

# Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy

## Guide for authors

- [Introduction](#)
  - [Types of article](#)
  - [Submission checklist](#)
- [Before you begin](#)
  - [Ethics in publishing](#)
  - [Studies in humans and animals](#)
  - [Conflict of Interest](#)
  - [Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing](#)
  - [Submission declaration and verification](#)
  - [Use of inclusive language](#)
  - [Reporting sex- and gender-based analyses](#)
  - [Authorship](#)
  - [Changes to authorship](#)
  - [Clinical trial results](#)
  - [Reporting clinical trials](#)
  - [Registration of clinical trials](#)
  - [Copyright](#)
  - [Elsevier supports responsible sharing](#)
  - [Funding source](#)
  - [Open access](#)
  - [Elsevier Researcher Academy](#)
  - [Language](#)
  - [Informed consent and patient details](#)
  - [Submission](#)
  - [Submit your article](#)
- [Preparation](#)
  - [Double anonymized review](#)
  - [Use of word processing software](#)
  - [Article structure](#)
  - [Article structure](#)
  - [Sections](#)
  - [Introduction](#)
  - [Material and methods](#)
  - [Results](#)
  - [Discussion](#)
  - [Conclusions](#)
  - [Appendices](#)
  - [Essential title page information](#)
  - [Highlights](#)
  - [Abstract](#)
  - [Keywords](#)
  - [Acknowledgements](#)
  - [Formatting of funding sources](#)
  - [Units](#)
  - [Math formulae](#)

- [Footnotes](#)
- [Artwork](#)
- [Image manipulation](#)
- [Electronic artwork](#)
- [Color artwork](#)
- [Figure captions](#)
- [Tables](#)
- [References](#)
- [Citation in text](#)
- [Reference links](#)
- [Web references](#)
- [Data references](#)
- [Preprint references](#)
- [References in a special issue](#)
- [Reference style](#)
- [Journal abbreviations](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Research data](#)
- [Data linking](#)
- [After acceptance](#)
  - [Proofs](#)
- [Author inquiries](#)
  - [Author Inquiries](#)

# Introduction

## Types of article

The **Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy (BJPT)** publishes original research articles, reviews, and brief communications on topics related to physical therapy and rehabilitation, including clinical, basic or applied studies on the assessment, prevention and treatment of movement disorders. Our Editorial Board is committed to disseminate high-quality research in the field of physical therapy. The BJPT follows the principle of publication ethics included in the code of conduct of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). The BJPT accepts the submission of manuscripts with up to 3,500 words (excluding title page, abstract, references, tables, figures and legends). A total of five (5) combined tables and figures is allowed. Any extra information that the authors would like to publish with the manuscript can be published as Appendices or Supplementary material. Appendices will be included in the total number of words allowed and published at the end of the PDF version of the article after the references. Supplementary material is hosted online and its content is not included in the manuscript word count.

The following types of study can be considered for publication, if directly related to the journal's scope:

**a) Intervention studies (clinical trials):** studies that investigate the effect(s) of one or more interventions on outcomes directly related to the BJPT's scope. The World Health Organization defines a clinical trial as "any research study that prospectively allocates human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effect(s) on health outcome(s)". Clinical trials include single-case experimental studies, case series, non-randomized controlled trials, and randomized controlled trials. Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) must follow the [CONSORT recommendations](#) (Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials) recommendations. The [CONSORT checklist](#) and [Statement Flow Diagram](#) must be completed and submitted with the manuscript. Clinical trials must provide prospective registration (i.e. registration of the trial in a public trial registry at or before the time of first patient enrollment) that satisfies the requirements of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), e.g. <https://clinicaltrials.gov/> and/or <https://www.anzctr.org.au/>. The complete list of all clinical trial registries can be found at: <https://www.who.int/clinical-trials-registry-platform/network/primary-registries>. We suggest that all authors register clinical trials prospectively via the website <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>.

Note: We do not accept single case studies and series of cases (i.e. clinical trials without a comparison group).

**b) Observational studies:** studies that investigate the relationship(s) between variables of interest related to the BJPT's scope. Observational studies include cross-sectional studies, cohort studies, and case-control studies. All observational studies must be reported following the recommendation from the [STROBE statement](#).

**c) Qualitative studies:** studies that focus on understanding needs, motivations, and human behavior. The object of a qualitative study is guided by in-depth analysis of a topic, including opinions, attitudes, motivations, and behavioral patterns without quantification. Qualitative studies include documentary and ethnographic analysis.

