

**To (formally) index *Western Geography* or not? This is the (discussion) question.**

The *Western Geography* 25, 2023 Editorial wrote of the illustrious pedigree and importance of *Western Geography* and while this Editor stands by this statement, the reality of the 21st century publishing world is challenging for *Western Geography*. As stated in the Editorial in 2023, there are approximately 51 academic / scholarly journals in human and physical geography in Canada and more than 1000 worldwide. (data from *Ulrich's Periodicals Directory*, 2024). Researchers and writers have many more choices of where to publish in the 2020s than in 1990 when *Western Geography* began. Some Researchers and authors commented to yours truly that they would like to publish in *Western Geography* because of its focus but alas, *Western Geography* is not indexed, that is, its volumes and contents are not in any commercial publisher literature database (or indexing database).

While some web crawlers have crawled and indexed some articles from *Western Geography*, none of the articles listed in *Google Scholar* are from the *Western Geography* site hosted at UVic Department of Geography. Most of *Western Geography* articles via *Google Scholar* are from *CiteSeer* from Penn State College of Information Sciences and Technology, ResearchGate.net and Academia.edu and very few that were published after 2018. Although not exactly certain why this is the case, this volume of *Western Geography* will follow *Google Scholar's* suggestions

<https://scholar.google.com/intl/en/scholar/inclusion.html> and specifically following below

<https://scholar.google.com/intl/en/scholar/inclusion.html#indexing>

with:

- **Title(s)** with minimum 24 point font,
- **Author(s)** in minimum 16 point font with explicit format Author(s):
- and with an **Abstract** clearly labeled as such

so as more likely to be crawled by *Google Scholar* and the above-mentioned services.

Meanwhile, WDCAG Executive, *Western Geography* Editorial Board and WDCAG members need to think about whether *Western Geography* should be indexed by a journal literature indexing database service such as the *Directory of Open Access Journals* <https://doaj.org/> or commercial services such as *Gale Canadian Periodical Index-CPI* or *ProQuest Canadian Business Current Affairs-CBCA*. Each of the above have specific criteria summarized below: *Directory of Open Access Journals-DOAJ* specifies:

- publish minimum five research articles per year
- primary target audience of researchers or practitioners
- Editorial board and Referees

While *Western Geography* meets the latter two, we are struggling to meet the first criteria.

Other requirements are that the journal have an official International Standard Serial Number-ISSN and this could be obtained via Library and Archives Canada.

*DOAJ* also requires a specific Creative Commons license and since there are several <https://chooser-beta.creativecommons.org/> this would also have to be discussed.

This Editor also reached out to *Gale Canadian Periodical Index-CPI* and *ProQuest Canadian Business Current Affairs-CBCA* as to their criteria and/or requirements to be indexed but as of Dec20, 2024 did not yet hear back.

At the upcoming WDCAG conference to be held at Thompson Rivers University-TRU in Kamloops, BC Thurs March 6- Sat March 8, 2025 these *Western Geography* issues will be discussed.

As for this volume of *Western Geography*, thank you to all of those who submitted and thanks to the Referees, including the guest Referees, for all their work.

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