

GARC

GLOBAL AUTISM RESEARCH CENTER

GLOBAL AUTISM RESEARCH JOURNALS DIRECTORY

2026

A practical directory for journal discovery, manuscript fit,
open-access planning and submission readiness.

RESOURCE SERIES

Research & Evidence

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About this directory

The Global Autism Research Journals Directory 2026 is a curated publication-navigation resource for autism researchers, research teams, universities and collaborators. It identifies a practical set of journals that regularly publish autism-specific or closely related neurodevelopmental research and helps authors think about journal fit before submission.

Important use note

This directory is curated rather than exhaustive. Inclusion does not constitute an endorsement, guarantee of acceptance or quality ranking. Journal scope, access models, article-processing charges, editorial teams and submission policies can change. Authors should always verify the current official journal and author-guideline pages before submitting.

What this resource gives you

- A structured list of core autism-specific journals and adjacent high-relevance journals.
- A plain-language description of the research each journal is best suited to receive.
- Current publishing-model signals: subscription, hybrid/open-access option or fully open access.
- A manuscript-to-journal fit matrix for common autism research outputs.
- A submission-readiness checklist designed for research teams and early-career authors.
- Official publisher links rather than third-party journal-ranking pages.

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01 Directory snapshot

The directory is organized by manuscript fit, not by a single league table. An excellent autism paper can be a poor fit for a prestigious general journal, while a carefully matched specialist journal can provide the right readership, reviewers and translational reach.

18

Curated journals in this 2026 edition

Verified through official publisher or journal pages

10

Autism-specific / autism-primary titles

Core discovery list

8

High-relevance adjacent titles

Neurodevelopment, disability, psychiatry and communication

4

Primary fit dimensions

Scope • population • method • intended readership

Use four filters before you shortlist a journal

Filter	Question to ask
1. Scope fit	Does the journal routinely publish your exact topic, population and method?
2. Audience fit	Who must read the paper: autism researchers, clinicians, educators, policy actors, disability researchers or molecular scientists?
3. Article-type fit	Original research, systematic review, brief report, methodology paper, policy/practice paper or community-focused work?
4. Publishing fit	Does the funding, open-access requirement, preprint policy and timeline work for your team?

GARC recommendation

Shortlist three journals before writing the final manuscript: one primary target and two realistic alternatives. Build the paper around the primary journal only after checking its current aims, article types and author instructions.

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02 Core autism journals I

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Autism

Sage | affiliated with the National Autistic Society | Subscription; optional open access

Scope: Interdisciplinary autism research with direct practical relevance to autistic people and quality of life.

Best fit: Empirical qualitative or quantitative studies, intervention, diagnosis, education, health, psychology, services and translational work.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Autism Research

Wiley | official journal of INSAR | Hybrid open access

Scope: Autism and related neurodevelopmental research with strong emphasis on genetic, neurobiological, immunological, epidemiological and psychological mechanisms.

Best fit: Mechanistic, developmental, epidemiological, clinical-trial and high-quality empirical autism research.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders

Springer Nature | Hybrid

Scope: Broad autism and related developmental-disability research spanning causes, prevalence, diagnosis, treatment, education, services, policy and society.

Best fit: Theoretical and applied research, reviews, brief reports, service and clinical studies.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Research in Autism

Elsevier | Subscription / supports open access

Scope: Empirical and review work connecting genetic, neurobiological, cognitive and behavioral understanding with practical questions faced by autistic people, families and professionals.

Best fit: Broad empirical autism studies, reviews, adult and under-researched topics, co-occurring conditions and translational work.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

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03 Core autism journals II

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Autism in Adulthood

Sage | Subscription; optional open access

Scope: Research and scholarship on autistic adults from emerging adulthood through later life, with strong community involvement and policy/practice orientation.

Best fit: Adult health, employment, relationships, services, systems, policy, methodology and participatory research.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Autism & Developmental Language Impairments

Sage | Fully open access

Scope: Developmental communication, language and communication disorders, including autism-related language and AAC research.

Best fit: Language development, communication, AAC, speech-language research, multilingual and developmental communication studies.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Advances in Autism

Emerald Publishing | Hybrid

Scope: Health, care, quality of life, lived experience, policy and service development for autistic people.

