

During a recent virtual writing retreat, we used a peer-review framework to review your abstract. We then had an open discussion and noted down all the feedback. We reviewed your abstract using a structured worksheet with the following advice in mind: “The abstract is a condensed and concentrated version of the full text of the research manuscript. It should be sufficiently representative of the paper if read as a stand-alone document”. We looked for important elements of a research abstract and we comment on them below. We hope the following is helpful for your revisions.

It’s important to note that Geoscience Communication puts a lot of emphasis on evaluation of communication practice and ensuring that the practice is based on a solid research question and research design. The articles need to tell the story of *research* on geoscience communication and not just tell the story of geoscience communication that’s been done.

Overall:

Your project sounds very interesting and we were really interested in the “creative process” and how it can be used with communities. The abstract touches on some very interesting elements and issues, which made us want to read on. However, there are a few things we believe should be improved for this to be relevant for a peer-reviewed publication.

Title:

The title is nice, but we felt it referred more to the “literature review” part of the study than the pilot study. We felt that the pilot study should be emphasised more. The authors use the word “potential”, but they have in fact carried out a pilot study where they put some of these ideas to the test. That sounds more like an “actual” tool rather than a “potential” tool.

Need and relevance:

You have communicated the need and relevance in the first couple of sentences, but we got lost a little in the long second sentence. We noted repetition in this list that could be reduced. For example, the first and second points seem repetitive as well as the third and fourth. We also lacked some kind of definition of a “creative practice” to latch on to. This is described in slightly more detail further down, but maybe you could integrate a clear (but short) definition into the initial need and relevance part of the abstract.

Question/Hypothesis

There seems to be 2 parts to this paper which comprise of a literature review and a pilot study. The questions/aims for these parts are split up. We suggest that the authors draw these together and connect them into a single clear question/aim/hypothesis for the whole paper. In a way, the literature review provides a clear question/need. Maybe consider leaving out the details of the review and simply say that a “literature review provides us with an important question:...”

Methods:

The methods presented are a literature review and a pilot study. Firstly, we were uncertain from the abstract whether you have performed the literature review yourselves or not. If you did, then you should use the active voice and “own” this part of the study more clearly. We also lacked a clearer description of exactly which “creative practice” the authors used in the pilot study. For us, this is a very important part of the story the abstract lacks. Maybe cut down on the literature review part and add a sentence explaining the “creative practice” implemented in the pilot study.

Results and conclusions

There are hints of some interesting results, but they are not clearly communicated. Geoscience Communication puts a lot of emphasis of evaluation of communication practice. In this regard, writing “we noticed...” does not imply a thorough evaluation. We are left wondering how the authors actually measured the effect of the pilot study. You might consider deleting the sentence where you say the “effects not being thoroughly researched” and concentrate on communicating some concrete results. There must be some!

Take-home message

The abstract ends with a couple of sentences that basically repeat the first sentences. We also do not recommend that the abstract contains a “we need more research” statement.

The abstract could end more powerfully by simply deleting the last two sentences and saying something more concrete about what exactly the pilot study achieved.

Clarity

The abstract reads quite nicely but there is some repetition that should be dealt with. For example, the last sentence basically repeats the “need”. Also the description of the literature review uses 3 sentences and could be cut back to leave more room for a description of “creative practice”, the results and a more powerful take-home message.

One of the peer-reviewers in our group constructed the following suggestion to help the authors understand some of the issues we had:

“Global South communities are increasingly exposed and vulnerable to natural hazards such as floods and droughts. Preparing for future extremes requires diverse knowledges, enhancing communication between diverse groups, and instigating organisational and behavioural change. Art and creativity (***DESCRIBE THIS BETTER***) are often used for raising awareness of climate change and for encouraging behavioural change in relation to health issues. Research using creative practice to increase resilience to natural hazards is still rare and it is important to investigate how the use of creative methods compares to other methods. ***SENTENCE WITH THEIR HYPOTHESIS.*** In this study we investigate if artistic and creative processes support Global South communities in improving their preparedness to extremes. We have done a literature review of 267 journal articles published between 2000 and 2018 which shows that there is a growing body of research on using creative practice in environmental issues. Furthermore, we carried out a pilot project where we tested the application of art and creativity in South Africa. We designed storytelling workshops to create community narratives about impacts of, and preparedness for, future drought. These narratives were filmed and edited and shared both with the community and governance actors. ***CONCLUSION SENTENCE ON THEIR WORK.***”

We really enjoyed peer-reviewing this interesting abstract and commend the authors on what seems to be a very interesting study. We hope that our suggestions help to revise the abstract so that the essence of the research is communicated in a clearer and more powerful way.

All the best,

Mathew Stiller-Reeve (Thematic Editor of Geoscience Communication) and 6 peer-reviewers from The National Graduate School in Infection Biology and Antimicrobials in Norway.