

Writing Journal Articles in the Social Sciences: Strategies to Avoid Desk Rejection

April 9, 2026

Workshop led by Christopher Leichtnam

Advisor and Coordinator, Scientific Writing Support (INED)

Date and location: April 9, 2026 (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with a lunch break from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.) | Campus Condorcet – Aubervilliers (building and room will be announced two weeks before the workshop) | **Bâtiment de Recherche Sud, room 1.122.**

Objective

When a paper is rejected, it can feel discouraging, disempowering, even brutal. But rejection also costs time and limits opportunities, particularly for people in the early stages of their careers.

Your writing is crucial in shaping how your readers perceive, interpret, and evaluate your work. If they do not value it, it is unlikely to succeed. Fortunately, with strategic writing choices, you can make your work harder to reject and improve its prospects significantly. To this end, we will focus on specific techniques you can apply immediately in your writing.

Audience

The workshop is open to HED doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, and early-career researchers.

Prerequisite

The workshop is conducted in **English** only.

Content

Paradoxically, the very qualities that characterize scientific thinking—its originality, rigor, complexity, nuance, precision, and conceptual depth—may also give rise to writing challenges that ultimately undermine those same strengths in the eyes of your readers.

We will examine why these challenges arise and how to address them. Combining hands-on activities and discussion, we will compare short passages of journal articles in the social sciences and ask what makes certain writing choices effective or ineffective for the purposes and readers they need to serve.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to deploy your skills to strategically orchestrate your readers' experience of your work, using targeted writing techniques to move beyond desk rejection and increase your chances of acceptance exponentially.