Best fit: Applied health and care research, qualitative work, policy, service evaluation and evidence-to-practice papers.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

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04 Core autism journals III

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities

Sage | Hammill Institute / DADD | Subscription; current OA options should be checked

Scope: Practical educational and support research for autism and developmental disabilities across multiple professional disciplines.

Best fit: Education, school-based interventions, practitioner-focused research, effective programs, training and applied support.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Molecular Autism

BioMed Central / Springer Nature | Fully open access

Scope: Molecular basis of autism and related neurodevelopmental conditions, integrating genetics, molecular neurobiology, neuropathology, biomarkers and imaging.

Best fit: Genetics, molecular mechanisms, biomarkers, neurobiology and translational molecular research.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

CORE AUTISM JOURNAL

Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders

Springer Nature | Hybrid

Scope: Critical review scholarship across autism and developmental disorders, including genetics, neuroscience, diagnosis, intervention, education and co-occurring conditions.

Best fit: Systematic, scoping and critical reviews; evidence syntheses; trend and field-mapping papers.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

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05 Related neurodevelopment & disability journals

RELATED JOURNAL

Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders

BioMed Central / Springer Nature | Fully open access

Scope: Cross-disorder neurodevelopmental research integrating neurobiology, genetics, cognition, pediatrics, psychiatry and psychology.

Best fit: Autism studies framed within broader neurodevelopmental mechanisms, precision medicine or cross-condition comparisons.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

RELATED JOURNAL

Research in Developmental Disabilities

Elsevier | Subscription / supports open access

Scope: Interdisciplinary empirical research on developmental disabilities and associated functioning, participation and support.

Best fit: Autism within developmental-disability, functioning, participation, support, education or rehabilitation contexts.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

RELATED JOURNAL

Journal of Intellectual Disability Research

Wiley | Subscription; optional open access

Scope: Scientific research on intellectual disability; autism papers are relevant when participants also have intellectual disability or analyses report that subgroup.

Best fit: Autism + intellectual disability, complex support needs, health, epidemiology and service research.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

RELATED JOURNAL

American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

AAIDD | hosted by Taylor & Francis from 2026 | Subscription; open-access option available

Scope: Multidisciplinary original research on intellectual and developmental disabilities across biology, behavior, health and services.

Best fit: Autism research embedded in intellectual/developmental disability science or complex-support populations.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

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06 Clinical, mental-health & communication journals

ADJACENT HIGH-RELEVANCE JOURNAL

Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry

Wiley | ACAMH | Subscription; optional open access

Scope: International child and adolescent psychology and psychiatry covering epidemiology, diagnosis, treatment, cognition, neuroscience, neurobiology and genetics.

Best fit: High-impact autism research with strong developmental psychopathology, clinical, longitudinal or mechanistic framing.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

ADJACENT HIGH-RELEVANCE JOURNAL

Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology

Wiley / Mac Keith Press | Subscription; optional open access

Scope: Paediatric neurology and childhood-onset neurodisability, including developmental, psychological, therapy, neurogenetic and neuroimaging research.

Best fit: Autism studies with strong neurodisability, clinical, developmental, motor, communication or health relevance.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

AUTISM SECTION

Frontiers in Psychiatry - Autism

Frontiers | Fully open access

Scope: Dedicated autism section spanning neurobiology, imaging, biomarkers, epidemiology, developmental trajectories, clinical management and interventions.

Best fit: Broad autism work suited to a psychiatry/translational readership, including methods, reviews, original research and protocols.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

ADJACENT HIGH-RELEVANCE JOURNAL

Evidence-Based Communication Assessment and Intervention

Taylor & Francis | Subscription / Open Select option

Scope: Evidence-based communication assessment and intervention for people with communication impairments, autism and developmental disabilities.

Best fit: Speech-language, AAC, communication assessment, intervention, systematic reviews and evidence-focused commentaries.

[Official journal page / current author information](#)

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07 Match your manuscript to a journal

The matrix below is a navigation aid, not a ranking. A manuscript may fit several journals; the final choice should follow a live scope check and recent-article scan.

