



RESEARCH POLICY

Policy, management and economic studies of science, technology and innovation

AUTHOR INFORMATION PACK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

●	Description	p.1
●	Impact Factor	p.2
●	Abstracting and Indexing	p.2
●	Editorial Board	p.2
●	Guide for Authors	p.5



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DESCRIPTION

Research Policy (RP) articles examine empirically and theoretically the interaction between **innovation, technology** or **research**, on the one hand, and economic, social, political and organizational processes, on the other. All *RP* papers are expected to yield findings that have implications for **policy** or **management**.

Aims and Scope:

Research Policy (RP) is a multi-disciplinary journal devoted to analyzing, understanding and effectively responding to the economic, policy, management, organizational, environmental and other challenges posed by innovation, technology, R&D and science. This includes a number of related activities concerned with the creation of knowledge (through research), the diffusion and acquisition of knowledge (e.g. through organizational learning), and its exploitation in the form of new or improved products, processes or services.

RP is generally acknowledged to be the leading journal in the field of **innovation studies**, with its academic status and influence being reflected in a remarkably high 'Impact Factor' for a multi-disciplinary social science journal (please see below).

Authors intending to submit a paper to *RP* should first check whether that paper is consistent with the journal's Editorial Strategy as detailed in the [Guide for Authors](#). *RP* uses an online submission process, <http://ees.elsevier.com/respol/> and all papers are subject to a 'double-blind' review process, details as in the Guide for Authors. Besides research articles and notes, *RP* also publishes a variety of other types of papers including Special Issues (or shorter Special Sections) occasional discussion papers on important topical issues, and book reviews, again further information in the Guide for Authors.

Main Subjects Covered:

Economics of Innovation/Technology/Science; Entrepreneurs/Entrepreneurship; Evolutionary or (neo-)Schumpeterian Economics; Geography of Innovation - e.g. industrial clusters; Indicators - science, technology, R&D, innovation etc.; Innovation and Sustainability; Innovation Management/Organization/Policy/Strategy; Innovation Systems - national, regional, sectoral, technological; Knowledge - creation/production, diffusion/transfer/exchange, adoption/exploitation etc.; Learning (e.g. organizational) and Experimentation; Product and Process Development; Networks - e.g. research/ R&D collaboration, university-industry links, regional clusters, supply chains; Research and Development (R&D) Management/Policy/Strategy; Research Policy; Resource-Based View of the Firm - competence/capability (e.g. absorptive, core, dynamic); Science Policy; Sociotechnical Paradigms/Regimes; Technological Paradigms/Trajectories; Technological problem-solving; Technology Management/Policy/Strategy.

Impact factor:

Research Policy's impact factor has increased appreciably over recent years, rising from 1.078 in 2000 to 1.536 in 2004 and 2.655 in 2008. (There was a slight drop to 2.261 in 2009 following an expansion in the number of *RP* articles published in 2008.) In 2008, the journal ranked 11th among the world's top journals in "Management" and 1st in the "Planning & Development" category as ranked by Thompson Reuters, Social Sciences Citation Index Index® (© Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports, 2008).

RP's Impact factor compares extremely well with that of leading journals in the neighbouring fields of Economics (where its 2008 impact factor would place it in 10th position, up from 29th position in 2000), Political Science (where it would currently rank 2nd), Sociology (3rd), Environmental Sciences (3rd) and other interdisciplinary social science journals.

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To find out more, please visit the Preparation section below.

INTRODUCTION

Authors thinking of submitting an article or a research note to Research Policy should first consider carefully whether the paper falls within the 'Aims and Scope' of RP as described on the journal homepage <http://www.elsevier.com/locate/respol>, i.e. that it falls broadly within the field of innovation studies or science policy. In particular, the paper should focus on innovation (in its various forms), technology, research and development (R&D) or science (see 'Editorial Strategy' below). The RP homepage also includes a list of 'Main subjects covered' which may provide further guidance as to whether the paper is likely to be of interest to RP.

In addition, authors need to bear in mind that RP readers include not only academics but also a range of consultants, industrialists, government officials, scientific administrators and others interested in these issues. Moreover, its academic readers come not only from the field of innovation studies, but also from a number of neighbouring disciplines. Therefore, authors need to approach the topic in a manner that is likely to be of interest to a large proportion of RP readers (i.e. the paper should be neither too narrow nor too technical). Amongst other things, this includes engaging substantially with the body of literature familiar to the journal's readership as well as focusing on research that yields potential policy or management implications (see 'Editorial Strategy' below).

First-time authors and authors who are new to Elsevier may be interested in additional information about the process for submitting a manuscript or the process for publishing in scholarly journals, in general, please visit <http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/authorsview.authors/authorpacks>

Editorial Strategy

Research Policy (RP) publishes original research contributions in the field of 'innovation studies'. RP Editors look for papers that deal with core RP issues such as innovation, technological change, R&D, science, and the management of research and knowledge, issues that are likely to be of interest to the broad RP readership that includes 'practitioners' (e.g. managers, consultants, policy-makers) as well as academic scholars. (See the list of 'Main subjects covered' for a more comprehensive list of the main issues <http://www.elsevier.com/locate/respol>).

