

# Elsevier author guideline

## Introduction

### Types of article and formatting

Next journals publish a number of article formats: Original Research Articles, Reviews, Communications, Comments, Protocols, Replication Studies, Video Articles, and Editorials. Besides Editorials, there are no formal length or formatting requirements. Authors are welcome to structure articles in the manner they need to best convey their research.

This Guide for Authors contains information on suggested article structures and lengths, but it is not necessary for Authors to adhere to this guidance.

### Original Research Article

- An Original Research Article reports complete studies and new results of interest to a wide audience.
- Original Research Articles should highlight the significance, originality, and rigor of the research so the potential scientific impact is clear to the broad and scale-spanning readership of the journals.
- All key experimental procedures necessary for the understanding of the research should be included in the main body of text. Additional experimental and supporting material should be published as supplemental information. Sufficient information to ensure accurate reproducibility must be provided.
- Original Research Articles have no formal restrictions on page length, total character count, number of figures, or number of references; though a typical Original Research Article will comprise approximately 3000-6000 words of text with 3-5 figures and 30-50 references.

### Review

- A Review article should be tutorial in nature and provide a broad and balanced overview of a research field for a diverse audience.
- Review articles should describe how the field is progressing, and key challenges to be overcome in the future.
- The editorial team welcomes the submission of Review articles without invitation; though interested Authors may wish to propose a Review prior to writing the article.

- Review articles have no formal restrictions on page length, total character count, number of figures, or number of references; though a typical Review article will comprise approximately 4000-8000 words of text with 8-10 figures and 50-120 references.

## **Communication**

- A Communication reports on ongoing studies or recent progress in a rapidly progressing field
- Communications should highlight the significance and rigor of the research so the potential scientific impact is clear to the broad and scale-spanning readership of the journal.
- All key experimental procedures necessary for the understanding of the research should be included in the main body of text. Additional experimental and supporting material should be published as supplemental information. Sufficient information to ensure accurate reproducibility must be provided.
- Communications have no formal restrictions on page length, total character count, number of figures, or number of references; though a typical Communication article will comprise approximately 2000-3000 words of text with 2-4 figures and 20-30 references.

## **Comment**

- Comment articles are a platform for topical, evidence-supported opinions related to the scope of the journal, and of interest to the journal's broad readership.
- Comment articles are typically single-author articles commissioned by the editorial office, but unsolicited contributions and multi-author contributions (for example from a coalition of experts) will be considered.
- Authors of Comment articles are invited to include a short 100-word biography.
- Comment articles have no formal restrictions on page length, total character count, number of figures, or number of references; though a typical Comment article will comprise approximately 1000-2000 words of text with 1-3 figures and 5-10 references.

## **Protocol**

- A Protocol article provides a step-by-step description of procedures that users can take to the lab and immediately apply in their own research.

- Each Protocol contains a full list of reagents and equipment, timing information, and step-by-step instructions for performing the experiment (with critical steps and cautions highlighted), as well as information on designing and adapting the technique, its advantages and limitations compared to alternatives, troubleshooting, analysing data, and interpreting results. Authors may submit videos for steps that are technically challenging.
- Protocol articles have no formal restrictions on page length, total character count, number of figures, or number of references; though a typical Protocol article will comprise approximately 2000-3000 words of text with 2-4 figures and 20-30 references.

### **Replication Study**

- A Replication Study is a format dedicated to exploring result reproducibility.
- A Replication Study should follow the exact experimental/modeling steps reported in a previously published research article and describe whether the reported results are reproducible.
- Replication Studies have no formal restrictions on page length, total character count, number of figures, or number of references; though a typical Replication article will comprise approximately 3000-6000 words of text with 3-5 figures and 30-50 references.

### **Video Article**

- Video articles are peer-reviewed scientific talks reviewing the state of the field or covering original research.
- Video articles should be accompanied by a manuscript that includes all the figures, tables and references presented in the video as well as the video transcript.
- Video articles have no formal restrictions on video length; though a typical Video article will typically last 20-30 minutes when reviewing existing literature, or 10-15 minutes when covering original research. The accompanying manuscript similarly has no formal restrictions on length.

### **Editorial**

- Editorials are submitted exclusively by invited Guest Editors to the journal.
- Editorials should convey the aims and objectives of the research within a Special Issue, placing it in a broader context.

