

PARTICIPATORY JOURNALISM INTEREST  
GROUP

## NEWSLETTER



## Call for Papers

The Participatory Journalism Interest Group (PJIG) is now accepting submissions of research papers for the upcoming 2025 AEJMC Conference, scheduled for Thursday, August 7 – Sunday, August 10, in San Francisco. The conference will be hosted at the San Francisco Marriott Marquis, 780 Mission Street, San Francisco, California 94103.

We encourage scholars to contribute their insights and research on participatory journalism and engaged journalism at this vibrant meeting of scholars, journalists, and other leaders in the field. Submission Deadline: Please mark your calendars to submit your papers before **April 1, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. (CDT)**.

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- **Dissertation Award Call**
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- **Meet Our Officers**

## Dissertation Award Call

The dissertation award recognizes the best Ph.D. dissertation in the field of participatory journalism research and includes a monetary prize. Dissertations are eligible if successfully defended between Sept. 1, 2024, and Aug. 31, 2025.

The committee reserves the right not to grant the award in any given year.

Suggested dissertation topics include:  
Participatory journalism (PJ) in response to misinformation, disinformation, or attacks on free speech.

... Read More on page 5.



# Welcome to PJIG!

Dear Members,

I hope you're all doing well! This year is off to a dramatic start, one that makes it plain just how valuable participatory journalism — as well as research-focused on participatory journalism — is for journalism, the public, and the relationship between the two. As the AEJMC deadline approaches (April 1!), I hope you will consider submitting research focused on how journalists, news audiences, and/or members of the public engage with and/or think about one another to PJIG. And if you are a PhD candidate finishing up your dissertation, please submit it for consideration for our Dissertation Award! You will find more details about each of these calls in the newsletter.



**Jacob L. Nelson, PhD**  
**Head of PJIG**  
Associate Professor, University of Utah

Though we haven't quite pinned down the details yet, I also wanted to share that former PJIG chair Andrea Wenzel and I will be working with PJIG to organize another Engaged Journalism Exchange as an AEJMC preconference. At a moment of heightened precarity and vulnerability in the field of journalism and in marginalized communities around the U.S., this preconference will offer a space to bring together journalists and civic media makers, organizers, and researchers. Please stay tuned for more information! We hope to see you there.

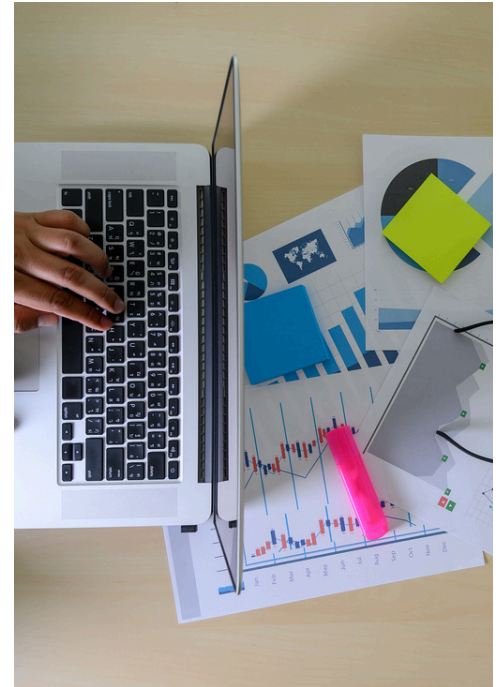
Please reach out with any questions about our paper or dissertation call, or about the preconference. Good luck with your submissions!

Thanks,  
Jake

# Call for Papers: AEJMC 2025 San Francisco

The Participatory Journalism Interest Group (PJIG) is now accepting submissions of research papers for the upcoming 2025 AEJMC Conference, scheduled for Thursday, August 7 – Sunday, August 10, in San Francisco. The conference will be hosted at the San Francisco Marriott Marquis, 780 Mission Street, San Francisco, California 94103.

We encourage scholars to contribute their insights and research on participatory journalism and engaged journalism at this vibrant meeting of scholars, journalists, and other leaders in the field.



**Submission Deadline:** Please mark your calendars to submit your papers before **April 1, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. (CDT)**.

**Conference Theme & Scope:** The conference theme for 2025 is Leading in Times of Momentous Change: Individual and Collective Opportunities

This year, PJIG wishes to cast as wide a net as possible and invite 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 that examines news practices and organizational policies that integrate the public into the journalism process, 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 a shared understanding about communities as small as a rural hometown or niche fandom and as large as the world, both the physical world and the digitally networked one.