Innovation studies spans a number of subfields including the economics of innovation (with particular attention to evolutionary and neo-Schumpeterian analysis); technology and innovation management; and innovation policy and science (or S&T) policy. In addition to innovation studies, RP also draws upon mainstream disciplines such as economics, management, organizational studies, sociology, economic geography, political science and certain specialized branches of history (history of technology, economic/business history) (see list of 'Main subjects covered'). The term 'innovation studies' has evolved from (and incorporates) the earlier fields of 'science policy,' 'research policy' (hence the name of the journal), 'science and technology (S&T) policy' and 'science, technology and innovation (STI) policy.'

Authors considering whether to submit a paper to RP need to ensure not only that the main focus of the paper relates to one or more of the core subjects listed in 'Main subjects covered' but also that they approach the topic in a manner that is likely to be of interest to a large proportion of RP's wide-ranging readership (i.e. the paper should be neither too narrow nor too technical). Amongst other things, this includes engaging substantially with the body of literature familiar to the journal's readership as well as focusing on research with potentially significant policy or management implications.

Submitted papers that have little direct relationship to the core RP issues, even if such papers are good, are likely to be rejected as 'out of scope'. In addition, some submitted papers, while they address an RP issue, may do so in a manner that is more appropriate to publication in a mainstream economics, management or other disciplinary journal, and they too are likely to be desk-rejected.

Types of Paper

RP publishes:

- Research Articles - full-length papers of up to 8-10,000 words
- Special Issues and Special Sections (see below)
- Research Notes - typically of 3-5,000 words, this category is a vehicle for specific types of material that merit publication, but do not require all the 'normal' components of a full research article. This might cover, for example, specific aspects of methodology that have broad relevance for RP readers, or short reports about specific sets or types of data (and their access and use) that merit publication without the full set of requirements for a normal article. It might also be relevant, for example, for updating an earlier RP paper, where it is not necessary to repeat the literature review, methodology etc.
- Discussion Papers - occasionally published on important topical issues where views differ; where such a paper has been accepted in principle, an RP Editor will commission perhaps two responses from those holding different views to appear alongside the discussion paper.
- Book Reviews - commissioned by RP Book Review Editor. (However, RP does not attempt to cover all new books in the field, only a selected few that are felt likely to be of wide-ranging importance for the field of innovation studies.)

Special Issues and Special Sections

Approximately twice a year, RP may publish a Special Issue (or a somewhat shorter Special Section) on a particular theme, where an integrated collection of articles has been put together and edited by two or three Guest Editors. Special Issues/Sections can fulfil a number of important functions:

- bringing together and integrating work on a specific theme (for instance, bringing together theoretical and empirical work, or work based on different methodological approaches);
- opening up a previously under-researched area (or one that has perhaps struggled with a rather conservative peer review process in its efforts to achieve recognition);
- constructing a bridge between formerly rather separate research communities, who have been focusing on similar or related topics.

Those thinking of proposing a Special Issue/Section should first consult or download the 'Notes for Proposers and Guest Editors' which can be found at <http://www.elsevier.com/inca/publications/misc/researchsi.pdf>. These notes provide guidance on the nature and content of the 2-4 page proposal required. Proposals should be submitted to respol@sussex.ac.uk at or before the start of March or September each year. These proposals are then reviewed by the RP Editors on the basis of certain criteria that include: the novelty, importance and topicality of the theme; whether the papers will form an integrated whole; the standing of the authors; the experience of the Guest Editors in handling a task of this magnitude; and the overall 'added value' of a Special Issue or Section (as compared with publishing these papers separately in 'normal' issues). Those thinking of submitting a proposal, however, should bear in mind that, out of the half a dozen or so proposals considered every six months, only one on average will be allocated a Special Issue 'slot', so the competition is intense. A group of loosely connected papers from a conference on a fairly standard subject is unlikely to be accepted.

Review Process

All RP papers are reviewed using a 'double-blind' process in which reviewers are not informed who are the authors of the paper, as well as the authors not knowing who are the reviewers. To make this possible, authors need to submit two versions of their papers, a 'full' one which will be seen only by the handling Editor, and a 'blinded' version in which the names and addresses of authors have been removed and any identifying references have been suitably anonymised (the version sent to referees).

Submitted papers are first considered by the RP Editor to whom they were submitted. Papers that do not fall within the scope of RP are 'desk-rejected'. (Those that are borderline may be sent to an RP Advisory Editor who is a specialist on that topic for advice.) Papers that, while they address an RP issue, do so in a manner that is more appropriate to publication in a mainstream economics, management or other disciplinary journal, may also be desk-rejected (again perhaps following specialist advice from an RP Advisory Editor). In addition, papers that fail to meet a minimum threshold for quality and originality will be rejected without being sent out to reviewers.

