

Contemporary Accounting Research **Editor's Report for January 1 to December 31, 2021**

Overview of 2021

Contemporary Accounting Research (CAR) enjoyed continued strong submission volume in 2021, with regular submissions exceeding 500 manuscripts and total submissions (including conference submissions) exceeding 600 manuscripts. We maintained our broad reach in attracting submissions that continue to reflect diversity in topics, methods and author location. We also maintained a highly rigorous and selective review process. A later section of this report provides detailed statistics.

In 2021, the *CAR* conference was held virtually for the second time. The virtual Craft of Accounting Research workshop and PhD and junior faculty consortium furthered *CAR*'s outreach to young Canadian scholars.

In the remainder of this report, I discuss the following topics:

- Personnel & process changes
- External recognition of the journal
- Conferences and meetings
- Manuscript statistics
- Update - 2022 events

Personnel & process changes

Judy Tran joined the *CAR* team as Editorial, Communications and Administration Specialist. Judy, along with Carina Hackett and Judith Russell of Queen's University continue to manage the back-office functions that keep the peer-review process flowing smoothly. As Managing Editor, Sylvia Siemens oversees accepted manuscripts through the production process up to compilation of each issue.

During 2021, we continued to work on improving our systems and procedures to maintain high standards of academic integrity and to acknowledge reviewers and editors for their support of the journal. Please see the section "Update – 2022 events" for details.

Social Media Presence

2021 marked the launch of *CAR*'s social media presence on LinkedIn and Twitter. We are using these platforms to announce recent articles accepted for publication, to promote virtual events (discussed below), to bring attention to our virtual issues (see next section) and to bring attention to the journal more generally. On December 31, 2021, we had 582 followers on LinkedIn and 384 on Twitter. We also now encourage authors of accepted articles to promote the research using their own social media networks and there has been a noticeable increase in the number of authors who are doing so. A big thanks to Krista Fiolleau and Stephanie Rioux-Wunder who are leading the new social media efforts on behalf of *CAR*.

Virtual Issues

CAR launched a new virtual issue series in 2021 with the objective of bringing more attention (and hopefully citations) to recent research we are publishing in high-interest areas. All articles included in a virtual issue were published within the past two years and reflect the variety of research

methods typical of work published in *CAR*. We worked closely with Wiley to identify topics for the virtual issues based on recent search trends by users of their databases. Wiley also provides Open Access to all articles in the virtual issues for a two-month period to encourage downloads. The theme of the first virtual issue in 2021 was corporate governance and the second virtual issue theme was corporate social responsibility (CSR). Thanks to *CAR* Editors Fabrizio Ferri (corporate governance) and Peter Clarkson (CSR) for their work in selecting articles for the virtual issues and writing the forewords that summarized the research highlighted in each. Data received from Wiley indicates that download activity for the articles included in each virtual issue increased considerably in the two months following the release of the issue.

Verification of Research Ethics Approval for Studies Involving Human Participants

Late in 2021 we implemented a requirement that all new submissions using research methods involving human participants (e.g., experiments, interviews, surveys) must be accompanied by institutional verification of research ethics review and approval. This new requirement is an update to our previous policy of requiring authors of new submissions using human participants to indicate (but not provide verification) that ethics approval had been received as part of completing the author declaration form. The new requirement is in keeping with best practices at other leading accounting journals.

Bundling of discussions with the discussed article

In 2018, we began to “bundle” accepted articles from the *CAR* conference with the related discussion. The first bundled discussion appeared in the journal in the second issue of 2019.

In 2021, we reviewed the bundled article process and identified deficiencies in the online posting of articles with discussions. The bundled article format as it existed was unworkable for HTML postings, and we worked with Wiley to create a new format suitable for both PDF/print and HTML versions. The transition to the new format was completed in May 2021.

Wiley’s New Journal Design

We are evaluating Wiley's New Journal Design (NJD) format to determine whether it's likely to be a good fit for the journal. Potential benefits could include shorter production times for articles.

New Editor-in-Chief Appointed

Professor Partha Mohanram of the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto has been appointed as the new Editor-in-Chief of *CAR* and begins his transition period as Editor-in-Chief Elect on May 1, 2022. Professor Mohanram will begin his three-year term as Editor-in-Chief on January 1, 2023. I look forward to supporting Partha as he transitions into his role as the next Editor-in-Chief of *CAR*.

