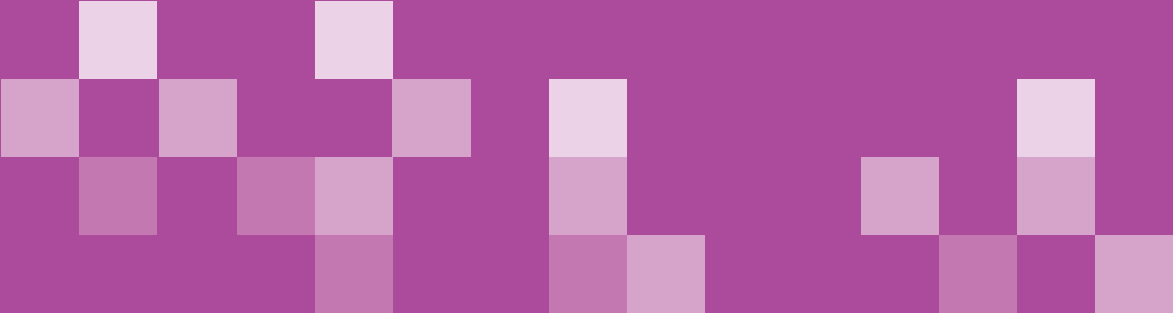


# ENCODING EQUITY ALLIANCE: MEDICAL JOURNALS IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT



## INTRODUCTION

The Encoding Equity Alliance is an alliance of organizations and individuals committed to driving change in clinical research and practice to advance health equity and optimize access and outcomes for all populations. Encoding Equity galvanizes collective action to amplify our impact, making change more quickly and comprehensively than would be possible for any one organization or group of constituencies on their own. Led by the Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS), with support from the Doris Duke Foundation (DDF), the alliance engages and activates individuals and organizations across the medical, research, funding, publishing, and technology sectors.

The ultimate goal of these efforts is to advance health equity through a scientifically rigorous, evidence-driven, context-specific evaluation of the use and misuse of race and ethnicity in healthcare predictive algorithms and guidelines.

## THE ROLE OF JOURNALS IN THE RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM

Medical journals occupy a unique position in the biomedical research ecosystem. They shape not only what enters the scientific record but how findings are framed, interpreted, and ultimately applied in clinical care and health policy. This position carries responsibility: journals can either reinforce harmful uses of race and ethnicity or they can implement approaches that ultimately promote health equity.

## THE CORE CHALLENGE

Race and ethnicity are social constructs that have been misused in medicine to reflect biological differences to explain differences in health outcomes. However, disparities related to race and ethnicity actually reflect the effects of racism, unequal access to resources, environmental exposures, structural inequities, and geography and geopolitics. Studies that include a description of race and ethnicity data can document health disparities, describe who is represented in a study, and lead to an understanding of how the social factors behind race and ethnicity affect health outcomes. This creates a challenge for authors and journal editors: how to avoid treating race and ethnicity as biological while documenting their effects.

## JOURNALS ARE “DOWNSTREAM” BUT NOT POWERLESS

By the time a manuscript reaches editorial review, the research has already been designed and conducted. Journals cannot retroactively fix legacy datasets with flawed categories, address a lack of diversity in trial enrollment, compensate for poor measurement of social and structural factors, or redesign badly designed studies. This toolkit acknowledges that journals cannot solve upstream problems.

But journals are not powerless. Through editorial policies, reviewer guidance, author requirements, and reporting standards, journals set expectations that shape how future research gets done. They can decline to publish research that causes harm or misleads, and they can encourage and reward better practices.

## THE DANGER OF PERFORMATIVE COMPLIANCE

A persistent risk in any standards-based effort is performative compliance. Authors may include boilerplate statements (for example, “race is a social construct”) and then proceed to use race as a biological variable in their analysis. Checklists and guidelines designed to improve rigor can create the appearance of accountability without actually changing critical thinking or practice.

This toolkit tries to address this risk by describing not just what journals should require, but why it matters and how to make it real. Real accountability requires ongoing reflection. Implementation toolkits themselves can become compliance exercises if people treat them that way. The strategies in this toolkit are meant to promote reflection, not proof that the work is done.

## THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

This toolkit is one piece of the broader Encoding Equity initiative, which addresses appropriate use of race and ethnicity across the research-to-practice continuum. Journals are part of a connected system, working alongside funders, researchers, institutions, and professional societies. Changes in journal policy can drive change and reinforce changes happening elsewhere in the system. Although some medical journals may not regularly publish articles addressing race and ethnicity, all journals should be prepared for this important work.

## THE IMPLEMENTATION GAP

Most journals do not have explicit policies on the use of race and ethnicity, and those that exist tend to focus on style (terminology, capitalization, inclusive language) rather than content, such as scientific rationale and appropriate use as a variable. Journals are far more likely to have policies on the use of sex and gender than on the use of race and ethnicity. Many journals may not be aware that ICMJE now includes race and ethnicity guidance. Other journals may be aware but have challenges in implementing the guidance. Higher-impact journals are more likely to have policies; smaller and specialty journals are less likely, often due to resource constraints rather than lack of interest.

## THE STYLE VS. CONTENT DISTINCTION

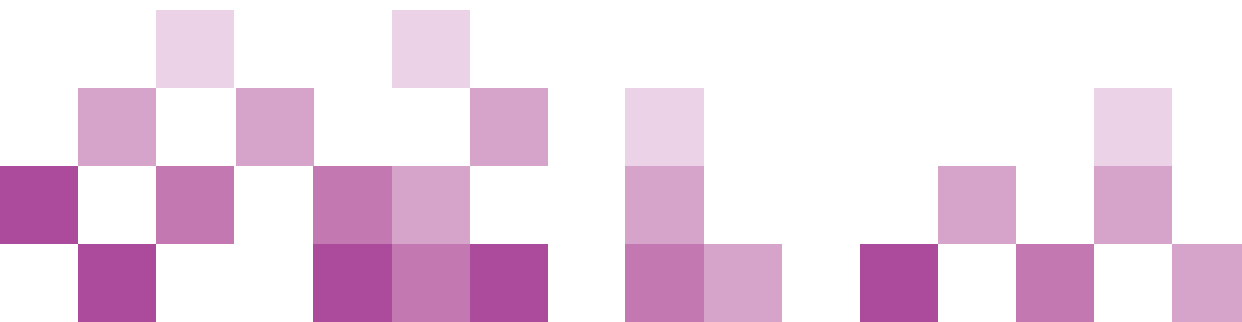
An important distinction runs through this toolkit: “style” policies address how race and ethnicity are discussed (terminology, capitalization, alphabetization of groups) while “content” policies address whether and why race and ethnicity are used as variables and how findings are interpreted. Staff editors and copy editors can enforce style. Evaluating content requires scientific judgment. A journal can have excellent style compliance (never using “Caucasian,” properly capitalizing “Black”) while still publishing research that treats race as a biological variable without justification. Both matter, but the field needs to move beyond style-only approaches.

## WHAT THIS TOOLKIT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

This is a menu of options, not a list of requirements. Different journals will take different approaches depending on their size, resources, and editorial structure. The toolkit is modeled on the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) change package framework, organized around Primary Drivers (the big levers for change), Change Concepts (broad strategies within each driver), and Change Ideas (specific, actionable steps). It is designed to be useful for large, well-resourced publishers with trained staff editors and for small specialty journals run by volunteer editors. Change ideas are tagged by resource level so journals can find a realistic starting point. Journals do not need to implement everything — incremental changes matter. And this is a living document: the science, terminology, and best practices in this space are evolving, and policies will need to evolve with them.

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Start wherever it makes sense for your journal. There is no required sequence. Identify your journal’s current state: Does it have any policy at all? Is the policy style-only, or does it address content? Do reviewers receive any guidance on evaluating the use of race and ethnicity? Choose one or two change ideas that are feasible given your resources and start there. Use the tiered resource indicators to find strategies matched to your capacity. Connect with the broader Encoding Equity community and peer journals for shared learning.



Not every journal will encounter race and ethnicity as a frequent study variable. Journals with narrower scopes, such as those focused on laboratory science, medical education, or specialties where population-level research is rare, may find that only a subset of these strategies applies regularly to their work. That is expected and appropriate. The resource-light baseline strategies, particularly around policy infrastructure and author guidance language, are designed to be universally applicable. The more intensive change ideas are most relevant for journals where race and ethnicity appear frequently as study variables or where participant demographics are central to the research being published.

