**Information for authors**

This page describes our policies and provides information that we think will be helpful to you as you prepare manuscripts for submission and publication. If you have submitted a paper and want information about the status of the paper, please log in to our online manuscript submission system, [Editorial Manager (EM)](http://www.editorialmanager.com/current-biology/?__hstc=25856994.0a5b9104a90f9f2400f08be631f223df.1665481449683.1665481449683.1665481449683.1&__hssc=25856994.2.1665481449683&__hsfp=1345237511). If you run into any problems or if you have specific questions, you can always e-mail us at [current-biology@cell.com](mailto:current-biology@cell.com) or call +44-(0)-207-424-4200.

**About the journal**

*Current Biology* is a general journal that publishes original research across all areas of biology together with an extensive and varied set of editorial sections. A primary aim of the journal is to foster communication across fields of biology, both by publishing important findings of general interest from diverse fields and through highly accessible editorial articles that explicitly aim to inform non-specialists.

*Current Biology* publishes papers reporting findings in any area of biology that have sufficient claim to be of general interest—this could be, for example, because the advance is important for a specific field, or because it is intrinsically of wide interest to biologists generally. We have several formats for publishing original research (articles, reports, and correspondences); see our [article types page](http://www.cell.com/current-biology/article-types) for details. *Current Biology* is a hybrid journal in that it offers all authors the option to pay for gold open access for their papers (either via a funding body agreement or author payment).

**Editorial evaluation timeline**

We read and evaluate every submission, and we try our best to get back to you quickly. We are mindful of how long it can take to publish a paper, so we work with authors and reviewers to minimize that time. Here’s how long each step in the process usually takes:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Initial decision to review | 1–3 days after submission |
| Decision after review | 2–4 weeks after submission |
| Anticipated timeframe for suggested revisions | 2–3 months (with flexibility if needed) |
| Time to online publication | 4–6 weeks after acceptance |
| Time to print publication | within 3 months of acceptance |

**Presubmission inquiries**

The editors strongly encourage authors to send a presubmission inquiry prior to any formal manuscript submission. Presubmission inquiries should include a list of all authors, a clear abstract, and a cover note explaining the significance of the advance and the potential general interest to the broad readership of *Current Biology*. All presubmission inquiries should be sent by e-mail to [cbiol@current-biology.com](mailto:cbiol@current-biology.com). We shall quickly let you know our thoughts on your paper’s potential suitability for *Current Biology*. We will usually reply within 24 hours, though in some cases we may seek specialist advice. If you do not receive an acknowledgment of your presubmission inquiry from the editors within one working day, please resend your inquiry to [cbiol@current-biology.com](mailto:cbiol@current-biology.com) to request an acknowledgement or call +44-(0)-207-424-4200 to check that your inquiry has been received. In the event of a positive response, we would invite you at that point to submit your manuscript online to *Current Biology*’s [Editorial Manager site](http://www.editorialmanager.com/current-biology/?__hstc=25856994.0a5b9104a90f9f2400f08be631f223df.1665481449683.1665481449683.1665481449683.1&__hssc=25856994.2.1665481449683&__hsfp=1345237511).

**Relationship between Cell Press journals**

**Transfer of papers between Cell Press journals**

We know it can be time consuming to serially submit your paper to multiple journals, restarting the review process each time. Cell Press publishes many journals, and we give you the opportunity to transfer your paper, along with the reviews and the reviewers' identities, from one journal to another. If you have questions about the suitability of your paper for transfer, please contact the editor of the receiving journal. If you have general questions about the transfer process, please refer to our [FAQs on article transfers](http://www.cell.com/current-biology/articletransfer). Often, the editor of the target journal will be able to reach a decision based on the existing reviews. Occasionally, the editor may seek comments from additional reviewers. If you transfer your paper using our online system, you will have a chance to edit your files before they are sent to the receiving journal. You can always submit your paper to another Cell Press journal without mentioning the first review process. In this case, the manuscript will be evaluated as a regular new submission.