**d) Systematic reviews:** studies that analyze and/or synthesize the literature on a topic related to the scope of the BJPT. Systematic reviews that include meta-analysis will have priority over other systematic reviews. Those that have an insufficient number of articles or articles with low quality in the Methods section and do not include an assertive and valid conclusion about the topic will not be considered for peer-review analysis.

The authors must follow the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) checklist to format their systematic reviews. The checklist is available at <http://www.prisma-statement.org/PRISMAStatement/Default.aspx> and must be filled in and submitted with the manuscript.

Potential authors are encouraged to read the following tutorial, which contains the minimum requirements for publication of systematic reviews in the BJPT: Mancini MC, Cardoso JR, Sampaio RF, Costa LCM, Cabral CMN, Costa LOP. Tutorial for writing systematic reviews for the Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy (BJPT). Braz J Phys Ther. 2014 Nov-Dec; 18(6):471-480.

**e) Studies on the translation and cross-cultural adaptation of questionnaires or assessment tools:** studies that aim to translate and/or cross-culturally adapt foreign questionnaires to a language other than that of the original version of existing assessment instruments. The authors must use [the checklist \(Appendix\)](#) to format this type of paper and adhere to the other recommendations of the BJPT. The answers to the checklist must be submitted with the manuscript. At the time of submission, the authors must also include written permission from the authors of the original instrument that was translated and/or cross-culturally adapted.

**f) Methodological studies:** studies centered on the development and/or evaluation of clinimetric properties and characteristics of assessment instruments. The authors are encouraged to use the Guidelines for Reporting Reliability and Agreement Studies (GRRAS) to format methodological papers, in addition to following BJPT instructions. Important: Studies that report electromyographic results must follow the Standards for Reporting EMG Data recommended by ISEK (International Society of Electrophysiology and Kinesiology), available at <http://www.isek.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Standards-for-Reporting-EMG-Data.pdf>.

**g) Protocols:** the BJPT does not publish any research protocols, including clinical trial protocols, systematic review protocol, observational study protocols and statistical analysis plans (SAP).

**h) Short communications:** the BJPT will publish up to six short communications a year in a format similar to that of the original articles, containing 1,200 words and up to two figures, one table, and ten references.

**i) Masterclass articles:** This type of article presents the state of art of any topic that is important to the field of physical therapy. All masterclass articles are invited manuscripts and the authors must be recognized experts in the field. However, authors can send e-mails to the editor-in-chief with an expression of interest to submit a masterclass article to the BJPT.

## Submission checklist

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

### Ensure that the following items are present:

One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:

- E-mail address
- Full postal address

All necessary files have been uploaded:

*Manuscript*

- Include keywords

- All figures (include relevant captions)
- All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
- Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided; Indicate clearly if color should be used for any figures in print

*Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files* (where applicable)

*Supplemental files* (where applicable)

Further considerations:

- Manuscript has been 'spell checked' and 'grammar checked'
- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)
- A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
- Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed

For further information, visit our [Support Center](#).

# Before you begin

## Ethics in publishing

Please see our information on [Ethics in publishing](#) and [Ethical guidelines for journal publication](#).

## Studies in humans and animals

If the work involves the use of human subjects, the author should ensure that the work described has been carried out in accordance with [The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association](#) (Declaration of Helsinki) for experiments involving humans. The manuscript should be in line with the [Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#) and aim for the inclusion of representative human populations (sex, age and ethnicity) as per those recommendations. The terms [sex and gender](#) should be used correctly.

Authors should include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects. The privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed.

All animal experiments should comply with the [ARRIVE guidelines](#) and should be carried out in accordance with the U.K. Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986 and associated guidelines, [EU Directive 2010/63/EU for animal experiments](#), or the National Institutes of Health [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#) (NIH Publications No. 8023, revised 1978) and the authors should clearly indicate in the manuscript that such guidelines have been followed. The sex of animals must be indicated, and where appropriate, the influence (or association) of sex on the results of the study.

## Conflict of Interest

All authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential competing interests include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Authors must disclose any interests in two places: 1. A summary declaration of interest statement in the title page file (if double-blind) or the manuscript file (if single-blind). If there are no interests to declare then please state this: 'Declarations of interest: none'. This summary statement will be ultimately published if the article is accepted. 2. Detailed disclosures as part of a separate Conflict of Interest form, which forms part of the journal's official records. It is important for potential interests to be declared in both places and that the information matches. [More information](#). We recommend the authors to use the Disclosure of Interest form from the ICMJE available at <https://www.icmje.org/disclosure-of-interest/>

## Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing

The below guidance only refers to the writing process, and not to the use of AI tools to analyse and draw insights from data as part of the research process.

