Get published and cited

This guide provides you with everything you need to know to help start your publishing journey and make an impact in your scientific community.

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Your guide to publishing an article with IOP Publishing

Whether you are writing up the results of a PhD chapter or preparing your first manuscript for publication, we will guide you through the process of what you need to consider when submitting your first article with IOP Publishing. Following some key points and taking some simple steps means that you will improve your chances of publication, and be ready to make an impact in the global scientific community.

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Last year articles published with IOP Publishing were downloaded over 78 million times. And over 12 million of those downloads were to open access articles.

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Before you write your article

Your research is complete, and you are on the first step to writing and publishing your paper. Consider which journal is right for you and who your target audience is. Getting these initial steps right is important because it can affect the reach and appeal of your published work.

**Who is your audience?**
Are your audience policy makers, fellow researchers or a non-specialist audience? Understanding this will help you know how to write about your research.

**Where are your audience?**
Knowing where your audience are and which journals they are reading will help you to determine where to submit your manuscript so that you can reach them.

**Which journal should you choose?**
Identifying the journal before you start writing your manuscript will also help you know how to format the paper according to any specific guidelines and criteria it may have. Understanding these will improve your chance of acceptance of publication.

Check if your institution has a transformative agreement with particular journals from IOP Publishing. They will aid costs for publishing open access by funding the article publication charge (APC). Find out more about open access funding options on page 11.

The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex, overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.

*Mark Twain, American writer*

**TIP**
Once you know to which journal you will submit for publication, check out the type of research and papers already published in it to get a feel for how you should present your work.
Advice from your peers

Writing your paper and getting published can be daunting, but it is also very rewarding, and your published work can help develop scientific breakthroughs. Hear some top tips from peers in the scientific community:

Writing skills are your Swiss Army knife to succeed in the process to publish your paper. Editors and reviewers demand high quality papers, but they also enjoy manuscripts nicely and clearly written, the same as the readers.

In order to publish innovative literature, you have to be aware of the state-of-the art in your field. Read, read and read more, especially the journals you would like to publish in.

Dr Eden Morales Narvaez
Biophotonic Nanosensors Laboratory, Centro de Investigaciones en Óptica A. C, Mexico

Publishing is the essence of scientific work. Any piece of work that is not published or disseminated to the community simply does not exist. Hence, if you want to give visibility to your work, you have to publish it.

Professor Caterina Cocchi
University of Oldenburg, Germany

Considerations when choosing which journal

- **Peer review**: considered a stamp of quality in the research community. Check whether a journal provides a rigorous peer review service.

- **Speed of publication**: if fast publication is important to you, check the publication times for the journal.

- **Open access options**: open access accelerates the discovery of your research immediately and freely available online for anyone to read, download and share. Authors, research institutions or funding organizations may fund the costs of publishing. Check with your institution whether there is funding available.

**TIP**
Investigate whether the journal has any article publication discounts which could help with funding, such as APC waivers.

More on our [website](#)
You know your audience and what journal you want to publish in, and you should be aware of any journal specific criteria. It’s now time to start preparing your article.

**Useful points**

- Gather your results and important data beforehand (notes, references, figures) – this will help you to organize your thoughts and plan your article outline.
- Identify the main point/research question of your paper and structure your writing around this. A good research paper addresses a specific research question.
- Use evidence to back up your message and create a logical discussion with this in mind.
- Remember your audience when you are thinking about your style of writing.
- Make your title and abstract clear and relevant to make it easier to be discovered.
- Include keywords and key search terms which reflect your content.
- The abstract is the second advertisement for your research article. Make sure it captivates your target audience and includes key terms.
The structure of your manuscript
Although not all article types are structured the same, here is a typical example you can follow:

**TITLE**
- The article title is the most visible part of the article
- Concise yet informative, and draws attention
- Include keywords so your audience will understand what it is about

**ABSTRACT**
- Check journal length requirements for abstracts (~200 words)
- Summarize the key points of your research
- Mention the work and methods you undertook
- Claim your key findings

**INTRODUCTION**
- State why the problem you address is important
- Reference relevant results of previous published work to contextualize your work within the academic field
- Discuss the goal of your work, its scope and the main advances you are reporting

**METHODS**
- Specify the study design and data collection
- Outline the analysis methods
- Give sufficient information to allow other researchers to use your findings for future research

**FIGURES**
- Figures should be representative, clear and well designed
- Figures should have a self contained caption

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**
- Explain the results and emphasize significant findings clearly
- Discuss the impact and importance of results compared with recent relevant research
- Make sure your graphs and tables are clear and organized
CONCLUSION

• Summarize the key points made in the other sections
• Conclude overall discussion of article
• Link this section to the introduction

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

• Recognize the contribution of funding bodies and anyone who has assisted in the work
• Acknowledge individuals who do not qualify for co-authorship but have contributed to your article intellectually, financially or in some other manner

REFERENCES

• List relevant papers referred to in the other sections, citing original works, both historical and recent

TIPS

• Focus on your title, intro and summary last.
• Use key terms in the title and abstract to enhance the discoverability of your research article.

Available services to help prepare
You can access a range of free services and tools from IOP Publishing’s Publishing Support to help increase the chances of your paper being accepted.
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- **Submission checklist** – check you have covered everything before submitting your paper.

