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SRCD Receives Grant from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to Help Further Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Scholarly Publishing

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PRESS RELEASE

January 14, 2026 (Washington, DC) – The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) was recently awarded a $200,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to further support the SRCD's goals to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Society's scientific publications.

SRCD will use the grant to support three major initiatives designed to reduce systemic and operational barriers in scholarly publishing.

First, SRCD will develop and pilot test a peer review academy, which will include a multi-course training sequence, a peer review certificate, and a mentored "capstone" review with an experienced researcher. This

program aims to expand and diversify the pool of trained peer reviewers, reduce implicit bias in peer review, and create a pathway that supports early career scholars, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, in developing editorial and peer review expertise.

Second, SRCD will conduct a marketing and feasibility analysis to identify gaps in the publication of diverse methodological approaches in developmental science, including qualitative, community-based, and other underrepresented research designs. Through environmental scans, interviews, and stakeholder surveys, this project will help SRCD assess barriers in the field and identify opportunities to support more inclusive methodological representation across its journals.

Finally, SRCD will build and pilot a linguistically trained peer review pool to better support authors whose primary language is not English, particularly Spanish- and Chinese-speaking researchers. This program will train and compensate reviewers who can provide linguistically sensitive feedback, ensuring manuscripts are evaluated on scientific merit rather than language proficiency, and will include workflow integration, reviewer training, and targeted outreach. Together, these initiatives advance SRCD's commitment to fostering a more equitable, accessible, and inclusive publishing ecosystem.

"Through SRCD's prior work with RWJF, we learned about many important systemic and operational barriers that we can address to further our goals of advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the Society's scientific publications," said Suzanne Le Menestrel, Ph.D., CAE, SRCD's Executive Director. "These new programs will help SRCD respond proactively to unmet needs in the field and cultivate a more inclusive research culture."

The SRCD Science team will work alongside members of the Publications Committee and SRCD's new publisher, Oxford University Press (OUP), to manage the development and implementation of these initiatives.

"As we continue to strengthen SRCD's publishing program, this new RWJF grant gives us an opportunity to deepen our commitment to equitable, inclusive, and accessible scholarly communication," said Melissa Lutchkus, Senior Publications Manager at SRCD. "We are excited to partner with our editors, Publications Committee, and OUP to develop resources and practices that better support authors, reviewers, and readers across diverse communities."

Support for these initiatives is being provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation.

About Society for Research in Child Development

The Society for Research in Child Development is one of the world's most prestigious and respected professional organizations in the field of child development. Founded by the National Academy of Sciences in 1933 as a multidisciplinary, not-for-profit, professional association, SRCD's membership consists of researchers, practitioners, and human development professionals from more than 60 countries. SRCD advances the developmental sciences and promotes the use of developmental research to improve human lives. This mission is achieved through a variety of programs, publications, and policy advocacy initiatives.