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**Editorial policies**

**Preprint servers**

We will consider papers previously posted on preprint servers like [arXiv](https://arxiv.org/" \t "_blank), [bioRxiv](https://www.biorxiv.org/" \t "_blank), [BioRN](https://www.ssrn.com/en/index.cfm/biorn/), [ChemRxiv](https://chemrxiv.org/" \t "_blank), or [ChemRN](https://www.ssrn.com/en/index.cfm/chemrn/" \t "_blank). We are very interested to hear from researchers about their motivations for posting and to discuss with them whether it is the best approach for their paper, so we strongly encourage authors who are planning to submit to us to contact the editors first to discuss their specific paper and situation. This policy only applies to the original submitted version of the paper; we do not support posting of revisions that respond to editorial input and peer review or posting of the final published version to preprint servers. Also, [our prepublication publicity policies](https://www.cell.com/current-biology/authors#prepub) with regard to coverage in the broader media still apply to studies posted on preprint servers. For more information about preprint servers and the discussions related to them, please see [this blog post](http://crosstalk.cell.com/blog/what-were-hearing-from-the-community-about-preprints).

**Pre-registration**

Cell Press journals support the pre-registration of both clinical trials and analysis plans in curated, public repositories when authors consider it appropriate. Individual Cell Press journals may require pre-registration of clinical trials in a WHO-compliant registry. If authors inform us that they have pre-registered their studies, their published article will indicate where the pre-registered information can be accessed.

**Related manuscripts**

If you or your coauthors have any related papers submitted or in press elsewhere, you need to let us know and include them with your initial submission (or with your revision if they were submitted during revision). We ask this because having access to related papers often helps us (and reviewers) to assess the submitted work, and it can help prevent potentially difficult scenarios down the road. Failure to provide copies of related manuscripts may delay the review process and may be grounds for rejection. As a matter of publishing ethics, we cannot consider any paper that contains data that have been published or submitted for publication elsewhere.

**Submission verification**

Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract or a published lecture or academic thesis), that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, that its publication is approved by all authors and tacitly or explicitly by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright-holder. To verify originality, your article may be checked by the originality detection service [Crossref Similarity Check](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elsevier.com%2Feditors%2Fperk%2Fplagiarism-complaints%2Fplagiarism-detection&data=04%7C01%7Cestebbins%40cell.com%7Cfb4760a0e9584fc7136908d9e106eacf%7C9274ee3f94254109a27f9fb15c10675d%7C0%7C0%7C637788242088953005%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=GOWz2GqFmU1b0EV8kVZLawcznTxaCY2rnrRyAJAKm%2Fc%3D&reserved=0" \t "_blank).

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*Author contributions section:* To make author contributions transparent, all research articles should include an author contributions section. Please describe the contributions concisely and use initials to indicate author identity. We encourage you to use the CRediT taxonomy, which offers standardized descriptions of author contributions. An authors contributions section is not required for front-matter articles.

*Corresponding author and lead contact:* You must designate at least one corresponding author and only one lead contact.

*Corresponding author:* We prefer that each paper have a single corresponding author because we think that the ownership and responsibility that are inherent in corresponding authorship will promote best practices in design and performance of experiments, analysis of results, organization and retention of original data, and preparation of figures and text.

That said, we understand that, for some studies, particularly for interdisciplinary ones, multiple authors may bear the responsibilities of a corresponding author. If you feel strongly and have compelling reasons, you may include additional corresponding authors. We may ask you to explain your rationale and to verify that all corresponding authors understand their responsibilities (listed below). We ask that you describe each corresponding author's specific contributions in the author contributions section.

*Lead contact:* The lead contact is the corresponding author who is also responsible for communicating with the journal (before and after publication) and conveying any relevant information or updates to co-authors and is accountable for fulfilling requests for reagents and resources and for arbitrating decisions and disputes. For research papers with multiple corresponding authors, please designate one (and only one) corresponding author as the lead contact. If there is only one corresponding author, then that author is automatically also the lead contact. You should denote the lead contact with a footnote in the author list (e.g., "5Lead contact").

*Responsibilities of the corresponding author and lead contact:* All corresponding authors bear responsibilities 1–8 below; the lead contact additionally bears responsibility 9.

