Scientific Navigation · Vol.1 No.1 (2025)

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Editorial Foreword

Published: 1 September | https://doi.org/10.64376/rcw8t171

"We are not students of some subject matter, but students of problems."

(Karl Popper)

On first read, Popper's assertion, delivered in a public lecture in 1963, seems simple enough. It reads like an invitation to keep our minds open. To lift our gaze beyond the familiar terrain of traditional teaching and research.

But, on reflection, it becomes clear that Popper is arguing for a fundamental reorientation of scholarship. It insists that inquiry begin with the problems we face. Problems spark curiosity. They expose blind spots in our understanding. They defy neat categorisation and resist the comfort of established routines. This focus revitalises research and prevents the complacency that often follows mastery of a single field. It transforms scholarship into a dynamic quest for solutions rather than a display of polished techniques. It elevates questions above the disciplinary labels we inherit and insists that intellectual progress be driven by the issues that matter most.

Disciplines supply conceptual resources. They offer specialised methods. They cultivate shared vocabularies and sustain professional networks. They also provide paradigms, as Thomas Kuhn observed - organising frameworks that guide normal science by defining shared assumptions and exemplar cases. Paradigms focus research on specific puzzles but risk calcifying into barriers when elevated above the problems themselves. These silos blind us to anomalies outside the accepted framework. Allowing problems to lead shakes those walls. Scholars draw freely on multiple traditions, foster unexpected collaborations, and uncover insights that no single discipline - or paradigm - could possibly reveal alone.

Urgent twenty-first-century challenges refuse to be contained within single fields:

- Climate change integrates atmospheric science, economics, sociology, indigenous knowledge, and ethics.
- The global mental health crisis spans psychiatry, psychology, education, public health, philosophy, and cultural studies.
- AI ethics demands computer science, law, political theory, economics, and anthropology.
- Pandemic preparedness unites virology, epidemiology, behavioural science, communication studies, and community engagement.
- Food security links plant and animal sciences, supply-chain logistics, nutrition, economics, and local traditions.
- The energy transition combines engineering, environmental policy, geography, and social acceptance.
- Migration and displacement involve international law, economics, psychology, and moral philosophy.
- Biodiversity conservation requires ecology, indigenous stewardship, legal frameworks, and education.
- Inequality and social justice demand economic analysis, sociological insight, legal reform, and ethical reflection.
- Digital misinformation challenges algorithm design, media studies, political science, and cognitive psychology.
- Education for human development engages neuroscience, philosophy of mind, pedagogy, and ethics.

Tackling problems rather than departmental demands both courage and humility. Scholars must venture beyond the safety of familiar expertise. They must learn new methods and adopt unfamiliar tools. They must expose every idea to rigorous critique. They must accept that solutions remain provisional and open to revision. They must embrace fallibilism as a guiding principle. This stance fosters a culture of constant questioning and values openness over certainty.

This orientation underlies the creation of Scientific Navigation. The journal commits to rigorous peer review and transparent methodology. It champions inclusivity across disciplines and convenes dialogues among researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and communities. It publishes work that bridges traditional divides and tackles complex problems with creativity and collaboration. It seeks both real-world impact and conceptual clarity.

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The invitation is clear yet demanding: begin with the problem, not the department. With imagination and integrity, navigate toward solutions that advance both knowledge and society. Let problems, not disciplines, chart the course in addressing the urgent challenges of our time.

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