We are looking for studies that delve into how journalism continues to evolve with the active involvement of "citizens," "users," "audiences," "fandoms," "followers," and 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 journalistic environment.

## 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
- Educational approaches to teaching media production in participatory contexts.

## 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.

Those interested in submitting a dissertation for the dissertation award should directly contact PJIG co-research chair Mark Poepse at [mpoepse@siue.edu](mailto:mpoepse@siue.edu) for a short list of submission requirements.

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



## 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.
- Extended abstracts will be accepted and should follow the AEJMC 2025 extended abstracts call.
- 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.

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) for inquiries related to your submission.



# PJIG Dissertation Award Call

The dissertation award recognizes the best Ph.D. dissertation in the field of participatory journalism research and includes a monetary prize. Dissertations are eligible if successfully defended between Sept. 1, 2024, and Aug. 31, 2025.

The committee reserves the right not to grant the award in any given year.

## Suggested dissertation topics include:

- Participatory journalism (PJ) in response to misinformation, disinformation, or attacks on free speech.
- PJ in election coverage (citizen's agenda, crowdsourcing questions for candidates, priority issues for voters, etc.).
- Efforts to build trust in journalism/journalists through participatory and engaged journalism practices.
- The use of user-generated content, polls, focus groups, and other methods to report news.
- Citizen media, civic mapping, community conversations, user comments, community organizing practices in journalism.
- Entrepreneurial journalism with collaborative elements.
- History/philosophy of participatory media
- The mission and meaning of "participatory" and/or "engaged" media
- Legal and ethical issues in participatory journalism
- Journalism boundaries and norms, such as objectivity and participatory/engaged journalism
- Crowdsourcing versus traditional gatekeeping models of journalism practice
- Beyond storytelling, creative ways to deliver news and information to affected publics, from Whatsapp to theater to comedy and beyond
- Listening strategies for understanding a community's information needs
- News sharing and social media distribution
- Participatory journalism in a multicultural and/or multinational environment
- Participatory journalism and mobile/wearable/immersive technologies
- Economic elements of traditional media and their relationship to participatory journalism movements
- Teaching journalism and media production in participatory contexts



## How to nominate:

**a.** Self-nominations are accepted as well as nominations by the dissertation chair/advisor. The nomination package includes four items:

(1) the nominator's cover letter, which includes the nominee's name, university affiliation, and dissertation title.

(2) A six-page abstract summarizing the dissertation in English. The abstract should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins, use 12-pt. Times New Roman Font, and not contain any appendices or references. Nominees may wish to refer to the [AEJMC Nafziger-White-Salwen Dissertation Award and the judging criteria](#) when writing their abstracts. The instructions can be found [here](#). The abstract should be organized as follows with subheadings:

- Introduction and statement of purpose
- Theoretical framework and key elements of previous research
- Method
- Findings
- Conclusion and discussion
- Statement of importance to the field

(3) a PDF of the dissertation

(4) the nominee's CV.

**b.** If the dissertation is nominated by the dissertation advisor, the nomination letter should be submitted electronically by the nominator. All other materials should be submitted by the nominee.

## Submissions Guidelines:

- **The nomination package must be submitted electronically as email attachments on or before 11:59 p.m. (Central), April 1, 2025.** All four (4) items must be delivered electronically by the deadline to qualify for consideration.
- Acknowledgements and other information that might identify the author, the adviser, or the university must be removed from the dissertation PDF and the abstract. This includes references to the university where the dissertation was written that may appear in the text. Submissions containing identifying information in these files may be disqualified.
- The full dissertation must be submitted in a single PDF file.
- A separate file comprising the extended (blind) abstract summarizing the dissertation must be submitted in ONE file (PDF, DOC, or DOCX).
- “PJIG Dissertation Award [insert nominee’s last name]” must be used as the subject header for any and all correspondence in relation to the award.
- Non-electronic methods of submission (facsimile, standard mail, courier) are not available or acceptable.

Send nominations and direct questions to Participatory Journalism Interest Group Research Co-Chair **Dr. Mark Poepse**, [mpoepse@siue.edu](mailto:mpoepse@siue.edu)



**Participatory  
Journalism  
Interest Group**

**ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION**



# Announcement of Postdoctoral Fellowship

**The Klein College for Media and Communications** is offering a one-year postdoctoral fellowship within its new Center for Community-Engaged Media. The Center seeks to support journalism, media, and information systems that center communities and encourage collaboration, understanding, dialogue, and care.

The postdoctoral fellow will support the center's collaborations with community stakeholders and local media—researching information needs, and collaboratively designing and assessing community-centered civic media and engagement initiatives.