## UNDERSTANDING THE TIERING SYSTEM

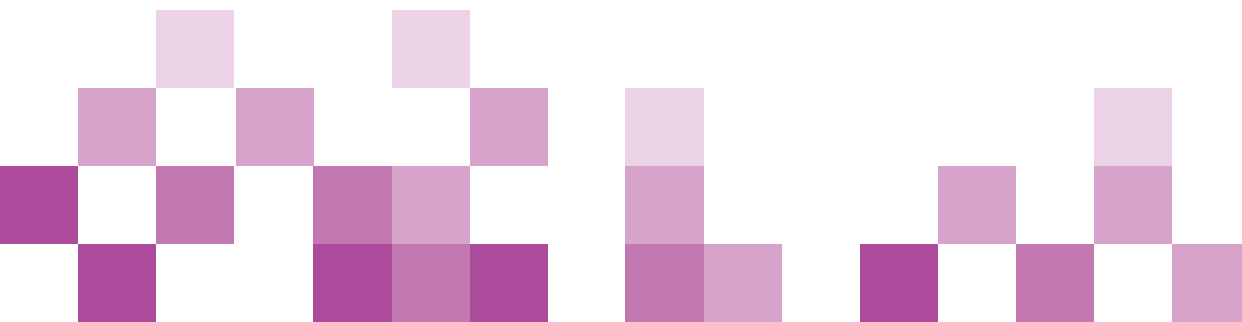
Throughout this toolkit, change ideas are tagged with resource-level indicators to help journals identify what's feasible given their size, staffing, and budget:

■ **Resource-Light** — Minimal resource requirement; any journal can implement with existing capacity

■ **Resource-Moderate** — Some additional editorial infrastructure, staff time, or coordination required

■ **Resource-Intensive** — Significant staff, budget, or organizational commitment needed

These resource tiers are not value judgments. Resource-light approaches can be highly effective. Resource-intensive approaches are not inherently better — they simply require more infrastructure and investment.



## CONNECTION TO NASEM REPORT

This toolkit builds on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) 2024 report *Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Biomedical Research*, specifically **Recommendation 8** which provides four action items for journals and publishers:

1. Require scientific rationale for use of race and ethnicity, describe data provenance, acknowledge limitations
2. Provide reviewer guidelines for assessing race and ethnicity reporting
3. Require reporting results across racial/ethnic groups (for health technologies)
4. Periodically evaluate policies to assess adherence and monitor progress

Primary Driver	NASEM Action Item
1. Editorial Policy & Author Guidance	Action Item 1
2. Peer Reviewer Guidelines and Support	Action Item 2
3. Reporting and Transparency Standards	Action Item 3
4. Policy Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	Action Item 4
5. Cross-Publisher Coordination	Additional NASEM Guidance

## PRIMARY DRIVER 1: EDITORIAL POLICY & AUTHOR GUIDANCE

Change Concept	Change Ideas
<b>Establish or strengthen journal policy on race and ethnicity</b>	<p><b>Adopt or adapt an existing standard as a starting point</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reference ICMJE recommendations on race and ethnicity reporting</li><li>• Adapt JAMA Network’s published guidance or AMA Manual of Style language</li><li>• Use the NASEM report’s framework as the basis for a policy statement</li></ul> <p><b>Develop a journal-specific formal written policy</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distinguish between style requirements (terminology, capitalization) and content requirements (rationale, provenance, limitations)</li><li>• Include policy on both the use of race and ethnicity as study variables and the reporting of participant demographics</li><li>• Address how to handle legacy datasets where original data collection categories cannot be changed</li></ul> <p><b>Secure editorial leadership commitment to the policy</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Editor-in-chief endorsement and communication to editorial board</li><li>• Discuss at editorial board meetings; document rationale for the policy</li><li>• For journals governed by professional societies: align with society leadership and any parallel society-level equity work</li></ul> <p><b>Situate the policy within the current political and institutional landscape</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frame the work in terms of scientific rigor and research quality, not solely diversity/equity language</li><li>• Consider naming conventions carefully (e.g., one journal shifted from “EDI Review” to “Contemporary Language and Population”)</li><li>• Anticipate and prepare for pushback; ground messaging in evidence and scientific standards</li></ul>

