

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Journal of Continuing Higher Education

Editor and Copy Editor

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The Journal of Continuing Higher Education (JCHE) is an international, double-blind peer-reviewed journal published three times per year in partnership with Taylor & Francis (T&F). JCHE serves as the flagship scholarly publication of the Association for Continuing Higher Education (ACHE) and has long been a leader among publications serving institutions with adult and continuing learning programs.

The journal publishes empirical research, conceptual papers, and practice-oriented articles that advance knowledge in adult, continuing, and online higher education. Its double-blind peer review process, international editorial board, and inclusion on international lists of publications for tenure and promotion reflect the journal's sustained scholarly rigor.

In 2025, JCHE received 135 submissions from across the world with an acceptance rate of approximately 40% and recorded more than 80,000 article downloads annually. The journal currently maintains a pipeline of more than 60 approved articles awaiting print publication. JCHE editors are appointed by ACHE for three-year terms and present an annual workshop on publishing in the journal at the ACHE Annual Conference.

TRANSITION CONTEXT

The current editorial team—Editor Dr. Walter Pearson and Copy Editor Katherine Lyons—has built a vibrant international editorial board and established strong operational and editorial standards during their tenure. As this editorial team prepares for transition, ACHE is conducting a national search for successor editor(s).

ACHE invites proposals from individuals or collaborative teams. The current model divides responsibility between a primary Editor (who manages peer review, editorial board relations, and administrative coordination with Taylor & Francis) and a Copy Editor (who focuses on content and formatting review prior to production). Proposals may reflect this two-role model or propose an alternative structure, provided the full scope of editorial responsibilities is clearly addressed.

QUALIFICATIONS

Editor

The Editor should:

- Have a distinguished record of scholarly research and professional accomplishments in adult, continuing, or online higher education;
- Demonstrate superior editorial ability, including prior editorial board experience with JCHE or comparable peer-reviewed journals;
- Demonstrate an understanding of and sensitivity to the diverse modes of inquiry represented in JCHE's scope, including qualitative, quantitative, and conceptual approaches;
- Reflect the broad-based philosophical orientation of ACHE—inclusive of diverse settings, populations, and arenas of continuing and adult higher education practice;
- Hold an active membership in ACHE; and
- Have institutional support sufficient to fulfill the responsibilities of the role (see Proposal Requirements).

Copy Editor

The Copy Editor should:

- Have demonstrated experience in scholarly editing, including familiarity with APA 7 style and academic journal conventions;
- Possess strong command of grammar, usage, mechanics, and academic writing conventions;
- Have familiarity with the publication standards and norms of adult and continuing higher education or a closely related field;
- Be capable of dedicating four to ten hours per article to content and formatting review; and
- Hold an active membership in ACHE (or be willing to join).

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Together, the Editor and Copy Editor share responsibility for the editorial supervision and continuing intellectual development of JCHE. The following describes the primary responsibilities of each role.

Editor

Editorial Leadership and Scope

- Provide leadership in decisions related to the scope, quality, and content of published articles, consistent with JCHE's Aims and Scope and ACHE's mission;
- Review all new submissions to determine scope fit prior to assigning peer reviewers, with discretion to mark submissions as unsuitable with appropriate author notification;
- Periodically review and update the journal's Aims and Scope in consultation with the Editorial Board, at least every two years;
- Work with ACHE leadership on strategic priorities for the journal.

Peer Review Management

- Log into the Editorial Manager (EM) system at least three times per week to monitor new submissions, review status, and required actions;
- Assign two Editorial Board members as reviewers for each submission, balancing recency of assignments and methodological preferences (qualitative vs. quantitative);
- Track and follow up on delayed review acceptances and submissions, using system reminders and personalized outreach as needed;
- Determine editorial decisions (accept, revise, reject) based on reviewer recommendations, including selection of a third reviewer in cases of disagreement;
- Communicate decisions to authors using Editorial Manager templates, modified as appropriate for each submission.

Editorial Board Relations

- Build and maintain a robust, international Editorial Board that reflects the breadth of JCHE's scope, including qualitative, quantitative, and international perspectives;
- Identify and vet prospective board members through networking, CV review, and Zoom interviews; present candidates to the ACHE Executive Board for approval prior to appointment;
- Conduct orientations for new board members;
- Assign each board member approximately three to four review articles per year, tracking fallow periods and methodological preferences via the JCHE Manuscript Records spreadsheet;
- Keep Taylor & Francis portal listings for Editorial Board membership accurate and current.

Publisher Relations (Taylor & Francis)

- Serve as the primary point of contact with Taylor & Francis's Editor Services, Production, and Peer Review teams;
- Coordinate with the T&F Production team for typesetting, author proofing, and final review within required three-business-day windows;
- Manage the Central Article Tracking System (CATS) for publication pipeline tracking;
- Review and approve final article proofs before online publication;
- Send post-publication DOI notifications to authors.

Editing and Pre-Production

- Run originality checks on all accepted manuscripts prior to formal approval;
- Verify that accepted manuscripts meet word count requirements (7,000 words for Research articles; 5,000 for Ideas in Practice);
- Maintain organized file management of manuscripts in process, coordinating handoff to the Copy Editor;
- Coordinate with the Copy Editor on author correspondence, including requests for edits and final revisions;
- Upload finalized manuscripts to T&F for production.