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3. Ensuring that authorship is granted appropriately to contributors
4. Ensuring that all authors approve the content and submission of the paper, as well as edits made through the revision and production processes
5. Ensuring adherence to all editorial and submission policies
6. Identifying and declaring competing interests on behalf of all authors
7. Identifying and disclosing related work by any co-authors under consideration elsewhere
8. Archiving unprocessed data and ensuring that figures accurately present the original data (see [data and code availability](https://www.cell.com/current-biology/authors#datacode) section)
9. Arbitrating decisions and disputes and ensuring communication with the journal (before and after publication), sharing of any relevant information or updates to co-authors, and accountability for fulfillment of requests for reagents and resources

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**Competing interests**

Transparency is essential for a reader’s trust in the scientific process and for the credibility of published articles. At Cell Press, we feel that disclosure of competing interests is a critical aspect of transparency. Therefore, we ask that all authors disclose any financial or other interests related to the submitted work that (1) could affect or have the perception of affecting the author’s objectivity, or (2) could influence or have the perception of influencing the content of the article.

Prior to acceptance, author groups of all article types (front or back matter) are asked to complete and submit a [“declaration of interests” form](http://www.cell.com/pb/assets/raw/shared/forms/di_form.pdf). We also ask that authors disclose any competing interests in the article in a dedicated Declaration of Interests section (see below).

Complete details of our declaration of interests policy and additional author instructions are available [here](http://www.cell.com/declaration-of-interests).

**Inclusion and diversity statement**

Starting in January 2021, we will require authors to fill out an inclusion and diversity form. This is a new initiative at Cell Press designed to give authors a mechanism to document inclusion and diversity information that is relevant to their paper and the option to showcase it in the paper itself by adding a dedicated inclusion and diversity statement. The concept underlying this initiative is similar to existing statements about declarations of interests, author contributions, and data and code availability but focuses on highlighting aspects of the paper that are relevant for inclusion and diversity. It is purposely multifunctional and designed to give authors a venue to express ways in which their work, their research group, or both are contributing to help science become a more inclusive and diverse enterprise overall.

Please find more information on this [here](https://www.cell.com/inclusion-diversity-statement-faqs), and preview the form [here](https://www.cell.com/pb/assets/raw/shared/forms/IandDstatement_form-1660912555953.pdf).

For more information about our rationale for this initiative, please read [our editorial](https://www.cell.com/cell/fulltext/S0092-8674(20)31689-5).

**Procedure for papers submitted by advisory board members**

Advisory board members at this journal are not involved in editorial oversight of peer review and do not have access to submitted papers unless they are specifically invited to comment on them as a peer reviewer. Any papers they themselves submit are handled by the in-house editorial team with the same editorial process and high degree of confidentiality as submissions from all other authors.

**Procedure for papers submitted by editorial team members**

The editorial operations of this journal are run by professional in-house editors, so submissions on which they are authors are very rare. However, they can occur if editors are included as authors based on work they performed before joining Cell Press. Conflicts that could potentially affect editorial judgement can also arise for other reasons, for example, if a partner, relative, or former collaborator of an editorial team member submits a paper. In all such cases, we ensure that the paper is handled confidentially by a different team member and the manuscript record is blinded within our tracking system to the editor who has a conflict so this person is not able to access either the paper itself or any information about the peer review process.

**Procedure for appeals**

To appeal an editorial decision you have received from this journal, please email the editorial office, summarizing the scientific basis on which you wish to appeal and including the manuscript number in the subject line of your email. The handing editor and, as needed, editorial team will consider your appeal and respond to you once they have done so. Please note that when your paper is under appeal at this journal, we regard it as being under active consideration, so please let us know immediately if you decide to submit to another journal instead.

**Data and image processing**

Data processing is sometimes necessary. When it is, please keep it minimal and ensure that the final figures accurately reflect the original data. In general, please make all processing transparent. Here are some specific guidelines:

1. Any alterations should be applied to the entire image. When this is impossible (e.g., when a single color channel on a microscopy image is altered), please clearly explain the alteration in the figure legend.
2. If you remove lanes from gels and blots or consolidate your data in any way, you must make the alterations obvious.
3. Only compare data that are appropriate to compare (e.g., data from the same experiment).
4. Individual images should not be used in multiple figures unless the figures describe different aspects of the same experiment (e.g., multiple experiments were performed simultaneously with a single control experiment). If an image is used in multiple figures, please clearly state the reason in the legend.

