

## Response to Topical Editor

### Comments from Topical Editor Marlene Villeneuve

Can you please address the following:

From: The GC editorial "Geoscience Communication – Building bridges, not walls"(Section 4 point 2):

"All research articles should include an explicitly marked section that considers the ethics of the investigation and should also demonstrate how the research has received ethical clearance from their research institute or professional body. If this is not possible, then a clear rationale should be given for any extenuating circumstances, ideally in the cover letter to the editor upon submission of the manuscript. Furthermore, if institutional ethical approval is not possible (e.g. if you are an independent researcher), then the ethical guidelines for a country or governing body should be adhered to: for example, the British Educational Research Association (BERA) provides ethical guidelines for educational research (see e.g. Flewitt, 2005)."

<https://gc.copernicus.org/articles/1/1/2018/>

*We appreciate the comments from the topical editor to clarify our ethical treatment of the survey data collection and reporting. We note that this manuscript was submitted to Solid Earth, not to Geoscience Communication. However, as the manuscript was submitted to a SE/GC joint special issue, we agree that it is important to make it clear to readers how the survey data was handled. Thus, we have rewritten the third paragraph of section 4, lines 490-505. We have made it clear that no identifying information was collected from the survey respondents, and no demographic data was collected. In addition, survey data was aggregated for analysis and no identifying data was preserved or added in the aggregation process. All survey respondents had the option to "opt out" of answering any question or part of the survey, and also could indicate if they didn't want their survey responses included in the data used for publication. This methodology is all in accordance with the ethical requirements for collecting survey data from students as defined by the James Madison University Institutional Review Board (IRB.) As required by the IRB, we had our survey data collection instrument and protocol for analysis and reporting verified and approved by the IRB (Protocol number 21-2232.)*