ACHE and Conference Engagement

- Present an annual workshop on publishing in JCHE at the ACHE Annual Conference;
- Identify articles of broad interest for potential inclusion in ACHE's webinar series;
- Report to ACHE leadership on journal performance and editorial activities as requested.

Copy Editor

The Copy Editor devotes four to ten hours per manuscript reviewing accepted articles for both content quality and formatting compliance prior to submission to Taylor & Francis for production. Responsibilities include:

Content Review

- Review organization, argument structure, and logical flow of the manuscript;
- Identify unsupported assertions and ensure each claim is grounded in data or appropriate citation;
- Flag overuse of jargon and recommend plain-language alternatives;
- Check for unnecessary repetition and extraneous content;
- Review grammar, usage, and mechanics, including subject-verb agreement, verb tense consistency, dangling modifiers, and the Oxford comma (required by APA 7).

Formatting Review

JCHE uses APA 7 as its primary style guide, with Taylor & Francis house style taking precedence where the two conflict. The Copy Editor will review:

- Heading levels and hierarchy;
- In-text citations and reference list accuracy and formatting;
- Paragraph indentation and justification (block-justified for abstract and long quotations; left-justified elsewhere);
- Block quotation formatting;
- Bulleted list punctuation;
- Footnotes/endnotes (incorporate or remove as appropriate);
- Acronym usage (spelled out on first use, consistently applied thereafter);
- Spacing after periods (one space) and within tables;
- Number and percentage sign formatting;
- Presence and proper formatting of author notes, appendices, tables, and figures;
- Removal of headers, footers, and extraneous paragraph returns.

Author Communication

- Collaborate with the Editor to prepare clear, organized author correspondence summarizing edits and questions following the copy editing pass;
- Incorporate author responses into the final manuscript and prepare the document for submission to T&F.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

- The Editor(s) will each be appointed for an initial three-year term by ACHE.
- Terms may be renewed for an additional two-year period upon mutual agreement of the editor(s), their institution(s), the ACHE Publications Committee, and the ACHE Board of Directors, at the recommendation of the Executive Committee. Renewal is not automatic; it is contingent upon satisfactory performance as evaluated by the JCHE Task Force.
- Editors wishing to renew should notify the JCHE Task Force no later than eighteen months prior to the expiration of their initial term.
- The editor(s) and their institution(s) shall become familiar with and operate in accordance with the ACHE–Taylor & Francis contract and any letter of agreement with ACHE.
- The new editor(s) will collaborate with the current editorial team during a transition period prior to formally assuming full responsibilities for the journal.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATION

ACHE will provide an annual stipend of \$7500 to the editor(s) for the duration of the initial term and any approved renewal period. The amount of the stipend, and its allocation between Editor and Copy Editor if proposals reflect a two-person team, is to be proposed by applicants and will be subject to approval by the ACHE Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

The stipend is intended to supplement, not replace, institutional support. Funds may be used to defray costs associated with travel to the ACHE Annual Conference, staff time, materials, and other expenses directly related to the conduct of journal business. Stipend expenditures will be reported annually to ACHE.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss the stipend structure with their institution and to reflect expected institutional contributions (including release time and staff support) clearly in their budget proposal.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Candidates (individuals or teams) for the editor(s) position must submit the following:

- Curriculum vitae for all proposed editors, with particular attention to editorial and publishing experience;
- A statement of editorial vision describing proposed goals for JCHE, approaches to editorial leadership, and any anticipated changes to current practice;
- A description of proposed team structure and division of responsibilities (if applying as a team), including how the two roles will be coordinated;
- A transition plan describing the proposed approach to assuming editorial responsibilities from the current team, including plans for working with the existing Editorial Board;
- For those with institutional support, a letter of support from the immediate supervisor(s) and an appropriate institutional fiscal representative for each editor on the proposed team. This letter should clearly state institutional commitments, including release time, staff support, production assistance, and technology support for the duration of the editorship.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

Proposals will be reviewed and a selection made through the following process:

1. The JCHE Task Force will screen all complete proposals and develop a recommendation;
2. The ACHE Executive Committee will review the recommendation;
3. The ACHE Board of Directors will provide final approval.

The Publications Committee reserves the right to request interviews with finalists prior to making a recommendation.

KEY DATES

Date	Milestone
August 5, 2026	Release of Official Call for Proposals
September 4, 2026	Letter of Intent Due (non-binding)
September 25, 2026	Full Proposals Due to Publications Committee
October 23, 2026	Decision by ACHE Board of Directors
November 2, 2026	Transition Period Begins (collaboration with current editors)
January 4, 2027	New Editor(s) Assume Full Responsibilities
December 31, 2029	Editorial Term Officially Ends

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Letters of intent and full proposals should be submitted electronically to:

Clare Van Ness

Chair, JCHE Task Force

admin@acheinc.org

Receipt of a letter of intent is non-binding for both the applicant and ACHE but is strongly encouraged to help the JCHE Task Force anticipate the volume of proposals.

QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this RFP or the editorship may be directed to the JCHE Task Force Chair at the address above. Prospective applicants are encouraged to review the current JCHE Aims and Scope at <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ujch20/current> prior to submitting.

The Association for Continuing Higher Education appreciates your interest in the Journal of Continuing Higher Education and looks forward to receiving your proposal.