External recognition of the journal

Over the years, *CAR* has earned international recognition as one of the world’s top accounting journals. In 2016, *CAR* was included in the *Financial Times* (FT) Research Rank of 50 business journals. We are still awaiting the outcome of the FT’s most recent review of its journal rankings, which commenced in late 2020. *CAR* merited an A* in the 2019 ranking by the Australian Business Deans’ Council, and a score of 4 from the UK Chartered Association of Business Schools’ *Academic Journal Guide 2021*. Currently, Google Scholar ranks *CAR* fourth among accounting

and taxation journals on its h5-index and h5-median. According to the most recent Impact Factor information (2020), *CAR*'s two-year ISI impact factor is 3.543, and its five-year impact factor is 4.911, both of which are up from 2020.

Conferences and meetings

Craft of Accounting Research workshop

The goal of this annual one-day event is to enhance the quality of research carried out in Canada. This workshop is intended for doctoral students in at least the third year of their PhD program.

The 2021 workshop was held virtually on June 9 as part of the 2021 virtual CAAA Annual Conference. The workshop was organized by Andy Bauer (University of Waterloo), Lan Guo (Wilfrid Laurier University), and Kim Trottier (HEC Montréal). The 2021 workshop was presented in a new format that started with a large group session focused on providing advice and best practices for improving writing skills. This session was followed by breakout groups focused on different research methods including textual analysis, experiments, archival strategies, qualitative methods, and artificial intelligence. The workshop also offered opportunities for selected participants to present and receive feedback on their own research ideas in a new PechaKucha format. The afternoon featured breakout sessions for different research topic areas including taxation, management accounting, financial reporting, and audit/governance. The workshop concluded with a group session on creativity and its application to academic research.

The 44 participants included nine faculty members, 31 students and junior faculty members from Canadian colleges and universities, along with four students and junior faculty members from elsewhere in the world. Juan Manuel Garcia Lara represented the European Accounting Association (EAA) at this workshop.

CAR conference

The journal holds the annual *Contemporary Accounting Research* conference to provide a forum where the global accounting research community can engage and interact, in Canada. The invitation-only conference attracted roughly one-fifth of the total number of new submissions to the journal in 2021.

We held the 36th annual *CAR* conference virtually on October 22 and 23, 2021. Thanks to the financial support of CPA Canada, we were able to offer the event without charging a registration fee.

Jeff Pittman and Partha Mohanram shared responsibility as co-editors for the conference with me, including organizing the program, and selecting papers and discussants. The conference attracted 98 submissions (see Table 1 in the Manuscript statistics section), which are peer-reviewed as regular journal submissions. With the aid of Editors' recommendations, Jeff, Partha and I chose seven manuscripts that reflected a wide range of topics and methods, in keeping with *CAR* conference tradition. As always, conference sessions consisted of presentations by authors and discussants, followed by an open discussion with attendees. CPA Canada also organized one 50-minute 'perspectives from practice' session that was held at the end of the first day and focused on the challenges and opportunities for transforming accounting for the 21st century. The session was well-attended and generated lively discussion. The conference received positive feedback and

because of the virtual format we had a record number of registrants. In total, 779 individuals registered for the conference including 233 members of the CAAA.

PhD and junior faculty consortium

Each year, a consortium precedes the *CAR* Conference. The consortium allows faculty experts to present their ideas and insights about research to Canadian doctoral students and junior faculty members. The main objective is to broaden junior scholars' appreciation and understanding of accounting research with respect to the methods employed and the topics examined. We thank *CAR* Editors John Campbell and Clara Xiaoling Chen for their hard work organizing this year's consortium.

The 2021 consortium was held October 21. The consortium began with two concurrent sessions on research design issues. "Research Design Issues for Archival Research" was led by Beth Blankespoor (University of Washington), Jung Min Kim (doctoral student at the Wharton School), and Jonathan Shipman (University of Arkansas). "Research Design Issues for Experimental and Survey Research" was led by David Bedford (University of Technology Sydney), Justin Leiby (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), and Kristi Rennekamp (Cornell University). Robbie Moon (Georgia Institute of Technology) and Fei Du (University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign) presented the second research session on textual analysis, big data, and machine learning. The final research session focused on ESG, CSR, and DEI and was led by Khrystyna Bochkay (University of Miami) and Jeff Hales (University of Texas at Austin).

The consortium also featured two career advice sessions. The first session focused on the review process and writing a review and converting an R&R. Linda Myers (University of Tennessee) provided insights from the author perspective, while Jake Thornock (Brigham Young University) discussed the reviewer's perspective. Jenna D'Adduzio (University of British Columbia) and Minjeong Kim (University of Wisconsin – Madison) led the second career advice session, which focused on the transition from coursework to dissertation to finding a job. CPA Canada delivered closing remarks.

In total, 146 individuals attended the 2021 consortium. Attendees at the Consortium also participated in the *CAR* conference.