**Provide clear, actionable guidance to authors**

**Update instructions for authors ■**

- Require authors to explain why race and ethnicity are included as study variables
- Require description of how race and ethnicity data were collected (self-report, investigator-assigned, administrative data, etc.) and by whom
- Require authors to define race and ethnicity as used in their study
- Require acknowledgment of limitations of race and ethnicity data in the methods section—not only in the limitations section

**Address common content pitfalls in author guidance ■**

- Guidance on avoiding use of race as a biological or explanatory variable for health disparities without scientific justification
- Guidance on the “social construct disclaimer” problem: acknowledging race as a social construct while still using it as if biological
- Guidance on appropriate use of race vs. ancestry, ethnicity, nationality, and geographic origin
- Guidance on reporting structural racism, discrimination, and social determinants alongside racial/ethnic data

**Provide specific guidance for special cases ■**

*Legacy/secondary datasets*

- When original data collection categories cannot be changed, require transparent description of the categories and their limitations
- Require authors to be explicit that they’re limited by how data were previously described; place this limitation upfront
- Require that acknowledgment of legacy data limitations is carried through the findings and discussion — not treated as a one-time disclaimer in the methods section that is then ignored in the interpretation of results

*International research*

- Acknowledge that racial and ethnic categories vary across countries and contexts
- Require authors to describe the local classification system used and its relevance

*Genetic/genomic research*

- Guidance on use of race vs. genetic ancestry groups

<p><b>Provide clear, actionable guidance to authors</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Provide specific guidance for special cases</b> (cont.)  <i>Health technology research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require reporting results across racial/ethnic groups (per NASEM Action Item 3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Integrate policy into submission and editorial workflow</b></p>	<p><b>Add race and ethnicity reporting requirements to the submission checklist</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At minimum: a checkbox or question during submission asking whether race and ethnicity is used, and if so, confirming the rationale, provenance, and limitations are described</li> </ul> <p><b>Train staff editors to screen for compliance</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff/copy editors can screen for style compliance (terminology, capitalization, alphabetization of groups)</li> <li>• Train staff editors on the difference between style and content issues; establish clear escalation pathways for content concerns</li> </ul> <p><b>Adapt editorial review to each journal's structure and resources</b> ■ ■ ■</p> <p>Journals have found several workable models, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handling editors review race and ethnicity issues as part of standard editorial assessment</li> <li>• Designated associate editors with health equity expertise flag manuscripts for closer attention</li> <li>• Trained staff editors conduct systematic review of all accepted manuscripts</li> <li>• Highly selective journals apply standards retrospectively, only to manuscripts that have cleared initial review</li> </ul> <p><b>Engage authors through direct dialogue</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include specific comments regarding race and ethnicity guidance in revision letters</li> <li>• Provide constructive, specific feedback rather than generic rejection language</li> <li>• Frame editorial requests around scientific quality and transparency</li> <li>• Consider phone/video calls for particularly complex issues</li> </ul>

<p><b>Integrate policy into submission and editorial workflow (cont.)</b></p>	<p><b>Be prepared to reject manuscripts when necessary</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish clear criteria for rejection related to race and ethnicity issues</li> <li>• Communicate rejection rationale clearly to authors</li> <li>• Use rejections as educational opportunities</li> </ul>
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**PRIMARY DRIVER 2: PEER REVIEWER GUIDELINES & SUPPORT**

<p><b>Change Concept</b></p>	<p><b>Change Ideas</b></p>
<p><b>Provide explicit guidance to peer reviewers</b></p>	<p><b>Add a race and ethnicity prompt to the peer reviewer form</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Example (from JAMA Network): “Are there concerns about Equity, Diversity, or Inclusion (EDI) in terms of framing, methods, terminology, inclusive language, or representativeness that the authors should address?”</li> <li>• Can be a simple yes/no checkbox with a free-text comment field</li> <li>• Low burden on reviewers; serves as a prompt/reminder even if most check “no”</li> </ul> <p><b>Develop a brief reviewer guidance document on race and ethnicity</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on key questions reviewers should consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a scientific rationale for including race and ethnicity?</li> <li>• How were race and ethnicity data collected? Is data provenance described?</li> <li>• Are limitations of race and ethnicity data acknowledged?</li> <li>• Is race and ethnicity used as a biological variable without justification?</li> <li>• Are structural racism or other contextual factors considered?</li> <li>• Are results reported across racial/ethnic groups where appropriate?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To the degree possible, keep it concise</li> </ul>

