**Natural Hazards Center Research Award Program**

**Report Template and Guide**

The following template can be used to easily create your Natural Hazards Center Research Award report.

Report style will closely follow the [Publication Manual of American Psychological Association (APA), 7th edition](https://apastyle.apa.org/); however, there will be some differences in the final format due to our web-based publishing system. The [Purdue University Online Writing Lab](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) is an excellent resource for APA and many other styles. We also encourage you to familiarize yourself with APA guidelines for [inclusive and bias-free language](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/).

**Please scroll to the end of this document for additional Center-specific style and writing tips before you begin writing. Guidance has also been provided in comment boxes throughout the document.**

**We Can Answer Your Questions!**  
  
We are here to support you at every stage of the writing process. Not sure how to format a reference? Torn by word choice, or acceptable acronyms, or any other sort of writing quandary? Please contact the Natural Hazards Center editing team with any questions at [haz.research.awards@colorado.edu](mailto:haz.research.awards@colorado.edu).

**Title Here (12 Words or Less)**

First Author Name, Affiliation   
Second Author Name, Affiliation  
Third Author Name, Affiliation  
Etc.

Note: For further guidance on who should be included as an author, see [The Ethics of Manuscript Authorship: Best Practices for Attribution](https://www.aje.com/en/arc/ethics-manuscript-authorship/). Please ensure all authors listed meet these requirements.

**Abstract**

Please include your abstract here. (**No more than 250 words**.) This should include a brief overview of the project, the research questions being addressed, a description of the research design and sample, preliminary findings, and any conclusions or implications of the study. Abstracts should be a single paragraph and should be significantly different from the introduction of the report.

Keywords: (include three to five keywords)

**Title of Your Report**

Begin your double-spaced report here with a brief introduction. **The body of the report (not including abstract, references, or tables, figures, and photos) should be** **no more than 20 double-spaced pages**.

**Introduction**

The introduction should briefly describe the hazards or disaster context and underscore the reasons for the current study, emphasizing the need (e.g., gap in the literature) it fills. You may include a brief description of the study here, noting that specific details will be provided in the following methods sections, but it is not required.

**Literature Review**

The literature review should demonstrate a solid grasp of the theory and/or empirical work that has been done in the area of study proposed.

Note that this section is normally written in past or present perfect tense. Always use past tense when referring to another researcher’s work. Information on [the proper tense for all report sections is available in this chart](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/grammar/verb-tense).

**Research Design**

The order of sections below may differ depending on the type of study and preference of the researcher. In most cases, the research design section should not be more than three or four double-spaced pages. Headings suggested below are optional and can be retitled according to author preference.

**Research Questions**

Please list your research questions here. It’s preferable if they are clearly numbered, as in the following example.   
 Our three research questions were:  
 1. The first question.

2. The second question.

3. The third question.

**Study Site Description**

This optional section can include a description of the study location, additional details related to the hazard or disaster, and/or the cultural context in which this work takes place.

**Data, Methods, and Procedures**

Describe all quantitative, qualitative, and/or mixed methods approaches used in the study. Procedures for recruitment and obtaining consent in human subjects research should be explained.

**Sampling and Participants**

The sampling strategy, including inclusion and exclusion criteria, should be explained, as well as information on representation and the potential for generalizing results. Specify the number and demographic characteristics of participants. If human subjects are not directly involved, specify the unit of analysis and describe the selection procedures. If documents or other data sources were analyzed, these materials should be described as well.   
**Data Analysis**

This section should briefly but clearly describe how the data were analyzed for the research project.

**Ethical Considerations, Researcher Positionality, Reciprocity, and Other Considerations**

For human subjects research, please identify the approving Institutional Review Board and date of approval. Some scholars may also want to address other issues in this section related to broader ethical considerations, researcher positionality, reciprocity in the research, and so forth.

**Findings**

This section should use subheadings to easily organize themes that focus on data analysis, results, and discussions about preliminary findings.

**Conclusions**

Please conclude with a brief overview of the research and summarize the main findings. This section may be organized using subheadings such as “Implications for Practice,” “Policy Applications,” “Limitations and Strengths,” and “Future Research Directions.”

**References**

References should be formatted according to the APA Style Manual referenced above. Each reference in the reference list should have a corresponding in-text citation. Please double check that all reference entries and in-text citations are paired. References without a corresponding citation will be removed from the reference list.

Reference lists that contain multiple errors will be returned to the authors for correction.

If you are using a reference manager (such as EndNote, Mendeley, Zotero, etc.) please assure that reference entries are editable and that no extraneous formatting remains.

Include DOIs when possible.

All references should begin with a hanging indent, as in the examples below.