Virtual events

In 2021, *CAR* was pleased to host three free virtual events focused on different research methods. These events were organized by one or more *CAR* Editors with doctoral students and junior faculty as the target audience. An informal social event was held after each event to give panel members and participants an opportunity to meet and continue the discussion from the event.

The first event, "Qualitative Methods in Accounting Research: Some Reflections from the Field," was held on May 12th, 2021, and organized by *CAR* Editor Ingrid Jeacle (University of Edinburgh). The event featured three panelists: Henri Dekker (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), Darlene Himick (University of Ottawa), and Bertrand Malsch (Queen's University). In total, 95 people registered for the event, including 17 CAAA members.

The second event entitled, "Articulating and evaluating incremental contribution in experimental

accounting research”, was held September 17, 2021. The event’s four panelists were: Jeff Hales, (University of Texas at Austin), Kristi Rennekamp (*CAR* Editor, Cornell University), Willie Choi (University of Wisconsin-Madison), and Khim Kelly (*CAR* Editor, University of Central Florida). There were 191 registrants, including 79 CAAA members.

The final event, “*CAR* Virtual Event on Textual Analysis,” was held December 14, 2021. The session was moderated by Jenny Tucker (*CAR* Editor, University of Florida). The panelists were: Khrystyna Bochkay (University of Miami), Stephen V. Brown (University of Connecticut), and Andy Leone (Northwestern University). In total, 640 individuals registered for the event, including 110 CAAA members.

Manuscript statistics

Each year, we present statistics that illustrate *CAR*’s national and international reach, the selectivity of the review process, the timeliness of manuscript processing, and the topical and methodological diversity of submissions.

Canadian mandate and global reach of the journal

Table 1 shows continuing strong submission volume in 2021, with a record number (641) of total submissions. In 2021, 15% of submissions involved a Canadian author, consistent with recent history. Another 46% of submissions involved at least one author working outside of Canada and the US.

Table 1: New submissions 2017-2021 by submission type, with annual changes and region of origin

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Regular	543	487	503	436	413
Conference	98	135	104	121	119
TOTAL	641	622	607	557	532
<i>% increase over prior year</i>	3%	2%	9%	5%	9%
<i>% of Total with a Canadian author</i>	15%	16%	15%	18%	14%
<i>% of Total with an author from outside Canada and the U.S.</i>	46%	46%	44%	39%	40%

Table 2: Publications 2017-2021, with region of origin

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Volume	38	37	36	35	34
Pages	3253	2695	2694	2261	2182
Articles, including discussants’ comments*	95	86	86	78	74
<i>% of articles with a Canadian author**</i>	9%	19%	19%	21%	12%
<i>% of articles with an author from outside Canada and U.S.**</i>	36%	20%	22%	24%	23%

*In 2019, Wiley began publishing bundled conference articles & discussions with a single DOI. Of the 95 articles published in 2021, there were 6 discussions published as part of bundled articles.

**For bundled articles, the manuscript geographic region of origin for the conference paper was used.

The publication information in Table 2 shows an upward trend in the page count and the number of articles over time, consistent with increasing submission volume.

Comparing the regional percentages in Table 2 with those in Table 1 confirms that the journal generally publishes papers by Canadian scholars at rates similar to their submission percent (with 2021 as an exception), and those by non-US international authors at rates below their submission percent. It is worth noting that it is misleading to compare the number of articles published year-by-year with submission numbers in the same year, because manuscripts vary in the time period from initial submission to publication, generally taking from two to three years. Almost no manuscripts are published in the same year they are submitted.

Selectivity

Table 3 reports on first-round decisions, demonstrating *CAR*'s highly selective peer-review process. The “withdraw” decision indicates manuscripts that were not suitable for the journal, either because they did not fit within the journal's Aims and Scope (e.g., lacked ‘accounting’ content), or because they did not merit reviewers’ time (e.g., insufficient care taken by authors in preparing the paper). First-round rejections are those where, after peer-review, the Editor determines that the manuscript does not meet *CAR*'s standards and is highly unlikely to do so with revision. Manuscripts are rarely accepted on the first round, so the sum of rejections and withdrawals indicates that about 20% of submissions receive a “revise” recommendation in the first round.

Table 3: First-round rejection and withdrawal decisions, as a percent of submissions, 2017-2021

	2021*	2020	2019	2018	2017
First-round rejections	70%	73%	68%	67%	65%
First-round withdrawals	<u>9%</u>	<u>8%</u>	<u>12%</u>	<u>12%</u>	<u>11%</u>
Sum of rejections & withdrawals	79%	81%	80%	79%	76%

* The 2021 numbers represent the 592 submissions that had a first-round decision on February 12, 2022, out of 641 total 2021 submissions.