<p><b>Provide explicit guidance to peer reviewers (cont.)</b></p>	<p><b>Create a more detailed reviewer checklist for flagged manuscripts</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For use when a manuscript is specifically flagged for race and ethnicity review</li> <li>• Structured assessment covering rationale, data provenance, terminology, framing, analysis, and limitations</li> </ul> <p><b>Develop or curate training resources for peer reviewers</b> ■ ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short online module or webinar on evaluating race and ethnicity in research</li> <li>• Annotated examples of well-handled and poorly-handled race and ethnicity reporting</li> <li>• Reference to NASEM report and key literature</li> </ul>
<p><b>Select and support reviewers with relevant expertise</b></p>	<p><b>Be intentional about reviewer selection for race and ethnicity-intensive manuscripts</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select at least one reviewer with research experience relevant to the populations or equity questions addressed</li> <li>• This does not mean only selecting reviewers from underrepresented groups; focus on expertise in the relevant science</li> </ul> <p><b>Create a pool of reviewers with equity expertise</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate a group of reviewers with demonstrated expertise in race and ethnicity methodology</li> <li>• For smaller journals: identify 2-3 people willing to serve in this capacity</li> <li>• For larger journals: maintain a database of equity-competent reviewers across relevant specialties</li> </ul> <p><b>Develop peer review mentorship for early-career scholars</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair early-career reviewers with experienced reviewers on manuscripts that involve race and ethnicity considerations</li> <li>• Mentorship can be structured (formal pairing with shared review assignments) or informal (senior reviewer available for consultation when questions arise)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Select and support reviewers with relevant expertise (cont.)</b></p>	<p><b>Develop peer review mentorship for early-career scholars (cont.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This builds long-term capacity in the reviewer pipeline and helps emerging scholars develop competence in evaluating the use of race and ethnicity in research</li> <li>• For smaller journals: even one mentorship pairing builds capacity over time</li> </ul> <p><b>Use collaborative editorial decision-making for complex cases</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring manuscripts with challenging race and ethnicity issues to editorial meetings for group discussion</li> <li>• Especially important when international reviewers may be less likely to raise race and ethnicity concerns rooted in U.S. or other specific national contexts</li> </ul>
<p><b>Address reviewer burden realistically</b></p>	<p><b>Minimize additional burden through smart design</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate race and ethnicity questions into existing reviewer forms rather than adding a separate form</li> <li>• Limit initial ask to a single prompt/checkbox; detailed review only when flagged</li> <li>• Recognize that not every manuscript requires detailed race and ethnicity review — triage is appropriate</li> </ul> <p><b>Compensate or recognize equity-focused review work</b> ■ ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If using a dedicated equity review panel, consider compensation (even modest honoraria)</li> <li>• Recognize equity review contributions in annual reviewer acknowledgments</li> </ul> <p><b>Don't rely solely on peer reviewers</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge that peer reviewers may not read or apply guidance even when provided</li> <li>• Build redundancy: staff editors catch style issues; associate editors catch content issues; peer reviewers add scientific judgment</li> <li>• Multiple layers of review create a safety net</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recognize different viable approaches</b></p>	<p><b>The Staff-Driven Model</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-resourced journals handle all race and ethnicity review through paid editorial staff</li> <li>• Peer reviewers focus exclusively on scientific content</li> </ul>

