encouraged to submit a full paper,

**the deadline for submission of manuscripts is
April 30, 2025.**

Full manuscripts will undergo a blind peer-review process.

Submission Guidelines for Full Papers

- Only English language submissions can be considered.
- Contributions must be original (not published previously or currently under review for publication elsewhere).
- Review and original articles should not exceed 45,000 characters and spaces in length, including references, figures, and tables (allowances for figures and tables should be deducted on the basis of size: approximately 1,250 characters for a quarter-page figure/table).
- All research syntheses should adhere to the meta-analytic reporting standards (MARS) proposed by the APA (<http://www.apa.org/pubs/authors/jars.pdf>).

Additionally, authors should include a statement in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement (<http://www.prisma-statement.org>) as a supplemental file for review.

- Other submission formats (short reports, research summaries, opinion pieces, etc.) are also considered; please contact the editors for details.
- Reference citations in the text and in the reference list should be in accordance with the principles set out in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).
- Supplemental material must be made available through Zenodo: <https://zenodo.org/>
- See also any recent issue of the journal.

For detailed author guidelines, please see the journal's website at www.hogrefe.com/j/zfp/

Timeline

- **December 1, 2024:** Abstract submissions due
- **December 31, 2024:** Feedback to authors
- **April 30, 2025:** Full paper submissions due
- **July 15, 2025:** Feedback to authors of full paper submissions due
- **August 15, 2025:** Revised manuscripts due
- **August 31, 2025:** Editorial decision about acceptance/refusal of revised papers due
- **Issue 1 (2026):** Publication of topical issue