Turnaround time

Turnaround time, reported in Table 4, is the time from an author's submission until a decision is issued by the Editor. *CAR*'s goal is that 90% of manuscripts should be turned around within 100 days. We continue to closely monitor manuscripts that approach or exceed the 100-day mark, and follow up with Editors and reviewers as needed, in an effort to maintain timeliness without sacrificing the quality of reviewer feedback. The median time to provide an initial decision on a regular submission was 58 days in 2021.

Table 4: Timeliness of first-round feedback to authors, 2017-2021

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
# with 1 st round feedback < 100 days	509	497	527	488	452
Total new submissions	592	620	603	557	532
% < 100 days	86%	80%	87%	88%	85%
Median turnaround time (days):					
Regular	58	72	61	60	63
Conference	93	88	76	69	82

* The 2021 numbers represent the 592 new submissions that had a first-round decision by February 12, 2022, out of 641 total 2021 submissions.

Topics and methods

From its inception, *CAR* has taken pride in being open to all forms of accounting research. Table 5 below summarizes authors' self-reports of topic areas and methods for 2021 submissions. If an author identified more than one topic or more than one method, Table 5 reports the first topic mentioned.

Table 5: New submissions 2021 by topic area and method

Topic	Audit	Manag'l	Fin'l	Tax	AIS	Other	Row Total	Row %
Method								
Analytical	7	13	11	4	0	2	37	6%
Experimental	21	34	23	2	2	2	84	13%
Empirical/Archival	110	54	273	37	1	10	485	76%
Case/Field Study	6	11	0	1	0	6	24	4%
Other	3	2	3	0	0	3	11	2%
Column Total	147	114	310	44	3	23	641	100%
Column %	23%	18%	48%	7%	0%	4%	100%	

Tables 6 and 7 below summarize the mix (percentages) of topics and methods for new submissions over the past five years. Overall, the mix of methods and topics reflected in new submissions during 2021 is largely consistent with that of the preceding four years.

Table 6: Submission mix by method, 2017-2021

Method	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Analytical	6%	5%	7%	5%	7%
Experimental	13%	12%	11%	14%	14%
Empirical/Archival	76%	77%	76%	73%	74%
Case/Field Study/Other	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Other	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 7: Submission mix by topic area, 2017-2021

Topic Area	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Auditing	23%	26%	26%	27%	27%
Managerial	18%	16%	17%	20%	16%
Financial	48%	50%	46%	43%	48%
Taxation	7%	5%	7%	5%	5%
AIS*	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	4%	3%	5%	4%	4%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Rounded down to 0% given the very small number of AIS submissions

Update - 2022 events

Below, I report on a few details from the first months of 2022.

In January 2022, we sent thank you letters to all members of the *CAR* editorial board for their service during 2021.

We also sent an annual update to reviewers in January, continuing the practice of offering a waiver of a future submission fee as a gesture of appreciation to reviewers who provide two prompt reviews. The practice is now supported by a formal process for tracking who has earned a waiver and an expiry policy. Our sustainable fee waiver process will help retain the goodwill of our reviewers, a resource that is critical to the continued success of *CAR*.

During 2022, we look forward to returning to in-person events with the 37th Annual *Contemporary Accounting Research* Conference being in Halifax on October 21 and 22, 2021, with the Doctoral/Junior Faculty Consortium being held on October 20. The conference will also be the first *CAR* hybrid event. We also plan to continue hosting virtual (non-conference) events. The next event is being planned for September and will examine qualitative methods and the role of theory, organized by Yves Gendron (Université Laval). A second virtual event will likely be held in December with planning to commence later this summer. We are also continuing to promote the high-quality research published in *CAR* through virtual issues. The first 2022 issue was released March 1 and focuses on research examining issues related to auditing accounting estimates. The five articles in the virtual issue were selected by *CAR* Editors Jeff Cohen and Jeff Pittman; Brad Pomeroy (*CAR* Ad Hoc Editor) co-authored the foreword with Jeff Pittman. At least one more virtual issue will be released in 2022 with the theme to be determined.

In closing, I acknowledge and thank all members of *CAR*'s community for their continued enthusiastic support of the journal. Together, they create and maintain the strong reputation the journal enjoys. I am particularly grateful for the dedication of Deputy Editors-in-chief, Partha Mohanram and Jeff Pittman, our team of Editors and reviewers, and the outstanding CAAA administrative support team of Carina Hackett, Judith Russell, Judy Tran and Sylvia Siemens. Collectively, the hard work and commitment to excellence of the entire *CAR* team contributes significantly to the success of the journal.

Sincerely,



Editor-in-chief
Contemporary Accounting Research

27 May 2022