Where authors use generative artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process, authors should only use these technologies to improve readability and language. Applying the technology should be done with human oversight and control, and authors should carefully review and edit the result, as AI can generate authoritative-sounding output that can be incorrect, incomplete or biased. AI and AI-assisted technologies should not be listed as an author or co-author, or be cited as an author. Authorship implies responsibilities and tasks that can only be attributed to and performed by humans, as outlined in Elsevier's [AI policy for authors](#).

Authors should disclose in their manuscript the use of AI and AI-assisted technologies in the

writing process by following the instructions below. A statement will appear in the published work. Please note that authors are ultimately responsible and accountable for the contents of the work.

### **Disclosure instructions**

Authors must disclose the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process by adding a statement at the end of their manuscript in the core manuscript file, before the References list. The statement should be placed in a new section entitled 'Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process'

*Statement: During the preparation of this work the author(s) used [NAME TOOL / SERVICE] in order to [REASON]. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication*

This declaration does not apply to the use of basic tools for checking grammar, spelling, references etc. If there is nothing to disclose, there is no need to add a statement.

### **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.

### **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. These guidelines are meant as a point of reference to help identify appropriate language but are by no means exhaustive or definitive.

### **Reporting sex- and gender-based analyses**

#### **Reporting guidance**

For research involving or pertaining to humans, animals or eukaryotic cells, investigators should integrate sex and gender-based analyses (SGBA) into their research design according to funder/sponsor requirements and best practices within a field. Authors should address the sex and/or gender dimensions of their research in their article. In cases where they cannot, they should discuss this as a limitation to their research's generalizability. Importantly, authors should explicitly state what definitions of sex and/or gender they are applying to enhance the precision, rigor and reproducibility of their research and to avoid ambiguity or conflation of terms and the



constructs to which they refer (see Definitions section below). Authors can refer to the [Sex and Gender Equity in Research \(SAGER\) guidelines](#) and the [SAGER guidelines checklist](#). These offer systematic approaches to the use and editorial review of sex and gender information in study design, data analysis, outcome reporting and research interpretation - however, please note there is no single, universally agreed-upon set of guidelines for defining sex and gender.

## **Definitions**

Sex generally refers to a set of biological attributes that are associated with physical and physiological features (e.g., chromosomal genotype, hormonal levels, internal and external anatomy). A binary sex categorization (male/female) is usually designated at birth ("sex assigned at birth"), most often based solely on the visible external anatomy of a newborn. Gender generally refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, and identities of women, men and gender-diverse people that 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. Sex and gender are often incorrectly portrayed as binary (female/male or woman/man) and unchanging whereas these constructs actually exist along a spectrum and include additional sex categorizations and gender identities such as people who are intersex/have differences of sex development (DSD) or identify as non-binary. Moreover, the terms "sex" and "gender" can be ambiguous--thus it is important for authors to define the manner in which they are used. In addition to this definition guidance and the SAGER guidelines, the [resources on this page](#) offer further insight around sex and gender in research studies.

## **Authorship**

All authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted.

## **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.

## **Clinical trial results**

In line with the position of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, the BJPT will not consider manuscripts that have published the clinical trial results prior to publication. The only exception is when the results are posted in the clinical trial registry in the form of a brief structured (less than 500 words) abstract or table. However, divulging results in other circumstances (e.g., investors' meetings) is discouraged and may jeopardize consideration of the manuscript. Authors should fully disclose all posting in registries of results of the same or closely related work.



## Reporting clinical trials

Randomized controlled trials should be presented according to the CONSORT guidelines. At manuscript submission, authors must provide the CONSORT checklist accompanied by a flow diagram that illustrates the progress of patients through the trial, including recruitment, enrolment, randomization, withdrawal and completion, and a detailed description of the randomization procedure. The [CONSORT checklist and template flow diagram](#) are available online.

## Registration of clinical trials

Registration in a public trials registry is a condition for publication of clinical trials in this journal in accordance with [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#) recommendations. Trials must be registered at or before the onset of patient enrollment. The clinical trial registration number should be included on the Title page (with author details). The editors will check consistency between the registration and the manuscript but reviewers will remain blinded. A clinical trial is defined as any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects of health outcomes. Health-related interventions include any intervention used to modify a biomedical or health-related outcome (for example drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioural treatments, dietary interventions, and process-of-care changes). Health outcomes include any biomedical or health-related measures obtained in patients or participants, including pharmacokinetic measures and adverse events. Purely observational studies (those in which the assignment of the medical intervention is not at the discretion of the investigator) will not require registration.