Papers passing through this initial editorial scrutiny are then typically sent out to three referees. If one or more of these turns down the invitation to provide a review, other referees will subsequently be appointed. Normally, at least two authoritative reviews are needed before the handling Editor can make a decision as to whether to accept, reject, or ask for a 'revise and resubmit' of the submitted paper.

Currently, approximately one third of the papers submitted to RP are desk-rejected, about one third are rejected after peer review, and one third are eventually accepted (most after being revised once if not twice).

Contact details for submission

Submission to Research Policy now proceeds totally online via the EES system <http://ees.elsevier.com/respol/> (see below). EES provides detailed guidance to authors submitting papers as well as to referees invited to submit a review.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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When submitting a paper on EES, authors will be prompted as to whether they have read and agree to these guidelines before proceeding further with their submission. They will be asked specifically for an assurance that the paper contains no element of data fabrication, data falsification or plagiarism (including unacknowledged self-plagiarism). Authors are reminded that, where they draw upon material from another source, they must EITHER put that material in the form of a quote, OR write it entirely in their own words (i.e. there is no 'middle way'). In both cases, they must explicitly cite the source, including the specific page number in the case of a quote or a particular point.

Conflict of interest

When submitting a paper to RP, authors need to select a specific Editor. They should choose the Editor who is best suited in the light of the content of the paper, please see list of relevant keywords for each editor [here](#). However, authors should not submit to an Editor working in same institution (or one who has worked in the same institution over the previous five years). Nor should they submit to an Editor with whom they have co-authored, collaborated or had some professional or personal relationship over the last five years. If in any doubt, authors should explicitly mention the nature of their relationship and any possible conflict of interest in a covering letter to the Editor when they submit the paper so that the Editor can take a view and, if necessary, allocate the paper to be handled by another RP Editor.

Submission declaration

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Divide your article into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 1.1 (then 1.1.1, 1.1.2, ...), 1.2, etc. (the abstract is not included in section numbering). Use this numbering also for internal cross-referencing: do not just refer to 'the text'. Any subsection may be given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line.

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A typical article might include the following main sections.

Introduction

State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

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This section should extend (but not repeat) the background to the article already dealt with in the Introduction and lay the foundation for the work being reported. It should identify the most relevant previous literature on the topic (but not in excessive detail) in order to position the paper and demonstrate how it will make a significant contribution. It (or a separate section) should set out (and justify) the theoretical or conceptual framework adopted in the paper. It may identify a number of hypotheses to be tested or research questions to be explored. In short, this section (or sections) should explain what is the motivation for the paper and why its contribution is original and significant.

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The reader needs to know that the empirical data and/or other material are relevant, reliable and capable of supporting robust conclusions, and that the methodology is appropriate, systematic and rigorous.

Results

Results should be clear and concise.

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This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

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The main conclusions of the study may be presented in a short Conclusions section, which may stand alone or form a subsection of a Discussion or Results and Discussion section.

This section should also may make clear what is the original contribution of the paper, discuss the policy or management implications of the findings, provide a critical assessment of the limitations of study, and outline possible fruitful lines for further research.

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If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

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"... as argued by Nelson and Winter (1982, p.52). Other authors (e.g. Dosi et al., 1988; Freeman, 1987; Lundvall, 1992a & 1992b) have suggested ..."

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Pavitt, K., 1984. Sectoral patterns of technical change: Towards a taxonomy and a theory. *Research Policy* 13, 343-73.

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Nelson, R.R., Winter, S.G., 1982. *An Evolutionary Theory of Economic Change*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Rogers, E.M., 2003. *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.). Free Press, New York.

Reference to an edited book

Dosi, G., Freeman, C., Nelson, R., Silverberg, G., Soete, L. (Eds), 1988. *Technical Change and Economic Theory*. Pinter Publishers, London.

Reference to a chapter in an edited book

Kline, S.J., Rosenberg, N. (1986). Overview of innovation, in: Landau, R., Rosenberg, N. (Eds), *The Positive Sum Strategy: Harnessing Technology for Economic Growth*. National Academy Press, Washington D.C., pp. 275-305.

Reference to a report

Levin, R.C., Klevorick, A.K., Nelson, R.R., Winter, S.G., 1987. Appropriating the returns from industrial research and development. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, Brookings Institution, Washington D.C.

Reference to a working paper, report etc. available on the web

Pachauri, R.K., Reisinger, A. (Eds), 2007. *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (downloaded on 12 November 2009 from http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_ipcc_fourth_assessment_report_synthesis_report.htm)

Reference to a conference paper, lecture etc. that has not been published:

Martin, B.R. 2010. Science Policy Research - Can Research Influence Policy? How? And Does It Make for Better Policy? Distinguished Lecture, Centre for Science and Policy, University of Cambridge, 3 March 2010.

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