<p><b>Recognize different viable approaches</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>The Staff-Driven Model</b> (cont.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards applied after acceptance, during production</li> </ul> <p><b>The Collaborative Model</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combine staff review (style) with strategic reviewer selection (substance) and equity editor consultation (complex cases)</li> <li>Editorial meetings provide forum for discussing challenging manuscripts</li> </ul> <p><b>The Minimalist Model</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple checkbox on reviewer form; handling editors address flagged issues</li> <li>No specialized training or dedicated roles</li> </ul>
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<b>PRIMARY DRIVER 3: REPORTING &amp; TRANSPARENCY STANDARDS</b>	
<b>Change Concept</b>	<b>Change Ideas</b>
<p><b>Require limitations to be stated upfront</b></p>	<p><b>For legacy datasets: require acknowledgment in introduction, not just limitations section</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevents readers from misinterpreting findings without context</li> <li>Authors must be explicit that they're limited by how data were previously described</li> <li>Authors should carry acknowledgment of data limitations through their findings discussion, not just state limitations once in the methods section</li> </ul> <p><b>For all manuscripts: require consistency between framing and use</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When manuscripts state "race is a social construct" but then use race biologically throughout, engage in dialogue with authors to clarify or revise</li> <li>Signals include: race used as an explanatory variable for biological differences without justification; race-based clinical recommendations made without acknowledgment of structural drivers; or limitations language confined to a single sentence while biological framing runs through the findings and discussion</li> </ul>

<p><b>Standardize reporting of race and ethnicity data</b></p>	<p><b>Require transparent demographic reporting</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of: how measured, which categories, why those categories, sample sizes by group</li> <li>• Capitalize racial/ethnic terms per style guide standards</li> <li>• Avoid outdated terminology (Caucasian, non-white) unless from legacy data with explanation</li> <li>• Require table footnotes to identify which groups have been aggregated into an ‘Other’ category</li> </ul> <p><b>Require stratified or disaggregated results where appropriate</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For health technology studies: require reporting of performance/outcomes across racial/ethnic groups</li> <li>• For clinical research: encourage or require subgroup analyses by race and ethnicity when sample size permits</li> <li>• Provide guidance on when aggregation vs. disaggregation is appropriate and when sample sizes are too small for meaningful stratification</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission commentaries when needed to prevent harm</b> ■ ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When publishing research with potential for misinterpretation, commission expert commentary</li> <li>• Research about communities without authors from those communities</li> <li>• Commentaries can provide critical framing that protects against harm</li> </ul>
<p><b>Address international and cross-national research</b></p>	<p><b>Provide guidance for handling international research</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge that racial/ethnic categories are context-dependent</li> <li>• Require authors to describe the categorization system used and its limitations</li> <li>• Distinguish between nationality, ethnicity, and race in international contexts</li> </ul> <p><b>Align with existing reporting frameworks</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-reference EQUATOR Network reporting guidelines (CONSORT, STROBE, etc.)</li> <li>• Note where race and ethnicity reporting intersects with existing requirements</li> <li>• Encourage journals to advocate for inclusion of race and ethnicity standards in future reporting guideline updates</li> </ul>

## PRIMARY DRIVER 4: POLICY EVALUATION & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### Change Concept

**Monitor policy adherence and impact**

### Change Ideas

#### **Track basic implementation metrics** ■

- Number/percentage of manuscripts flagged for race and ethnicity issues
- Number/percentage of reviewer forms where EDI concerns are noted
- Whether Instructions for Authors include race and ethnicity guidance (yes/no baseline)

#### **Conduct periodic audits of published manuscripts** ■

- Sample published articles to assess compliance with race and ethnicity policies
- Assess whether published papers include scientific rationale, data provenance, and limitation acknowledgment
- Compare reporting before and after policy implementation

#### **Conduct process audits of the review workflow itself** ■

- Survey staff editors, associate editors, and peer reviewers about the burden, clarity, and workflow of race and ethnicity review processes
- Assess whether guidance materials are clear and usable, or creating confusion
- Identify bottlenecks or points where race and ethnicity review is being skipped or treated as pro forma
- Use findings to refine processes — the goal is a workflow that people can actually sustain, not one that looks good on paper but breaks down in practice
- For smaller journals: even brief, informal check-ins with editors and reviewers can surface problems early

#### **Study the effectiveness of specific interventions** ■

- Publish research on your own journal's experience
- Share findings with the broader publishing community
- Contribute to evidence base on what works