- Editorials should be submitted once all expected articles have been accepted and published.
- Editorials should not include unpublished or original data.
- An Editorial article is limited to 1 Figure and 1000 words.

### **What's Next**

- Authors of Original Research Articles, Reviews and Communications are welcome to include an additional optional section, immediately following the Conclusion, titled What's Next.
- Authors may use this section to provide a summary providing context and implications of the research, and future challenges and opportunities, seminal discoveries highlighted in the field, implications to the wider community and/or potential future directions.
- What's Next sections should be understandable to a non-expert by minimizing technical jargon wherever possible.
- If included, the "What's Next" section should ideally comprise 1 or 2 paragraph.

### **Before you begin**

#### **Ethics in publishing**

Please see our information on [Ethics in publishing](#).

#### **Declaration of competing interest**

Corresponding authors, on behalf of all the authors of a submission, must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. All authors, including those *without* competing interests to declare, should provide the relevant information to the corresponding author (which, where relevant, may specify they have nothing to declare). Corresponding authors should then use [this tool opens in new tab/window](#) to create a shared statement and upload to the submission system at the Attach Files step. **Please do not convert the .docx template to another file type. Author signatures are not required.**

#### **Submission declaration and verification**

Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract, a published lecture or academic thesis, see '[Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication](#)' for more information), 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 compliance, your article may be checked by [Crossref Similarity Check](#) and other originality or duplicate checking software.

## **Preprints**

Please note that [preprints](#) can be shared anywhere at any time, in line with Elsevier's [sharing policy](#). Sharing your preprints e.g. on a preprint server will not count as prior publication (see '[Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication](#)' for more information).

## **Use of inclusive language**

Inclusive language acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities. Content should make no assumptions about the beliefs or commitments of any reader; contain nothing which might imply that one individual is superior to another on the grounds of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition; and use inclusive language throughout. Authors should ensure that writing is free from bias, stereotypes, slang, reference to dominant culture and/or cultural assumptions. We advise to seek gender neutrality by using plural nouns ("clinicians, patients/clients") as default/wherever possible to avoid using "he, she," or "he/she." We recommend avoiding the use of descriptors that refer to personal attributes such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition unless they are relevant and valid. When coding terminology is used, we recommend to avoid offensive or exclusionary terms such as "master", "slave", "blacklist" and "whitelist". We suggest using alternatives that are more appropriate and (self-) explanatory such as "primary", "secondary", "blocklist" and "allowlist". These guidelines are meant as a point of reference to help identify appropriate language but are by no means exhaustive or definitive.

## **Sex and gender reporting**

For research involving or pertaining to humans and animals, we recommend that authors address sex and gender dimensions in the paper whenever appropriate, and use the terms "sex" and "gender" carefully in order to avoid confusing both terms. While sex refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals that are associated with physical and

physiological features, gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, and identities of women, men and gender-diverse people which occur in a historical and cultural context, and may vary across societies and over time. Gender influences how people view themselves and each other, how they behave and interact and how power is distributed in society. Gender is often incorrectly portrayed as a binary (female/ male) factor. In reality, there is a variety of gender identities and expressions that inform how individuals identify themselves and express their gender. Authors may find the [Sex and Gender Equity in Research \(SAGER\) guidelines opens in new tab/window](#) helpful.

### **Author contributions**

For transparency, we encourage authors to submit an author statement file outlining their individual contributions to the paper using the relevant CRediT roles: Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Software; Supervision; Validation; Visualization; Roles/Writing - original draft; Writing - review & editing. Authorship statements should be formatted with the names of authors first and CRediT role(s) following. [More details and an example.](#)

### **Changes to authorship**

Authors are expected to consider carefully the list and order of authors **before** submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. Any addition, deletion or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only **before** the manuscript has been accepted and only if approved by the journal Editor. To request such a change, the Editor must receive the following from the **corresponding author**: (a) the reason for the change in author list and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Editor consider the addition, deletion or rearrangement of authors **after** the manuscript has been accepted. While the Editor considers the request, publication of the manuscript will be suspended. If the manuscript has already been published in an online issue, any requests approved by the Editor will result in a corrigendum.

