

Simine Vazire

Candidate Statement

I am in the unusual position of running for SPSP president two years in a row. I was excited to run again this year in large part because one of the issues I ran on last year, giving graduate student members the right to vote in SPSP elections, has now become SPSP policy! I continue to think that our graduate student members are vital to the organization and that one of our top priorities should be providing support to graduate students and early career members. For example, I would like to see SPSP provide support for graduate students and post docs in difficult situations in their PhD programs or labs. In addition, SPSP is in a great position to provide training and support to early career members considering a variety of career paths, and foster connections with members working outside of academia. Finally, SPSP can play an important role in helping to demystify often-hidden processes such as peer review at journals and funding agencies, hiring and promotion practices, and even the internal workings of SPSP itself. All of these initiatives would help to strengthen the position of early career scholars, and could reduce inequality, bias, and mistreatment of early career scholars.

Another important issue is addressing the cultural homogeneity in SPSP and in psychology more broadly. To address the concerns of the global public, we must connect with and bring in a broad range of voices to our organization. To do this, we can partner with organizations throughout the world to offer joint virtual events (e.g., visiting each other's classrooms), foster bidirectional exchanges of research and teaching materials, and develop collaborative projects. SPSP can also use the income from journal subscriptions to provide English writing support to submitting authors.

Improving the representation and influence scholars from a broad range of backgrounds and career stages will further SPSP's aim of providing rigorous, high quality evidence to the world. Diversity in our community helps to minimize biases and blind spots in the questions we ask and the methods we use to answer them. In addition, we can promote excellence by rewarding a broader range of contributions to teaching and research. Too often, the people recognized with awards, invited speaking roles, or grants are those that are already very visible. However, less visible contributions and roles are vital to achieving the scientific rigor we strive for. Rewarding a broader range of contributions and scholars will help create more incentives for important and undervalued work, accelerating the pace of discovery.

Finally, SPSP can continue to improve how we communicate our findings to the world. What we say carries a lot of weight with the public and with decision-makers. We have a mandate to share the knowledge we produce, and to do so responsibly. This is why we ask researchers to be transparent, and SPSP as an organization has the same responsibility to be transparent and accountable. For example, SPSP journals could be more transparent about the peer review process through policies such as naming handling editors on published papers and publishing the peer review history with published articles. In addition, SPSP can increase transparency in our public outreach by adding simple labels to press releases to communicate important limitations and uncertainty. By striving to be well-calibrated in the claims we promote and share, we can help prevent the misuse of our findings and demonstrate our commitment to credible, well-calibrated science.