Manuscript profile	Useful journals to examine	Fit signal
Autism genetics / biomarkers / molecular mechanisms	Molecular Autism; Autism Research; Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Strong biological or mechanistic framing
Broad empirical autism study	Autism; JADD; Research in Autism; Autism Research	Check practical relevance, method and audience
Autistic adults / aging / employment / systems	Autism in Adulthood; Autism; Research in Autism	Adult-specific questions and community relevance
Systematic / scoping review	Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders; Autism; JADD	Confirm review type accepted before submission
Education / school / practitioner implementation	FOCUS; Autism; Research in Developmental Disabilities	Applied or implementation-oriented framing
Health / care / services / policy	Advances in Autism; Autism; Autism in Adulthood	Good fit for service and policy translation
Language / communication / AAC	Autism & Developmental Language Impairments; EBCAI; DMCN	Communication-specific methods and outcomes
Autism + intellectual disability / complex support needs	JIDR; AJIDD; Research in Developmental Disabilities; JADD	Ensure subgroup reporting and inclusion are explicit
Child mental health / developmental psychopathology	JCPP; Frontiers in Psychiatry - Autism; JADD	Clinical/developmental framing
Neurodisability / motor / clinical development	DMCN; Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders; Autism Research	Strong developmental medicine or neurological relevance

Do not choose by impact metric alone

Journal metrics can be useful context, but scope match, readership, methods, open-science requirements, editorial fit and the quality of peer review usually matter more for a specific manuscript. Metrics also change over time and differ by database.

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08 Publishing model & fee guide

Three common models

Model	What it means	Examples in this directory
Subscription	Readers or institutions pay for access; authors often have no mandatory publication charge unless choosing optional open access.	Autism and Autism in Adulthood list subscription access with optional open access.
Hybrid	A subscription journal that also allows authors to pay for immediate open access under an eligible licence.	Autism Research and JADD explicitly offer hybrid/open-access pathways.
Fully open access	All published articles are freely accessible; an APC may apply after acceptance unless covered or waived.	ADLI, Molecular Autism and Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders are open-access titles.

Current 2026 examples worth knowing

- Autism: no fee to submit or publish under the standard subscription route; optional Sage Choice open access is available.
- Autism in Adulthood: no fee to submit or publish under the standard route; optional open access is available.
- Autism Research: standard publication has no charge; optional hybrid open access carries an APC. Wiley listed USD 4,740 for the open-access option when checked in September 2026.
- Autism & Developmental Language Impairments: fully open access; Sage listed a USD 2,000 APC when checked in September 2026.

Fee rule

Never budget from a third-party APC list. Verify the fee on the official publisher page immediately before submission or acceptance, and check institutional open-access agreements, funder coverage and waiver eligibility.

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09 Submission readiness checklist

Use this checklist before the final submission decision. Each item should be evidenced, not assumed.

#	Readiness item	Evidence to confirm	Done
1	Journal fit	The research question, participant population and methods sit clearly inside the journal scope.	☐
2	Recent evidence	You reviewed recent articles from the target journal to understand current editorial fit.	☐
3	Article type	The manuscript matches an accepted article category and its current word/figure limits.	☐
4	Ethics	Human-participant ethics, consent/assent, safeguarding and data governance statements are complete where required.	☐
5	Reporting guideline	The relevant reporting standard is applied (for example CONSORT, PRISMA, STROBE, COREQ or other study-appropriate guidance).	☐
6	Authorship	All authors meet authorship criteria; order, affiliations, ORCID and corresponding-author details are agreed.	☐
7	Community relevance	Language, outcomes and interpretation avoid unnecessary stigma and reflect the relevance of the research to autistic people where appropriate.	☐
8	Data statement	Data availability, repository or reason for restricted sharing is prepared.	☐

Gate 1-8 complete?

Only move to final submission packaging after scope, article type, ethics, reporting, authorship, community relevance and data-sharing considerations have been checked.