**Journal Article Example:**

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of the article. Name of periodical, volume (issue), pp. #–#. https://doi.org/xxxx

**Book Example:**

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Copyright Year). Title of the book (7th ed.). Publisher. DOI or URL

**Chapter in an Edited Book Example:**

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Copyright Year). Title of the book chapter. In A. A. Editor & B. B. Editor (Eds.), Title of the book (2nd ed., pgs. #–#). Publisher. DOI or URL

**Organizational Web Page Example:**

Organization. (Year, Month Date). Title of Page. URL

**Tables and Figures**

Place all table and figure images in order in this section of the document, along with a brief and descriptive title. For example:  
Table 1. Percentage of Surveys Completed by Participant Group

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Participant Group** | **First Survey** | **Second Survey** | **Third Survey** |
| **1** | 20 | 60 | 80 |
| **2** | 35 | 72 | 88 |
| **3** | 45 | 31 | 71 |

*Note:* Include general, specific, and probability notes below each table or figure in accordance with APA Manual section 7.14. Please make column and row labels title case. Use words rather than symbols if possible (for instance “percent” rather than “%”). Do not repeat information that applies to the entire table, or column, or row—for example the table above does not repeat the term percentage as it is made clear in the title.

Any tables and figures that were not created in Word or Excel **must be submitted** as separate files in an image format such as jpg or png. These should **not be embedded in the Word document**. Tables and figures that do originate in Word or Excel should be placed in this section of the document at full-size.

Do NOT include a title on table or figures that are in an image format, as all titles need to be editable.

For tables and figures that are submitted separately, please make a notation referencing the name of the file, as such:

Figure 1. Descriptive Title

(Please see Figure1.jpg)

Photos to be included in the body of the report should follow the format of tables and figures and include a descriptive caption and copyright information. For instance:  
Photo 1. A group of volunteers unloads supplies donated to survivors of Hurricane Harvey. ©Jan Smith, 2017

(Please see Photo1.jpg)

Please obtain and submit permission to use copyrighted imagery that falls outside of [APA fair use guidelines](https://www.apa.org/about/contact/copyright/).

**Project Photos**

If possible, please provide one to three original photos as separate files in .jpg or .png format that can be posted online to illustrate your report in social media and other promotional efforts. Please submit all photos as separate files outside of the Word document.

For further guidance, please see the CONVERGE Extreme Events Research Check Sheets focused on [Sharing and Communicating Results](https://converge.colorado.edu/resources/check-sheets/sharing-and-communicating-results).

**Bios**

Before submitting your final report, please [submit author bios and photos](https://hazards.colorado.edu/bio-submission/request?src=author) to be added to the Natural Hazards Website. **Do not append bios to this document**.

**Natural Hazards Center Style and Writing Tips**

**Acronyms:** All acronyms should be spelled out and/or explained on first reference in the body of the report, such as “Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).” If an acronym is introduced then it should be used later in the report, as well. For instance, in the above example, if FEMA is not mentioned again, there is no need to include the acronym.  
  
In addition, please do not use non-standard acronyms. For instance, if you’ve termed a sample group “homeowners with insurance” do not refer to them as HWIs, even if you’ve explained the acronym.

**Attributive/Collective Nouns as Modifiers:** To limit difficult to read constructions, do not show possession for attributive or collective nouns used as modifiers. Example: Subject responses indicated that they were impacted by the hurricane **not** the subjects’ responses indicated that they were impacted by the hurricane.

**Dashes/Hyphens:** Dashes in sentences are em dashes—that is, a long dash with no space between words. They should NOT be en dashes – like this – or double hyphens -- like this.

**Decision-making:** In all instances, hyphenate decision-making per the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Decision maker is two words.

**Human-Centered Language:** We are committed to using language that centers people first over conditions they may be experiencing. For instance, a person with a low income rather than a low-income person or older adults rather than the elderly. The [Conscious Style Guide](https://consciousstyleguide.com/) has many resources and ideas for concise human centered language, including sections on age, appearance, ability and disability, gender and sexuality, ethnicity and race, socioeconomic status, and much more.

**Jargon:** The Natural Hazards Center’s audience consists of readers from many different disciplines, professions, organizations, and career stages. Please **avoid or explain** any discipline-specific jargon.

**Numbers/Numerals:** Numbers through nine are spelled out, unless they are in a numbered list. Number 10 and above should appear as numerals. The same goes for ordinal numbers (seventh or 21st). Ordinal numbers should not contain superscript (🚫 21st).

**Percent:** The % symbol should be used with all numbers in the text. The word percent should be used if the number is spelled out (i.e., two percent or 20%).

**Plain Language:** Please use clear, plain language throughout your report. This includes using short sentences, active voice, and jargon-free terminology where possible. [More information can be found here](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/writing_style/plain_style%20.html).

**Seriation:** For the most part, seriation in a sentence uses lower case letters in parentheses so that (a) they will look like this, and (b) etc. If numbering is relevant to the series, then numbers may be used. Example: The three steps to making friends are (1) introduce yourself, (2) give a sincere compliment, and (3) plan a future meeting. Seriation in lists follows similar rules. Note that they will never appear like this: 1) or like this a). See [here for more information](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_headings_and_seriation.html).

**U.S.:** United States is a noun (the Natural Hazards Center is located in the United States), while U.S. is **only** used as a modifier (U.S. disasters have been costly in past years). Also note the abbreviation is U.S. and not US.