**Did you know** every day 50 authors are using our new pre-submission feedback service in their publishing journey.

**Read, review and edit**
Once you have written your paper, read it thoroughly to identify any errors or mistakes. You could also ask colleagues and co-authors for a second opinion.
Submitting your article

Ready to submit your article? Here are the next steps.

How to submit
You will find the ‘Submit an article’ link on every homepage of an IOP Publishing journal. You will need to make sure you have an account in our manuscript submissions system: ScholarOne.

You will first be asked to select an article type for your manuscript, to enter the title and abstract, and to select some keywords. Please note that, if your article is accepted for publication, these keywords will feature on the published article, and they will help with its discoverability.

Did you know you can track the progress of your article with our free article tracker. In 2022, Track my article was used over 7,000,000 times which is over 1900 uses per day.

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Authors from China can submit the article ID in the official account, and immediately obtain the status information of the article. If you have a WeChat account, you can use this to check the status of your article during the publication process.

Scan the QR code to access our WeChat account.
**Funding**

**Open access funding**
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**Green open access**: authors publishing in one of IOP Publishing’s subscription-based journals can archive the accepted version of their article on a personal website immediately or on an institutional or subject repository 12 months after publication. A preprint of the article can be posted at any time on non-commercial repositories or preprint servers such as arXiv. The costs associated with high-quality open access publishing in IOP Publishing’s journals are covered by APCs. These can be paid by organizations, funders or researchers.

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Did you know in 2021, we waived £1.2million of article publication charges for open access articles across 64 countries.

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• You submit your work as normal and then if you are eligible, our publishing team will get in contact with you.
• We have a frequently asked questions section on our website.

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'Why publish OA under a TA video'

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Peer review and reviewer reports

Once submitted, your article will be reviewed by expert peers in the field, known as reviewers. They will assess quality and originality and help the journal editors towards making a decision on the publication of your article.

There are different types of peer review:

**Single anonymous** is where reviewers are anonymous to authors, but author identities are visible to reviewers.

**Double anonymous** is the default on all IOP Publishing journal titles. Reviewers do not know the identity of the authors, and authors do not know the identity of the reviewers. This has the potential to reduce bias with respect to gender, race, country of origin or affiliation, leading to a more equitable system.

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You can find out more about the different peer review models on IOP Publishing journals on our [website](#).

The time of peer review varies from journal to journal. You can find this information on the journal homepages, including time to first decision and cite score.

Watch this [short video](#) on the peer review process for more information.
Peer review plays an essential role in maintaining quality across scientific scholarly communications. At IOP Publishing, we manage the process of peer review, allowing reviewers and board members to concentrate on the science.

**ioppublishing.org/peer-review**

- **60+** IOP staff manage peer review from submission to acceptance.
- **5DAYS FOR SUITABILITY, SCOPE AND ETHICS CHECKS**
  - The IOP Peer Review Excellence course has trained hundreds of reviewers since its launch in 2020.
  - We have over 9,000 reviewers who have achieved IOP Trusted Reviewer Status.
  - Our experts take 15 min to select the right reviewer, thanks to our advanced tools and curated pool of reviewers.
- **30,532** reviewers submitted reports in 2021.
  - In 2021 all our open access journals moved over to transparent peer review.
- **19,078** reviewers claimed Publons recognition for 56,659 IOP reviews in 2021.
  - 1,073 reviewers won Outstanding Reviewer awards at the 2021 Reviewer Awards.
- **45%** of rejected articles were offered transfers.
- **22%** ARTICLES WERE SUBMITTED TO DOUBLE ANONYMOUS PEER REVIEW
- **21DAYS FROM SUBMISSION TO FIRST DECISION**

* All statistics are for the full year of 2021 unless otherwise stated.
First decision

Rejected manuscripts
Don’t worry if the first decision you receive is a rejection. It can happen to any researcher at some point in their careers. It is important that you review the report carefully and understand why and how you can amend your paper to ensure it is suitable for re-submission.

Don’t ignore any parts of the report – if you are not acting on any of the advice then give reasons why not.

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The true value and impact of your paper can be greatly enhanced by sharing it with your peers. The more people who read, cite and benefit from your research, the more valuable your paper becomes and the greater your esteem as an author. This is more important than ever given that the impact of research papers is becoming increasingly valuable to funders and institutions.

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Top tips:

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2. Use social media to tell people about your work through blogging or through other outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, WeChat and Weibo (don’t forget to tag us in your post and use relevant hashtags so that we can share your post across our social media accounts).

3. Update your profile on professional and academic networking sites (such as LinkedIn, ResearchGate and Mendeley) with a link to your article or abstract as per the content-sharing guidelines of the networking site.

4. Update your institutional/departmental homepage and research group website with a link to your paper.

5. Contact your institution’s press office with a summary of your paper and ask for advice about promoting it to the media.

6. Write a lay summary of your paper (with a link to the full version) and send to blogs in your subject area.

7. Produce a video abstract giving an accessible introduction to your article–this can help to encourage people to read your paper.

8. Use a service like Kudos to help more people find and understand your work.

9. Mention your publication at conferences when giving presentations, and have copies to hand out to colleagues.

10. Check major abstracting and indexing services (e.g. Web of Science and Scopus) to make sure that your published paper is listed with correct details.

11. Update any citations to your article on pre-print servers or in documents/presentations where you have referred to this work. The IOP Publishing citation style is: [Author list] [Year] [Journal name] [Volume] [Article/Page number].
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