## Copyright

Upon submission of an article, authors will be asked to add a "Copyright Transfer Form" (please use the "Authors' Copyright Form" available [here](#) here) to assign to the Associação Brasileira de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Fisioterapia (ABRAPG-Ft) the copyright in the manuscript and any tables, illustrations or other material submitted for publication as part of the manuscript (the "Article") in all forms and media (whether now known or later developed), throughout the world, in all languages, for the full term of copyright, effective when the Article is accepted for publication. An e-mail will be sent to the corresponding author confirming receipt of the manuscript together with a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' form or a link to the online version of this agreement.

## Elsevier supports responsible sharing

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

## 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 from the Journal Homepage for more information.

## Elsevier Researcher Academy

[Researcher Academy](#) 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

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 [Language Editing service](#) available from Elsevier's Language Services.

## Informed consent and patient details

Studies on patients or volunteers require ethics committee approval and informed consent, which should be documented in the paper. Appropriate consents, permissions and releases must be obtained where an author wishes to include case details or other personal information or images of patients and any other individuals in an Elsevier publication. Written consents must be retained by the author but copies should not be provided to the journal. Only if specifically requested by the journal in exceptional circumstances (for example if a legal issue arises) the author must provide copies of the consents or evidence that such consents have been obtained. For more information, please review the [Elsevier Policy on the Use of Images or Personal Information of Patients or other Individuals](#). Unless you have written permission from the patient (or, where applicable, the next of kin), the personal details of any patient included in any part of the article and in any supplementary materials (including all illustrations and videos) must be removed before submission.

## 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.

## Submit your article

Please submit your article via <https://www.editorialmanager.com/bjpt/default.aspx>.

# Preparation

## Double anonymized review

This journal uses double anonymized review, which means the identities of the authors are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. [More information](#) is available on our website. Authors must submit an anonymized manuscript by removing all identifying information (e.g., institutions, cities, funding information, and author initials) from the blinded document. Please submit the following files separately:

*Title page (with author details):* This should include the title, authors' names, affiliations, acknowledgements and any Declaration of Interest statement, and a complete address for the corresponding author including an e-mail address.

*Blinded manuscript (no author details):* The main body of the paper (including the references, figures, tables and any acknowledgements) should not include any identifying information, such as the authors' names or initials, affiliations, institutions, cities or funding information. It is the authors' responsibility to ensure that manuscripts are properly blinded.

## 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.

## Article structure

This section describes the article structure for this journal.

### Article structure

All manuscript submitted to the journal must include continuous line numbering on all the manuscript pages; and the pages should be sequentially numbered.

## Sections

Divide your article into clearly defined sections. Each subsection is given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line. Subsections should be used as much as possible when cross-referencing text: refer to the subsection by heading as opposed to simply 'the text'.

## Introduction

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

## Material and methods

Provide sufficient detail to allow the work to be reproduced.

## 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.

## Appendices

If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

### *Supplementary material*

Supplementary material contains supporting information that cannot be included in the printed version for reasons of space, and that is not essential for inclusion in the full text of the manuscript, but would nevertheless benefit the reader. When possible, the authors are encouraged to include all supporting information in a single PDF file but other formats are also accepted, including Excel and PowerPoint files. Although the contents of these files do not count in the document word count, we encourage authors to present it in a concise, clear, and well-organized fashion. Supplementary material is not formatted or edited by our production team and will be published exactly as received. Authors should make explicit references to these items in appropriate locations in the text of the manuscript as "Supplementary material".

## Essential title page information

- **Title.** Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
- **Author names and affiliations.** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. You can add your name between parentheses in your own script behind the English transliteration. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lowercase superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author.
- **Corresponding author.** Clearly indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. This responsibility includes answering any future queries about Methodology and Materials. Ensure that the e-mail address is given and that contact details are kept up to date by the corresponding author.
- **Present/permanent address.** If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main, affiliation address. Superscript Arabic numerals are used for such footnotes

## Highlights

Highlights are mandatory for this journal as they help increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the [example Highlights](#).

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85 characters, including spaces, per bullet point).