In addition to contributing to center projects in development, we welcome proposals from prospective postdoctoral fellows interested in exploring research questions connected to efforts to make journalism and civic media more community-centered, equitable, actionable, sustainable, and/or responsive to how people access or avoid news and information. If selected, the center will support the fellow with research funds and project administration.

The fellow will work closely with the center's director, faculty affiliated with the center, and relevant community and/or media collaborators.

## Skills and qualifications:

- PhD in communication or related field. Degree must be conferred by July 2025.
- Experience conducting quantitative and/or qualitative research.
- Strong writing skills and experience presenting data for non-academic audiences.
- Strong networking and communication skills. Background in journalism or community organizing a plus.
- Familiarity with and connections to the Philadelphia region also a plus.

## Compensation:

This position will pay \$61,008 with Temple University employee benefits offered. This one-year appointment has the possibility of renewal for an additional year, pending funding.

## Application:

Prospective candidates must send an email with the subject line "(last name) CCEM Postdoc" and include a CV, sample publication not to exceed 30 pages, a list of three references (one of which should be your dissertation advisor), and a cover letter summarizing your proposed research during the fellowship, and explaining how your background and experience aligns with the CCEM. Please send materials to **Dr. Andrea Wenzel**: [andrea.wenzel@temple.edu](mailto:andrea.wenzel@temple.edu).

# Critical Studies in Media Communication – Call for Papers

Editor-Elect Leland G. Spencer ([spencelg@sc.edu](mailto:spencelg@sc.edu)) is now processing new manuscripts for general issues of Critical Studies in Media Communication.

Critical Studies in Media Communication welcomes research that understands communication, critical studies, and media studies in the broadest possible terms. Since its inception, CSMC has published some of the most theoretically sophisticated and critically rigorous pieces of scholarship in the field. The journal publishes research that critiques the operation of power in the media. CSMC especially invites articles that center the voices and experiences of women, Black, indigenous, and people of color, queer and trans people, and people with disabilities—as scholarly interlocutors and as subjects of study. With respect to methodology, the journal welcomes all appropriate methods, including rhetorical, theoretical, critical, interpretive, (auto)ethnographic, poetic, creative, empirical, or mixed-method approaches. Potential topics include but are not limited to: the use of media in social movements, critical analyses of media texts or genres, theory development, the role of media in public and civic affairs, the political economy of the media, global media systems, and media industry studies.

CSMC welcomes submissions from scholars, students, activists, and practitioners at any stage of their careers. All submissions undergo rigorous peer review in a mentorship-centered process committed to developing excellent scholarship. The preferred length for scholarly research and theory manuscripts is 6,000-9,000 words, including endnotes and references; a 100-word abstract and 4-5 keywords should accompany submissions. Book reviews are also welcome and should be 1,200-1,500 words. Submissions should be formatted in APA style (7th edition).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

## MEET OUR OFFICERS



**Head**  
Jacob L. Nelson  
University of Utah

Jacob L. Nelson is an associate professor in the communication department at the University of Utah and the author of *Imagined Audiences: How Journalists Perceive and Pursue the Public* (Oxford University Press, 2021). His research and teaching focuses on the relationship between journalism and the public. Prior to joining the University of Utah, he worked as an assistant professor at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. He received his PhD from Northwestern University's Media, Technology, and Society doctoral program.

Carrie Brown is an associate professor of journalism at Montclair State University, where she specializes in community engagement. Her courses focus on understanding and meeting community information needs and building trust, particularly with groups underserved or ill-served by traditional media. Her work also often involves partnering with New Jersey local news organizations to help fill information gaps and using a variety of creative strategies to make sure people get the news they need, whether it is via social media or newsletters, WhatsApp groups, or other means. Previously, she was the founding director of the engagement journalism Master's program at the Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY. Her research and recent book *Transforming Newsrooms*, co-authored with Jonathan Groves, centers on how news organizations can change their cultures and adapt to the changing media landscape. Brown also worked as an associate professor of journalism at the University of Memphis and as a daily newspaper reporter and editor. She has a PhD from the University of Missouri, a Master's degree in communication from the Annenberg School at Penn, and an undergraduate degree in journalism and conservation biology from the University of Wisconsin.



**Vice Head**  
Carrie Brown  
Montclair State University



**Research Co-Chair**  
Mark Poepsel  
Southern Illinois University

Mark Poepsel is an associate professor of Mass Communication at Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville, near St. Louis, Missouri. Mark's research interests include engagement journalism and threats against journalists. He teaches media writing, publication design, media management, advanced broadcast writing, and graduate research methods courses, among others. Mark recently won a Department of Education grant, administered by the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois, to develop *The OER Guide to Media Writing*, an open access textbook. Mark is a former local television reporter and was educated at Mizzou for his undergraduate and PhD degrees and the University of Arizona for his master's in Latin American Studies.