### **Article Transfer Service**

These journals use the Elsevier Article Transfer Service to find the best home for your manuscript. This means that if an editor feels your manuscript is more suitable for an alternative journal, you might be asked to consider transferring the manuscript to such a journal. The recommendation might be provided by a Journal Editor, a dedicated [Scientific Managing Editor](#), a tool assisted recommendation, or a combination. If you agree, your

manuscript will be transferred, though you will have the opportunity to make changes to the manuscript before the submission is complete. Please note that your manuscript will be independently reviewed by the new journal. [Find out more](#)

## **Copyright**

Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete a 'License Agreement' (see [more information](#) on this). Permitted third party reuse of open access articles is determined by the author's choice of [user license](#).

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As an author you (or your employer or institution) have certain rights to reuse your work. [Find out more](#)

## **Elsevier supports responsible sharing**

Find out how you can [share your research](#) published in Elsevier journals.

## **Role of the funding source**

You are requested to identify who provided financial support for the conduct of the research and/or preparation of the article and to briefly describe the role of the sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the article for publication. If the funding source(s) had no such involvement, it is recommended to state this.

## **Open Access**

Please visit our Open Access [page](#) for more information.

## **Elsevier Researcher Academy**

[Researcher Academy opens in new tab/window](#) is a free e-learning platform designed to support early and mid-career researchers throughout their research journey. The "Learn" environment at Researcher Academy offers several interactive modules, webinars, downloadable guides and resources to guide you through the process of writing for research and going through peer review. Feel free to use these free resources to improve your submission and navigate the publication process with ease.

## **Language (usage and editing services)**

Please write your text in good English (American or British usage is accepted, but not a mixture of these). Authors who feel their English language manuscript may require editing to eliminate possible grammatical or spelling errors and to conform to correct scientific

English may wish to use the [English Language Editing service opens in new tab/window](#) available from Elsevier's Author Services.

## **Submission**

Our online submission system guides you stepwise through the process of entering your article details and uploading your files. The system converts your article files to a single PDF file used in the peer-review process. Editable files (e.g., Word, LaTeX) are required to typeset your article for final publication. All correspondence, including notification of the Editor's decision and requests for revision, is sent by e-mail.

## **Suggesting reviewers**

Please submit the names and institutional e-mail addresses of several potential reviewers. You should not suggest reviewers who are colleagues, or who have co-authored or collaborated with you during the last three years. Editors do not invite reviewers who have potential competing interests with the authors. Further, in order to provide a broad and balanced assessment of the work, and ensure scientific rigor, please suggest diverse candidate reviewers who are located in different countries/regions from the author group. Also consider other diversity attributes e.g. gender, race and ethnicity, career stage, etc. Finally, you should not include existing members of the journal's editorial team, of whom the journal are already aware.

*Note: the editor decides whether or not to invite your suggested reviewers.*

## **Preparation**

### **New submissions**

Submission to *Next* journals proceed totally online and you will be guided stepwise through the creation and uploading of your files. The system automatically converts your files to a single PDF file, which is used in the peer-review process. As part of the Your Paper Your Way service, you may choose to submit your manuscript as a single file to be used in the refereeing process. This can be a PDF file or a Word document, in any format or lay-out that can be used by referees to evaluate your manuscript. It should contain high enough quality figures for refereeing. If you prefer to do so, you may still provide all or some of the source files at the initial submission. Please note that individual figure files larger than 10 MB must be uploaded separately.

## **References**

There are no strict requirements on reference formatting at submission. References can be in any style or format as long as the style is consistent. Where applicable, author(s)



name(s), journal title/book title, chapter title/article title, year of publication, volume number/book chapter and the article number or pagination must be present. Use of DOI is highly encouraged. The reference style used by the journal will be applied to the accepted article by Elsevier at the proof stage. Note that missing data will be highlighted at proof stage for the author to correct.

### **Formatting requirements**

There are no strict formatting requirements but all manuscripts must contain the essential elements needed to convey your manuscript, for example Abstract, Keywords, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Conclusions, Artwork and Tables with Captions. If your article includes any Videos and/or other Supplementary material, this should be included in your initial submission for peer review purposes. Divide the article into clearly defined sections.