<p><b>Update policies to reflect evolving best practices</b></p>	<p><b>Establish a regular review cycle</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review race and ethnicity policies at least annually</li> <li>• Assign responsibility for policy review to a specific editor or committee</li> <li>• Track changes in external standards (ICMJE, NASEM, EQUATOR, etc.) and update accordingly</li> </ul> <p><b>Engage with evolving science and terminology</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay current with literature on race, ethnicity, ancestry, and health</li> <li>• Update terminology guidance as consensus evolves</li> <li>• Recognize that this is a rapidly developing field; policies will need iterative refinement</li> </ul> <p><b>Participate in collaborative efforts across publishers</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with cross-publisher initiatives (e.g., Joint Commitment for Action on Inclusion and Diversity in Publishing)</li> <li>• Share policies, experiences, and lessons learned with peer journals</li> <li>• Work toward consistent standards across journals and disciplines</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build organizational capacity for sustained effort</b></p>	<p><b>Allocate resources appropriate to journal size</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small journals: Assign an existing editor to champion this work; budget time rather than money</li> <li>• Mid-size journals: Consider designating an associate editor with equity expertise</li> <li>• Large journals: Invest in staff editor training, dedicated review panels, and research on policy effectiveness</li> </ul> <p><b>Designate expertise for continuous review and assessment</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, assign a person with relevant expertise to oversee ongoing review and assessment of race and ethnicity policies</li> <li>• This role includes staying current with evolving evidence and best practices, and responding to emerging issues as they arise</li> <li>• For smaller journals, this may be an existing editor who takes on this as a defined responsibility; for larger journals, it may be a more formal role</li> </ul>

<p><b>Build organizational capacity for sustained effort</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Plan for staff and editor turnover</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document policies and procedures so they survive leadership transitions</li> <li>• Build race and ethnicity review into onboarding for new editors, staff, and reviewers</li> <li>• Avoid single-point-of-failure models where knowledge resides in one person</li> </ul> <p><b>Address challenges of monitoring at scale</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solutions: Shared policies across journals; cross-journal learning; coordinate training; leverage editor-in-chief meetings</li> </ul> <p><b>Acknowledge international complexity</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on transparency rather than uniformity</li> <li>• Provide support for international authors to meet standards</li> </ul>
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<p><b>PRIMARY DRIVER 5: CROSS-PUBLISHER COORDINATION &amp; COMMUNICATION</b></p>	
<p><b>Change Concept</b></p>	<p><b>Change Ideas</b></p>
<p><b>Leverage existing standards and frameworks</b></p>	<p><b>Make ICMJE race and ethnicity guidance more visible</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70-80% of journals already follow ICMJE</li> <li>• Explicitly highlight race and ethnicity components in author guidelines</li> <li>• Lower-barrier entry point for journals without policies</li> </ul> <p><b>Align with other established standards</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Commitment for Action on Inclusion and Diversity in Publishing</li> <li>• COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) guidance</li> <li>• Relevant EQUATOR Network reporting guidelines</li> <li>• AMA Manual of Style, AP Style Guide</li> </ul>
<p><b>Share resources and coordinate across journals</b></p>	<p><b>Make policies and tools publicly available</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share policies, checklists, and training materials</li> <li>• Contribute to common resource repository</li> </ul>

<p><b>Share resources and coordinate across journals</b> (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Make policies and tools publicly available</b> (cont.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in Encoding Equity Alliance activities and dissemination</li> </ul> <p><b>Coordinate within publisher organizations</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For commercial publishers: develop publisher-level policy framework</li> <li>• For society journals: align journal policy with society-level equity work</li> <li>• For multi-journal publishers: create shared resources and training</li> </ul> <p><b>Learn from journals with established practices</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study their approaches and adapt what works</li> </ul>
<p><b>Raise awareness and build the evidence base</b></p>	<p><b>Develop special issues or invited content</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission articles on appropriate use of race and ethnicity in research</li> <li>• Publish illustrative examples of implementing reporting recommendations</li> <li>• Highlight community partnerships in biomedical research</li> </ul> <p><b>Communicate rationale and changes transparently</b> ■</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform authors, reviewers, and readers about new or updated policies</li> <li>• Frame changes in terms of scientific rigor and research quality</li> <li>• Anticipate and address concerns openly</li> </ul>