## Abstract

A concise and factual structured abstract is required (background, objective, methods, results, conclusion) with a maximum of 250 words. The abstract should briefly state 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).

## 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 (without identifying information) in a separate section at the end of the article before the references. 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.

## Units

Follow internationally accepted rules and conventions: use the international system of units (SI). If other units are mentioned, please give their equivalent in SI.

## 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).

## Footnotes

Footnotes should be used sparingly. Number them consecutively throughout the article. Many word processors can build footnotes into the text, and this feature may be used. Otherwise, please indicate the position of footnotes in the text and list the footnotes themselves separately at the end of the article. Do not include footnotes in the Reference list.

## Artwork

This section describes the artwork for this journal.

## Image manipulation

Whilst it is accepted that authors sometimes need to manipulate images for clarity, manipulation for purposes of deception or fraud will be seen as scientific ethical abuse and will be dealt with accordingly. For graphical images, this journal is applying the following policy: no specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. Adjustments of brightness, contrast, or color balance are acceptable if and as long as they do not obscure or eliminate any information present in the original. Nonlinear adjustments (e.g. changes to gamma settings) must be disclosed in the figure legend.

## Electronic artwork

### *General points*

- Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your original artwork.
- Embed the used fonts if the application provides that option.
- Aim to use the following fonts in your illustrations: Arial, Courier, Times New Roman, Symbol, or use fonts that look similar.
- Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
- Use a logical naming convention for your artwork files.
- Provide captions to illustrations separately.
- Size the illustrations close to the desired dimensions of the published version.
- Submit each illustration as a separate file.
- Ensure that color images are accessible to all, including those with impaired color vision.

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*

If your electronic artwork is created in a Microsoft Office application (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) then please supply 'as is' in the native document format.

Regardless of the application used other than Microsoft Office, 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 all used fonts.

TIFF (or JPEG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones), keep to a minimum of 300 dpi.

TIFF (or JPEG): Bitmapped (pure black & white pixels) line drawings, keep to a minimum of 1000 dpi.

TIFF (or JPEG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale), keep to a minimum of 500 dpi.

**Please do not:**

- Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); these typically have a low number of pixels and limited set of colors;
- Supply files that are too low in resolution;
- Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

## Color artwork

Please make sure that artwork files are in an acceptable format (TIFF (or JPEG), EPS (or PDF) or MS Office files) and with the correct resolution. If, together with your accepted article, you submit usable color figures then the journal will ensure, at no additional charge, that these figures will appear in color online (e.g., ScienceDirect and other sites). [Further information on the preparation of electronic artwork.](#)

## Figure captions

Ensure that each illustration has a caption. Supply captions separately, not attached to the figure. 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

This section describes the references for this journal.

## Citation in text

Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Any references cited in the abstract must be given in full. Unpublished results and personal communications are not recommended in the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text. If these references are included in the reference list they should follow the standard reference style of the journal and should include a substitution of the publication date with either 'Unpublished results' or 'Personal communication'. Citation of a reference as 'in press' implies that the item has been accepted for publication.



## Reference links

Increased discoverability of research and high quality peer review are ensured by online links to the sources cited. In order to allow us to create links to abstracting and indexing services, such as Scopus, Crossref and PubMed, please ensure that data provided in the references are correct. Please note that incorrect surnames, journal/book titles, publication year and pagination may prevent link creation. When copying references, please be careful as they may already contain errors. Use of the DOI is highly encouraged.

A DOI is guaranteed never to change, so you can use it as a permanent link to any electronic article. An example of a citation using DOI for an article not yet in an issue is: VanDecar J.C., Russo R.M., James D.E., Ambeh W.B., Franke M. (2003). Aseismic continuation of the Lesser Antilles slab beneath northeastern Venezuela. *Journal of Geophysical Research*, <https://doi.org/10.1029/2001JB000884>. Please note the format of such citations should be in the same style as all other references in the paper.

## Web references

As a minimum, the full URL should be given and the date when the reference was last accessed. Any further information, if known (DOI, author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given. Web references can be listed separately (e.g., after the reference list) under a different heading if desired, or can be included in the reference list.

## Data references

This journal encourages you to cite underlying or relevant datasets in your manuscript by citing them in your text and including a data reference in your Reference List. Data references should include the following elements: author name(s), dataset title, data repository, version (where available), year, and global persistent identifier. Add [dataset] immediately before the reference so we can properly identify it as a data reference. The [dataset] identifier will not appear in your published article.