### **Peer review**

These journals operate a single anonymized review process. All contributions will be initially assessed by the editor for suitability for the journal. Papers deemed suitable are then typically sent to a minimum of two independent expert reviewers to assess the scientific quality of the paper. The Editor is responsible for the final decision regarding acceptance or rejection of articles. The Editor's decision is final. Editors are not involved in decisions about papers which they have written themselves or have been written by family members or colleagues or which relate to products or services in which the editor has an interest. Any such submission is subject to all of the journal's usual procedures, with peer review handled independently of the relevant editor and their research groups. [More information on types of peer review.](#)

### **Revised submissions**

#### **Use of word processing software**

It is important that the file be saved in the native format of the word processor used. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. In particular, do not use the word processor's options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the [Guide to Publishing with Elsevier](#)). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork. To

avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

## **LaTeX**

If you wish to use LaTeX, it is recommended that Authors use the Elsevier article class [elsarticle.cls opens in new tab/window](#) to prepare your manuscript and [BibTeX opens in new tab/window](#) to generate your bibliography. Our [LaTeX site](#) has detailed submission instructions, templates and other information.

## **Article structure**

Authors are welcome to structure articles in the manner they need to best convey their research. The information below provides an example for how an article can be structured.

### **Introduction**

State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

### **Experimental**

Provide sufficient details to allow the work to be reproduced by an independent researcher. Methods that are already published should be summarized, and indicated by a reference. If quoting directly from a previously published method, use quotation marks and also cite the source. Any modifications to existing methods should also be described.

### **Theory/calculation**

A Theory section should extend, not repeat, the background to the article already dealt with in the Introduction and lay the foundation for further work. In contrast, a Calculation section represents a practical development from a theoretical basis.

### **Results**

Results should be clear and concise.

### **Discussion**

This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

### **Conclusions**

The main conclusions of the study may be presented in a short Conclusions section, which may stand alone or form a subsection of a Discussion or Results and Discussion section.

### **Abstract**

A concise and factual abstract is required. The abstract should state briefly the purpose of the research, the principal results and major conclusions. An abstract is often presented separately from the article, so it must be able to stand alone. For this reason, References should be avoided, but if essential, then cite the author(s) and year(s). Also, non-standard or uncommon abbreviations should be avoided, but if essential they must be defined at their first mention in the abstract itself.

### **Graphical abstract**

Although a graphical abstract is optional, its use is encouraged as it draws more attention to the online article. The graphical abstract should summarize the contents of the article in a concise, pictorial form designed to capture the attention of a wide readership. Graphical abstracts should be submitted as a separate file in the online submission system. Image size: Please provide an image with a minimum of 531 × 1328 pixels (h × w) or proportionally more. The image should be readable at a size of 5 × 13 cm using a regular screen resolution of 96 dpi. Preferred file types: TIFF, EPS, PDF or MS Office files. You can view [Example Graphical Abstracts](#) on our information site.

### **Keywords**

Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 6 keywords, using American spelling and avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, 'and', 'of'). Be sparing with abbreviations: only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

### **Acknowledgements**

Collate acknowledgements in a separate section at the end of the article before the references and do not, therefore, include them on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. List here those individuals who provided help during the research (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.).

### **Formatting of funding sources**

List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements:

- Funding: This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa].

- It is not necessary to include detailed descriptions on the program or type of grants and awards. When funding is from a block grant or other resources available to a university, college, or other research institution, submit the name of the institute or organization that provided the funding.
- If no funding has been provided for the research, it is recommended to include the following sentence:
- This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

### **Math formulae**

Please submit math equations as editable text and not as images. Present simple formulae in line with normal text where possible and use the solidus (/) instead of a horizontal line for small fractional terms, e.g.,  $X/Y$ . In principle, variables are to be presented in italics. Powers of  $e$  are often more conveniently denoted by exp. Number consecutively any equations that have to be displayed separately from the text (if referred to explicitly in the text).

### **Artwork**

#### **Electronic artwork**

##### **General points**

- Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your original artwork.
- Preferred fonts: Arial (or Helvetica), Times New Roman (or Times), Symbol, Courier.
- Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
- Use a logical naming convention for your artwork files.
- Indicate per figure if it is a single, 1.5 or 2-column fitting image.
- For Word submissions only, you may still provide figures and their captions, and tables within a single file at the revision stage.
- Please note that individual figure files larger than 10 MB must be provided in separate source files.

A detailed [guide on electronic artwork](#) is available. *You are urged to visit this site; some excerpts from the detailed information are given here.*

### **Formats**

Regardless of the application used, when your electronic artwork is finalized, please 'save as' or convert the images to one of the following formats (note the resolution requirements for line drawings, halftones, and line/halftone combinations given below): EPS (or PDF): Vector drawings. Embed the font or save the text as 'graphics'.