**Image screening**

We screen all accepted papers for image irregularities. If there is a question about a figure, either throughout this process or during the review process, we will work with the lead contact to resolve the issue. This is done on a case-by-case basis, but generally, we’ll ask you to supply the original, unprocessed data, along with descriptions of how the experiments were performed and how the figures were prepared. Based on this, we will let you know if the current form of the figure is OK or if we’ll need a revised figure. If the problem is more serious, we may need to delay publication while we work through the issues, or we may decide not to publish the paper. Before you submit a new paper, a revision, or the final paper, it is critically important that you check the original data and make sure you know and are happy with how the figures were prepared from them. We view this as the responsibility of the corresponding author(s). As the final step before submission, we encourage you to go over all of the figures once more and connect all of the data in the figures to the original, unprocessed data. You might find [our blog post on avoiding common mistakes in figure preparation](http://crosstalk.cell.com/blog/common-pitfalls-in-figure-preparation) helpful.

**Process for post-publication issues**

We will thoroughly investigate any issues with data or figures that we publish. While we do not monitor the internet or social media, we follow up on all clearly documented concerns that are directly brought to our attention (from authors or concerned readers, named and anonymous). If we think that there is reason to investigate, we will discuss the concerns with the lead contact. This process generally involves asking for the original, unprocessed data, along with descriptions of how the experiments in question were performed and how the figures were prepared. We will assess these materials, and we may consult with reviewers or other experts. There are several potential outcomes of the process. First, we may take no further action; in this case, we may publish an editorial note to describe the process and explain why we are taking no further action. Second, if we think the issues are resolvable with a correction, we may ask the authors to prepare a correction statement. Third, if we uncover serious issues, we may ask the authors to retract the paper and we will work with them to prepare a Retraction statement. Fourth, if the timeline to a potential resolution seems long, we might publish an editorial expression of concern to alert the community that an investigation is ongoing. At any point during this process, if our analysis uncovers potentially serious issues, we will generally ask authors to alert their institution and funding bodies.

Correcting the scientific record is a priority for us. Because we consider the investigation process confidential, we don’t report back in detail to the person who contacted us with the concern. As the process can include gathering and evaluating original data, discussing with authors, and collaborating with institutional investigations, it can take some time. We are committed to making sure that the investigation moves forward quickly, but as these are serious and important matters, we prioritize reaching the outcome that best serves the scientific community over reaching the fastest outcome.

**Other post-publication changes**

Upon request from authors who have changed their name, we will update author names on published papers and publish a Correction. In cases of authors with a strong need for privacy, the change will be made invisibly, without publishing a Correction. We will also arrange to update the article metadata in secondary indexation databases, specifically Clarivate/Web of Science, PubMed, and Scopus. Authors can submit a request for a change of name by emailing [namechange@elsevier.com](mailto:namechange@elsevier.com). For more information, see <https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/inclusive-author-name-changes>. (Authors requesting corrections of typographic errors in their published name should contact the journal directly.)

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For manuscripts reporting studies involving human subjects, statements identifying the committee approving the studies and confirming that informed consent was obtained from all subjects must appear in the STAR Methods section. All experiments on live vertebrates or higher invertebrates must be performed in accordance with relevant institutional and national guidelines and regulations. In the manuscript, a statement identifying the committee approving the experiments and confirming that all experiments conform to the relevant regulatory standards must be included in the STAR Methods section. The sex and gender, or both, must be reported for human subjects, and the sex of animal subjects and cells must be provided. In cases where this is appropriate, the influence (or association) of sex, gender, or both on the results of the study must be reported. Reporting of the age or developmental stage of subjects is also required. The editors reserve the right to seek comments from reviewers or additional information from authors on any cases in which concerns arise. We suggest that researchers carrying out experiments with animals refer to the [ARRIVE guidelines](http://www.plosbiology.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pbio.1000412) and recommendations from an [NIH-sponsored workshop](http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v490/n7419/full/nature11556.html) regarding experimental design and reporting standards.

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If your paper reports a new chemical compound, you must provide the exact structure of the compound. We also encourage you to provide data to support the reported structure. If the compound was synthesized, please include details of the synthesis in the STAR Methods. You should submit small-molecule crystallographic data to the [Cambridge Structural Database (CSD)](http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/products/csd/) and deposit relevant information to [PubChem](http://pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/). Database IDs should be included in the final version of the manuscript.

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For publication of research articles, we require a "resource availability" section in STAR Methods, which contains the following required subsections: lead contact, materials availability, and data and code availability. These sections are mandatory even if no unique reagents were generated in the study.