## Preprint references

Where a preprint has subsequently become available as a peer-reviewed publication, the formal publication should be used as the reference. If there are preprints that are central to your work or that cover crucial developments in the topic, but are not yet formally published, these may be referenced. Preprints should be clearly marked as such, for example by including the word preprint, or the name of the preprint server, as part of the reference. The preprint DOI should also be provided.

## References in a special issue

Please ensure that the words 'this issue' are added to any references in the list (and any citations in the text) to other articles in the same Special Issue.

## Reference style

*Text:* Indicate references by (consecutive) superscript arabic numerals in the order in which they appear in the text. The numerals are to be used *outside* periods and commas, *inside* colons and semicolons. For further detail and examples you are referred to the [AMA Manual of Style](#), A Guide for Authors and Editors, 11th Edition.

*List:* Number the references in the list in the order in which they appear in the text.

*Examples:*

Reference to a journal publication:

1. Van der Geer J, Hanraads JAJ, Lupton RA. The art of writing a scientific article. *J Sci Commun*. 2010;163:51–59. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.Sc.2010.00372>

Reference to a journal publication with an article number:

2. Van der Geer J, Hanraads JAJ, Lupton RA. The art of writing a scientific article. *Heliyon*. 2018;19:e00205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2018.e00205>

Reference to a book:

3. Strunk W Jr, White EB. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York, NY: Longman; 2000.

Reference to a chapter in an edited book:

4. Mettam GR, Adams LB. How to prepare an electronic version of your article. In: Jones BS, Smith RZ, eds. *Introduction to the Electronic Age*. New York, NY: E-Publishing Inc; 2009:281–304.

Reference to a website:

5. Cancer Research UK. Cancer statistics reports for the UK. Accessed 13 March 2003. <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/aboutcancer/statistics/cancerstatsreport/>; 2003. .

Reference to a dataset:

[dataset] 6. Oguro M, Imahiro S, Saito S, Nakashizuka T. Mortality data for Japanese oak wilt disease and surrounding forest compositions, Mendeley Data, v1; 2015. <https://doi.org/10.17632/xwj98nb39r.1>

## Journal abbreviations

Journal names should be abbreviated according to the [List of Title Word Abbreviations](#).

## Video

Elsevier accepts video material and animation sequences to support and enhance your scientific research. Authors who have video or animation files that they wish to submit with their article are strongly encouraged to include links to these within the body of the article. This can be done in the same way as a figure or table by referring to the video or animation content and noting in the body text where it should be placed. All submitted files should be properly labeled so that they directly relate to the video file's content. In order to ensure that your video or animation material is directly usable, please provide the file in one of our recommended file formats with a preferred maximum size of 150 MB per file, 1 GB in total. Video and animation files supplied will be published online in the electronic version of your article in Elsevier Web products, including [ScienceDirect](#). Please supply 'stills' with your files: you can choose any frame from the video or animation or make a separate image. These will be used instead of standard icons and will personalize the link to your video data. For more detailed instructions please visit our [video instruction pages](#). Note: since video and animation cannot be embedded in the print version of the journal, please provide text for both the electronic and the print version for the portions of the article that refer to this content.

## Research data

This journal encourages and enables you to share data that supports your research publication where appropriate, and enables you to interlink the data with your published articles. Research data refers to the results of observations or experimentation that validate research findings, which may also include 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

### Proofs

One set of page proofs (as PDF files) will be sent by e-mail to the corresponding author (if we do not have an e-mail address then paper proofs will be sent by post) or a link will be provided in the e-mail so that authors can download the files themselves. To ensure a fast publication process of the article, we kindly ask authors to provide us with their proof corrections within two days.

Elsevier now provides authors with PDF proofs which can be annotated; for this you will need to [download the free Adobe Reader](#), version 9 (or higher). Instructions on how to annotate PDF files will accompany the proofs (also given online). The exact system requirements are given at the [Adobe site](#).

If you do not wish to use the PDF annotations function, you may list the corrections (including replies to the Query Form) and return them to Elsevier in an e-mail. Please list your corrections quoting line number. If, for any reason, this is not possible, then mark the corrections and any other comments (including replies to the Query Form) on a printout of your proof and scan the pages and return via e-mail. 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. We will do everything possible to get your article published quickly and accurately. 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.

# Author inquiries

## Author Inquiries

Visit the [Elsevier Support Center](#) to find the answers you need. Here you will find everything from Frequently Asked Questions to ways to get in touch.

You can also [check the status of your submitted article](#) or find out [when your accepted article will be published](#).