- TIFF (or JPG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones): always use a minimum of 300 dpi.
- TIFF (or JPG): Bitmapped line drawings: use a minimum of 1000 dpi.
- TIFF (or JPG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale): a minimum of 500 dpi is required.

**Please do not:**

- Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); the resolution is too low.
- Supply files that are too low in resolution.
- Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

**Figure captions**

Ensure that each illustration has a caption. A caption should comprise a brief title (**not** on the figure itself) and a description of the illustration. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum but explain all symbols and abbreviations used.

**Tables**

Please submit tables as editable text and not as images. Tables can be placed either next to the relevant text in the article, or on separate page(s) at the end. Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text and place any table notes below the table body. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in them do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article. Please avoid using vertical rules and shading in table cells.

**References**

**Reference formatting**

There are no strict requirements on reference formatting at submission. References can be in any style or format as long as the style is consistent. Where applicable, author(s) name(s), journal title/book title, chapter title/article title, year of publication, volume number/book chapter and the article number or pagination must be present. Use of DOI is

highly encouraged. The reference style used by the journals will be applied to the accepted article by Elsevier at the proof stage. Note that missing data will be highlighted at proof stage for the author to correct. If you do wish to format the references yourself they should be arranged according to the following examples:

### **Supplementary material**

Supplementary material such as applications, images and sound clips, can be published with your article to enhance it. Submitted supplementary items are published exactly as they are received (Excel or PowerPoint files will appear as such online). Please submit your material together with the article and supply a concise, descriptive caption for each supplementary file. If you wish to make changes to supplementary material during any stage of the process, please make sure to provide an updated file. Do not annotate any corrections on a previous version. Please switch off the 'Track Changes' option in Microsoft Office files as these will appear in the published version.

### **Research data**

Next journals encourage and enable you to share data that supports your research publication where appropriate, and enable you to interlink the data with your published articles. Research data refers to the results of observations or experimentation that validate research findings. To facilitate reproducibility and data reuse, these journals also encourages you to share your software, code, models, algorithms, protocols, methods and other useful materials related to the project. Below are a number of ways in which you can associate data with your article or make a statement about the availability of your data when submitting your manuscript. If you are sharing data in one of these ways, you are encouraged to cite the data in your manuscript and reference list. Please refer to the "References" section for more information about data citation. For more information on depositing, sharing and using research data and other relevant research materials, visit the [research data](#) page.

### **Data linking**

If you have made your research data available in a data repository, you can link your article directly to the dataset. Elsevier collaborates with a number of repositories to link articles on ScienceDirect with relevant repositories, giving readers access to underlying data that gives them a better understanding of the research described. There are different ways to link your datasets to your article. When available, you can directly link your dataset to your article by providing the relevant information in the submission system. For more information, visit the [database linking page](#). For [supported data repositories](#) a repository banner will automatically appear next to your published article on ScienceDirect. In addition, you can

link to relevant data or entities through identifiers within the text of your manuscript, using the following format: Database: xxxx (e.g., TAIR: AT1G01020; CCDC: 734053; PDB: 1XFN).

## **After acceptance**

### **Online proof correction**

To ensure a fast publication process of the article, we kindly ask authors to provide us with their proof corrections within two days. Corresponding authors will receive an e-mail with a link to our online proofing system, allowing annotation and correction of proofs online. The environment is similar to MS Word: in addition to editing text, you can also comment on figures/tables and answer questions from the Copy Editor. Web-based proofing provides a faster and less error-prone process by allowing you to directly type your corrections, eliminating the potential introduction of errors. If preferred, you can still choose to annotate and upload your edits on the PDF version. All instructions for proofing will be given in the e-mail we send to authors, including alternative methods to the online version and PDF. We will do everything possible to get your article published quickly and accurately. Please use this proof only for checking the typesetting, editing, completeness and correctness of the text, tables and figures. Significant changes to the article as accepted for publication will only be considered at this stage with permission from the Editor. It is important to ensure that all corrections are sent back to us in one communication. Please check carefully before replying, as inclusion of any subsequent corrections cannot be guaranteed. Proofreading is solely your responsibility.

### **Offprints**

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