# **PNAS Information for Authors**

**REVISED July 2017** 

PNAS authors, editors, and reviewers come from around the globe. Submissions are welcomed from all researchers. Authors do not need to have a connection to an NAS member to publish in PNAS. More than 75% of published papers are submitted directly to PNAS, not Contributed papers by NAS members. To make its coverage more representative of the disciplines that comprise the National Academy of Sciences, PNAS has issued a <u>Call for Papers</u> in the Physical and Social Sciences.

Accepted papers must be of exceptional scientific importance and intelligible to a broad scientific audience. An NAS member makes the final decision for each paper.

PNAS is committed to <u>transparency in its editorial review</u> <u>process</u> (see our <u>FAQ for authors</u>). PNAS is a member of the <u>Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)</u> and subscribes to its principles.

#### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

PNAS publishes research reports, Letters, Front Matter, Commentaries, Perspectives, and Colloquium Papers. In accordance with the guiding principles established by George Ellery Hale in 1914, PNAS publishes brief first announcements of Academy members' and foreign associates' more important contributions to research and of work that appears to a member to be of particular importance. PNAS is a general science journal and all papers should be intelligible to a broad scientific audience.

**Research Reports** describe the results of original research of exceptional importance. Each research article is published with a brief, author-written Significance Statement that describes the significance of the work. Unsolicited research reports are welcome.

**Letters** are brief online comments that allow readers to constructively address a difference of opinion with authors of a recent PNAS article. Readers may comment on exceptional studies or point out potential flaws in studies published in the journal. Letters may not include requests to cite the Letter writer's work, accusations of misconduct, or personal comments to an author. Letters are limited to 500 words and 10 references, and must be submitted within 6 months of the online publication date of the subject article. Unsolicited Letters are welcome.

**Front Matter** is an expanded front section aimed at a more general level of discussion, tackling the stories of science in interesting ways. Sections include Opinions, News Features, Science and Culture, Inner Workings, and Core Concepts. Front Matter is written only at the invitation of the Editorial Board.

**Commentaries** call attention to papers of particular note and are written only at the invitation of the Editorial Board.

**Perspectives** present a viewpoint on an important area of research. Perspectives focus on a specific field or subfield within a larger discipline and discuss current advances and future directions. Perspectives are of broad interest to nonspecialists and may add personal insight to a field, but should be balanced and objective. Perspectives are written only at the invitation of the Editorial Board and evaluated for publication using the same process as <u>Direct Submissions</u>.

Colloquium Papers are reports of scientific colloquia held under

Academy auspices and are written only at the invitation of the Editorial Board.

## **EDITORIAL POLICIES**

All articles are evaluated solely on their scientific merit by peers, not by professional staff editors. A three-tier review process for research reports includes review by an Editorial Board member from one of the 31 NAS disciplines, an NAS Member Editor, and independent peer reviewers. NAS Member Editors are professional scientists and active researchers. A full list of Editorial Board members and their disciplines is included in our masthead.

#### **Submission Guidelines**

Direct Submission. The standard mode of transmitting manuscripts is Direct Submission. Direct Submissions account for more than 75% of papers published in PNAS and do not need to be sponsored by an NAS member. The Editorial Board screens all incoming submissions and may reject manuscripts without further review, or review and reject manuscripts that do not meet PNAS standards. More than 50% of Direct Submissions are declined by the Editorial Board without additional review, within 2 weeks on average. For papers that are sent on to an editor and reviewers, the average time to receive a decision is 41 days. If accepted, authors have their papers published online as soon as 4–5 weeks after acceptance. Authors must recommend three appropriate Editorial Board members, three NAS members who are expert in the paper's scientific area, and five qualified reviewers. The Board may choose someone who is or is not on that list or may reject the paper without further review. Authors are encouraged to indicate in their cover letter why their suggested editors are qualified to handle the paper. A directory of PNAS Member Editors and their research interests is available within the submission process and at <a href="mailto:nrc88.nas.edu/pnas\_search">nrc88.nas.edu/pnas\_search</a>. The editor may obtain reviews of the paper from at least two qualified reviewers, each from a different institution and not from the authors' institutions. The PNAS Office will invite the reviewers, secure the reviews, forward them to the editor, and secure any revisions and subsequent reviews. The name of the editor must remain anonymous to the author until the paper is accepted. Direct Submissions are published as "Edited by" the responsible editor and have an identifying footnote.

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which the member or coauthors disclose a significant financial or other competing interest. Members who have selected reviewers should submit information about their manuscript at www.pnascentral.org, including a PDF file for review, and documentation that the reviewers have agreed to review the paper. For papers sent for review prior to January 2017, members must secure the comments of at least two qualified reviewers, each from a different institution and not from the authors' institutions. Reviewers should be asked to evaluate revised manuscripts to ensure that their concerns have been adequately addressed. Members' submissions must be accompanied by the names and contact information, including emails, of knowledgeable experts who reviewed the paper, along with all of the reviews received and the authors' response for each round of review, and a brief statement endorsing publication in PNAS. Reviews must be on the PNAS review form. Members must select reviewers who have not collaborated with the authors in the past 48 months. See section iv and the Conflict of Interest Policy. Members must verify that reviewers are free of conflicts of interest, or must disclose any conflicts and explain their choice of reviewers. The names and institutional affiliations of all reviewers of Contributed Articles are published in a footnote. The Academy member must be one of the corresponding authors on the paper. These papers are published as "Contributed by" the responsible editor.

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When submitting tables, figures, and/or equations in addition to text, keep the text for your manuscript under 39,000 characters (including spaces) for 6-page articles and 65,000 for 10-page articles.

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Authors who place detailed materials and methods in SI must provide sufficient detail in the main text methods to enable a reader to follow the logic of the procedures and results and also must reference the online methods. If a paper is fundamentally a study of a new method or technique, then the methods must be described completely in the main text.

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