## MEET OUR OFFICERS



**Research Co-Chair**  
Antoine Haywood  
University of Florida

Antoine Haywood is an assistant professor in the Journalism Department at the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications. Before earning a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication, he worked extensively as a community media practitioner in Atlanta, Georgia, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. With collaborative support from practitioner networks like the Alliance for Community Media and News Futures, Antoine's research focuses on local media landscapes, community-engaged journalism practices, civic communication systems, and community media history.

Jillian Bauer-Reese is an Associate Professor of Practice in the Department of Journalism at Temple University's Klein College of Media and Communication. Bauer-Reese co-founded and continues to work as the program manager for Kensington Voice, a community hub and newsroom serving North Philly's Fairhill, Harrowgate, Kensington, and Norris Square neighborhoods. She is also a founding board member of the Tiny News Collective, and her recent work has been published in Slate, the Columbia Journalism Review, Poynter, MediaShift, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Billy Penn, Philly Weekly, and the Philadelphia Citizen. Her current creative and research interests include the intersection of journalism, public health, and social welfare.



**PF&R Co-Chair**  
Jillian Bauer-Reese  
Temple University



**Teaching Chair**  
Nisha Sridharan  
Temple University

Nisha Sridharan is an Assistant Professor at Temple University's Klein College of Media and Communication. Her research centers around the role of media in society, with research interests in journalism studies, organizational communication, community and participatory journalism, and DEIB in media. Her dissertation explores the journalistic and organizational practices of non-profit monothematic news organizations within the evolving media landscape. Nisha received her PhD from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University and her Master's degree from the University of Nevada, Reno, and has prior experience reporting for The New Indian Express in Chennai, India.



## MEET OUR OFFICERS



**Communication Co-Chair**  
Damilola Oduolowu  
University of Missouri

Damilola Oduolowu is a doctoral candidate and graduate instructor at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. His research seeks to understand the role of citizen journalists in continuously shaping issues in the contemporary journalism landscape and how social media platforms facilitate or challenge their contributions to social and environmental issues. He is a 2024 Pulitzer Center Crisis Reporting Fellow and a 2024 AEJMC-MCSD Diversity and Inclusion Career Development Fellow. Damilola has ten years of extensive experience in professional journalism. Before starting his Ph.D. program, he worked as a senior journalist reporter with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service. He has many stories to his credit, spanning TV, radio, and digital (podcasts, video, and web).

Fahad Humayun is an assistant professor in the communication department at the University of Evansville. His research has been published in prestigious journals such as Digital Journalism and Journalism Practice, and he is also a recipient of research awards from the International Communication Association (ICA) and the Association for Education in Mass Communication and Journalism (AEJMC). He has also taught at multiple universities in the past and brings experience of teaching both undergrad and graduate students. Dr. Humayun is an avid sports fan, and as a child, he used to stay up all night to watch NBA games on ESPN while living in Pakistan.



**Communication Co-Chair**  
Fahad Humayun  
University of Evansville



**Graduate Student Rep**  
Nina Kelly  
Wayne State University

Nina Kelly is a dual-title Ph.D. candidate in Communication and Urban Sustainability at Wayne State University in Detroit, and a proud first-generation college student and scholar. She is currently at work on her dissertation, which considers the impact of a hyperlocal, engaged news and information program on political efficacy, political knowledge, and future political and civic participation intentions. As a secondary focus, Nina also studies media and policy related to climate change, public transportation, and cities. These interests connect to her first career as an urban and regional planner, and she seeks to build bridges between the urban planning, communication, and journalism disciplines through her scholarship.

## MEET OUR OFFICERS



**Graduate Student Rep**  
Jessica Pettengill  
Michigan State University

Jessica Pettengill is a Ph.D. student in the School of Journalism at Michigan State University. She is pursuing a doctorate in Information & Media, and her research focuses on metajournalistic discourse, storytelling and narrative in media, and community resilience. Prior to her doctorate, she received her master's in Emerging Media Design and Development and her bachelor's in long-form journalism, both from Ball State University in Indiana. She has previously worked as an editor in broadcast journalism in Sacramento, California, and later as a digital media content producer and manager for The Huntington Museum and Arts Education non-profit P.S. Arts in Los Angeles.



## THANK YOU!

Email us at:  
[doduolowu@missouri.edu](mailto:doduolowu@missouri.edu)