

## **Call for papers AEJMC 2026 New Orleans—Participatory Journalism Interest Group**

The Participatory Journalism Interest Group (PJIG) invites your research paper submissions for the upcoming 2026 AEJMC Conference, scheduled for Tuesday, August 4 – Saturday, August 8 in New Orleans. The conference will be hosted at the [New Orleans Marriott](#), 555 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana - 70130

We encourage you to contribute your insights and research on participatory journalism and engaged journalism at this vibrant meeting of scholars, journalists, and leaders in the field. The submission site opens on January 15, 2026.

**Submission Deadline:** Mark your calendars to submit your papers before April 1, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. (CDT).

**Conference Theme & Scope:** The conference theme for 2026 is “Jazz & Jambalaya: Nurturing Harmony and Health in Higher Education.”

This year, PJIG invites all manner of research into the roles journalists and news organizations play when engaging actively in communities.

Participatory journalism is and has been a dynamic field of study that examines news practices and organizational policies that integrate the public into meaning-making processes from story selection to content creation and dissemination. As political and industry powers shift, we must continue to examine the role of journalists and news organizations as collaborators creating shared understanding about communities. The publics engaged or invited to be engaged may be as small as the population of a rural town or a niche fandom; or, they may be as large as the world.

To underscore, we are looking for studies that delve into how journalism continues to evolve with the active involvement of "citizens," "users," "audiences," "fandoms," "followers" and/or other types of engaged "participants."

Whether the research focuses on digital platforms, analog means of communication or both, we're interested in how participatory practices are shaping the news landscape and fostering a more collaborative environment for Journalism.

### **Suggested Research Topics**

Your research may address, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Participatory journalism in political coverage and elections
- Building trust through participatory journalism
- User-generated content and its impact on news reporting
- Citizen media and community engagement in journalism

- Collaborative elements in entrepreneurial journalism
- Legal, ethical, historical, and philosophical perspectives on participatory media
- The interplay between participatory journalism and “traditional” journalistic norms
- The role of social media and other communication technologies in participatory journalism and other forms of engagement between news organizations and their communities
- Economic aspects of participatory journalism, including entrepreneurial efforts
- Educational approaches to teaching Journalism in participatory contexts
- The role of AI in supporting or thwarting efforts to engage audiences in the co-creation of news and shared meaning

**Awards:** Submissions will be considered for five awards: two faculty paper awards (first and second place), two student paper awards (first and second place), with prizes of \$150 and \$75 respectively, and a dissertation competition, with a \$150 prize.

Paper submissions should be submitted through the AEJMC All-Academic submission site.

Student submissions should be clearly marked as "student papers" to qualify for the student competition.

Those interested in submitting a full dissertation for consideration for the dissertation award should directly contact PJIG co-research chair Mark Poepsel at [mpoepse@siue.edu](mailto:mpoepse@siue.edu) for a short list of submission requirements. Dissertation award submissions (and only dissertation submissions) are handled entirely by email.awe

**Submission Guidelines:**

- Papers should not exceed 25 double-spaced pages, excluding references, tables, figures, and appendices, and should adhere to the AEJMC uniform paper call requirements.
- Use a 12 pt. Times New Roman font with at least 1-inch margins.
- Include a cover sheet or an abstract of 75 words, not counted in the page limit.
- You may use any academic formatting style.
- Submissions must be original and not under review elsewhere.

**Research-in-Progress:** Research-in-progress submissions are new for 2026. They are replacing the call for extended abstracts some may be familiar with from years past. A research-in-progress submission provides scholars with a venue to workshop developing projects, whether early-stage studies, pilot data, or emerging theoretical ideas, and receive constructive feedback from the AEJMC community.

Submissions should be anonymized, 1,000–1,500 words (plus references), and clearly outline the project’s purpose, grounding, methods, and anticipated contribution,

demonstrating strong potential for future scholarly development. You can refer to a more detailed submission guideline [here](#).

**Submission Process:** Follow the AEJMC's electronic submission guidelines.

**Questions?** Contact PJIG Research Co-Chair, Dr. Mark Poepsel at [mpoepse@siue.edu](mailto:mpoepse@siue.edu) or Dr. Nisha Sridharan at [nisha.sridharan@temple.edu](mailto:nisha.sridharan@temple.edu) for inquiries related to your submission.

We look forward to your contributions, and we anticipate engaging discussions at this year's conference!

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