**Lead contact**

The lead contact statement must identify and provide contact information for the lead contact, who is the main point of contact for responding to material and resource requests. While manuscripts may have multiple corresponding authors and senior authors, they must have only one lead contact.

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* Further information and requests for resources and reagents should be directed to and will be fulfilled by the lead contact, Jane Doe ([janedoe@qwerty.com](mailto:janedoe@qwerty.com)).

**Materials availability**

The materials availability statement should describe the availability of newly generated materials associated with the paper, including any conditions for access.

Examples of appropriate materials availability statements are below. A combination of these statements may be appropriate.

* Plasmids generated in this study have been deposited to [Addgene, name and catalog number or unique identifier].
* Mouse lines generated in this study have been deposited to [the Knockout Mouse Project (KOMP), name and catalog number or unique identifier].
* This study did not generate new unique reagents.
* There are restrictions to the availability of [reagent] due to [reason why restrictions exist].
* There are restrictions to the availability of [reagent] due to the lack of an external centralized repository for its distribution and our need to maintain the stock. We are glad to share [reagent] with reasonable compensation by requestor for its processing and shipping.
* [Reagent] generated in this study will be made available on request, but we may require a payment and/or a completed materials transfer agreement if there is potential for commercial application.
* All unique/stable reagents generated in this study are available from the lead contact without restriction.
* All unique/stable reagents generated in this study are available from the lead contact with a completed materials transfer agreement.

**Data and code availability**

As a Cell Press author, you must be willing to share all of the data and original code you report in your published paper with the research community unless there is a countervailing legal or ethical prohibition (e.g., the data are confidential medical records). Your paper must include a comprehensive and accurate “data and code availability” statement that describes the steps you have taken or will take to make your data and original code available after publication. We strongly recommend that you archive all of the unprocessed data and original code that your paper reports in an online repository that meets the criteria for digital longevity, implementation of FAIR standards, and community support as [articulated by Fairsharing.org and collaborators](https://zenodo.org/record/4084763#.X9zIB-lKhTa). Note that should issues arise after publication, failing to produce your data can be grounds for retraction.

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[This author’s guide](https://www.cell.com/pb-assets/journals/research/cellpress/data/AuthorsJourney-1621989651830.pdf) describes how standardized datasets and original code accompany Cell Press manuscripts from submission through publication. Please note that it illustrates general practices; editors will provide guidance about specific cases. Exceptions to these requirements can be made for individual datasets when sharing data is legally or ethically prohibited. These cases should be discussed with editors as early as possible, ideally upon submission.

**Requirements for publication**

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The requirements for publication detailed above apply broadly across Cell Press. Individual journals might have additional requirements that align with their scientific community’s standards. If your journal has additional requirements that impact your paper, your editor will reach out to you with details.

**Resource identification initiative**

*Current Biology*is pleased to be part of the [resource identification initiative](http://www.force11.org/Resource_identification_initiative), a project aimed at clearly identifying the key resources used in the course of scientific research. This project helps address concerns of reproducibility by providing unique searchable identifiers, Research resource identifiers (RRIDs), for critical reagents and tools. RRIDs can be used to link readers to external resources, and they also enable search engines to return all papers in which a particular antibody, organism, or tool was used. We see these as important steps toward ensuring reproducible methods and providing critical data to help researchers identify suitable reagents and tools.

At this stage, we are asking authors to please include RRIDs as a unique identifier, when possible, for antibodies and genetically modified organisms in the key resources table of the STAR Methods sections. Fortunately, obtaining an RRID is fairly simple. The [resource identification portal](http://scicrunch.com/resources) allows you to search for antibodies and organism items (e.g., antibodies, model organisms, cell lines, and software) and obtain the appropriate identifiers. Once you have located the RRID, please insert "RRID:" plus the identifier in the appropriate location in the manuscript. For example:

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* Genetically modified organisms: "Subjects in this study were Fgf9Eks/Fgf9+ mice (RRID: MGI\_3840442)..."
* Cell lines: "HEK293T cells used were from ATCC (ATTC Cat# CRL-3216, RRID: CVCL\_0063)..."
* Tool: "ImageJ (ImageJ, RRID: SCR\_003070) was used for..."

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