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09 Submission readiness checklist - continued

#	Readiness item	Evidence to confirm	Done
9	Conflicts & funding	Funding, competing interests and role-of-funder statements are complete.	☐
10	Preprint status	Any preprint is disclosed and compatible with the target journal policy.	☐
11	AI disclosure	Any use of generative AI is handled according to the journal and publisher policy; AI tools are not listed as authors.	☐
12	Open-access plan	Funder mandate, licence, APC coverage and institutional agreement are checked.	☐
13	Cover letter	The cover letter states novelty, fit and why the journal readership benefits.	☐
14	Files	Main manuscript, tables, figures, supplements and required checklists are complete and readable.	☐
15	Final source check	The team reopens the live author guidelines immediately before pressing Submit.	☐

Final pre-submission pause

- Open the live author instructions one final time: journal requirements can change between drafting and submission.
- Confirm the manuscript files match the journal portal fields, article type and anonymisation requirements.
- Save a submission package and record the date, journal, manuscript version and corresponding author in the GARC publication tracker.

GARC human gate

Scientific, ethics and legal/data approvals remain human gates where applicable. A completed checklist does not replace required institutional review or external ethics approval.

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10 Publication integrity & inclusive dissemination

Minimum research-publishing baseline

- Do not submit the same manuscript simultaneously to multiple journals unless a journal explicitly permits a special process.
- Report methods, exclusions and analytic decisions transparently enough for readers to understand and evaluate the work.
- Use person-first or identity-first language in accordance with study context, community preferences and the target journal policy; explain terminology choices where useful.
- Avoid framing autism only through deficit language when the research question does not require it; describe support needs and outcomes precisely.
- Where feasible, include accessible summaries or community briefs that translate findings without overstating certainty.
- Correct the record if material errors are identified after publication and follow publisher processes for corrections or retractions.
- Use repositories and persistent identifiers responsibly: ORCID for researchers, DOI for outputs, and appropriate data repositories when sharing is ethically and legally permitted.

A useful signal from 2026 journal practice

Autism Research requires a lay summary in its manuscript structure, while Autism in Adulthood requires a Community Brief for several article types. These practices illustrate a broader move toward making autism research understandable beyond specialist academic audiences.

GARC publishing workflow

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Define manuscript type and target audience | 2. Shortlist 3 journals |
| 3. Read live scope + 10 recent relevant papers | 4. Select primary target |
| 5. Run ethics / reporting / authorship checks | 6. Format only after scope decision |
| 7. Internal scientific review | 8. Submit and record status in publication tracker |

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References & website placement

Where this file belongs on the GARC website

Website placement

Resources → Research & Evidence → Journals & Publishing

Suggested card title: Global Autism Research Journals Directory 2026

Suggested description: A curated guide to autism and neurodevelopmental journals, manuscript fit, open-access models and submission readiness for researchers worldwide.

Primary action: Download PDF

Secondary action: View related Researcher Tools

Maintenance rule

GARC should treat this directory as a living annual resource. The public PDF can remain versioned, while the website record should show the latest edition and publication date. A light verification pass should be completed at least annually, and sooner when a publisher changes a journal title, platform, access model or submission policy.

Official sources checked for this edition

1. Sage - Autism journal and author guidelines - [Official source](#)
2. Wiley / INSAR - Autism Research - [Official source](#)
3. Springer Nature - Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders - [Official source](#)
4. Elsevier - Research in Autism - [Official source](#)
5. Sage - Autism in Adulthood - [Official source](#)
6. Sage - Autism & Developmental Language Impairments - [Official source](#)
7. Emerald - Advances in Autism - [Official source](#)
8. Sage - Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities - [Official source](#)
9. BioMed Central - Molecular Autism - [Official source](#)
10. Springer Nature - Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders - [Official source](#)
11. Springer Nature - Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders - [Official source](#)
12. Elsevier - Research in Developmental Disabilities - [Official source](#)
13. Wiley - Journal of Intellectual Disability Research - [Official source](#)
14. Wiley - Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry - [Official source](#)
15. Wiley - Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology - [Official source](#)
16. Frontiers in Psychiatry - Autism section - [Official source](#)
17. Taylor & Francis - Evidence-Based Communication Assessment and Intervention - [Official source](#)
18. AAIDD - Journals and 2026 platform information - [Official source](#)

Source verification date: 26 September 2026. Publisher policies and fees may change after this date.

About GARC

The Global Autism Research Center (GARC) develops research, evidence resources, international collaboration and practical knowledge tools designed to strengthen autism research and its translation across settings and regions.