

# Instructions for preparation of manuscripts for publication in supplements to *BMC-series journals (biology titles)*

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## **General information**

### **Publication**

Manuscripts accepted by the meeting organisers will be published online in a BMC journal in both fully browseable web form and as formatted PDF files. Articles will then be available through BioMed Central and submitted for inclusion in PubMed.

### **Editorial policies**

Submission of a manuscript to a BMC journal implies that all authors have read and agreed to its content, and that readily reproducible materials described in the manuscript will be freely available to any scientist wishing to use them for non-commercial purposes. Nucleic acid sequences, protein sequences, and atomic coordinates should be deposited in an appropriate database in time for the accession number to be included in the paper. Where appropriate, authors are encouraged to adhere to the standards proposed by the Microarray Gene Expression Data Society (<http://www.mged.org>) and to deposit microarray data in one of the public repositories.

Authors are required to ensure that no material submitted as part of a manuscript infringes existing copyrights, or the rights of a third party. The manuscript should not already have been published in a journal and should not be under consideration by any other journal, but it can already have been deposited on a preprint server.

Copying text from previously published work without acknowledging the source is plagiarism and such misconduct may be reported to the authors' institution(s). Any quotations must be clearly indicated by quote marks and the source must be cited.

Submission of a manuscript reporting experimental research on humans or animals implies that authors have obtained approval for their research from the appropriate ethics committee or government body regulating animal or human research. A statement to this effect must be included in the Methods section of your manuscript.

We ask authors of manuscripts submitted for publication in supplements to BMC journals to complete a declaration of competing interests, which should be provided as a separate section of the manuscript, following the Acknowledgements. (see "[Competing Interests](#)" in [Manuscript sections](#)). Where an author has no competing interests, they should state this. The following articles give more information on competing interests:

<http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/317/7154/291>

<http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/308/6920/4>

### **Copyright**

Copyright on articles published in supplements to BMC journals will be retained by the author(s). Authors grant BioMed Central a license to publish the article and identify itself as the original publisher. Authors also grant any third party the right to use the article freely as long as its integrity is maintained and its original authors, citation details and publisher are identified. Author(s) will be asked to sign a BioMed Central Copyright and License Agreement that formalizes these and other terms and conditions of publishing articles in the supplement.

## **Manuscript preparation**

The following word processor file formats are acceptable for the main manuscript document:

- Microsoft Word (version 2 and above) – **preferred format**
- Rich text format (RTF)
- Portable document format (PDF)
- TeX/LaTeX\* (use [BioMed Central's TeX template: http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/fora/tex](http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/fora/tex))

Users of other word processing packages should save or convert their files to RTF before uploading. Many free tools are available that facilitate this process.

\*TeX/LaTeX users: We recommend using [BioMed Central's TeX template and BibTeX stylefile \(http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/fora/tex\)](http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/fora/tex). *Please note, you may place Methods before Results or after Conclusions*). If you use this standard format, you can submit your manuscript in TeX format. If you have used another template for your manuscript, or if you do not wish to use BibTeX, then please submit your manuscript as a DVI file. Please also submit your file as a PDF file. Please insert a [Competing Interests](#) section as these are compulsory for all Supplement articles.

### **Microsoft Word template**

Although we can accept manuscripts prepared as Microsoft Word, Word Perfect, RTF or PDF files, we have designed a Microsoft Word template that can be used to generate a standard style and format for your article (<http://www.biomedcentral.com/download/templates/BMC154d.dot>). It can be used if you have not yet started to write your paper, or if it is already written and needs to be put into BMC journal style. Please note you can put the Methods section to after the Conclusions if you prefer.

### **How to use the BMC journal template**

The template consists of a standard set of headings that make up an article manuscript, along with dummy fragments of body text. Follow these steps to create your manuscript in the standard format:

- Replace the dummy text for Title, Author details, Institutional affiliations, and the other sections of the manuscript with your own text (either by entering the text directly or by cutting and pasting from your own manuscript document).
- If there are sections that you do not need, delete them (but check the rest of the Instructions for Authors to see which sections are compulsory).
- Please include a [Competing Interests](#) section as these are compulsory for all Supplement articles.
- If you need an additional copy of a heading (e.g. for additional figure legends) just copy and paste.
- Enter the references using the reference style given.

### **Preparing figures**

Figures should be provided as separate files, not embedded in the text file. Please note, BMC does not redraw figures submitted for publication, so please ensure that the versions you submit are as high a quality as possible. Figures should be sequentially referenced in the text. If a figure consists of separate parts, it is important that a single composite illustration file should be submitted which contains all parts of the figure. Photographs should be provided with a scale bar if appropriate, as well as high-resolution component files. Figure files should not include the figure number, title or legend: these should be provided in the manuscript file.

Figures may be submitted in colour. Each figure should be closely cropped to minimize the amount of white space surrounding the illustration. Our figure cropping guidelines may be of help

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/fora/cropping>

### **Scaling/resolution**

Illustrations should be designed such that all information is legible when scaled to a horizontal width of 600 pixels, since this is the default size for a BMC journal (and PubMed Central) illustration on the web. High-quality versions of figures will also be generated and stored by BioMed Central, however, so image files should be submitted at a resolution of 300 dpi or greater if possible.

Text within figures should use either Arial or Helvetica fonts, although Courier may also be used if a monospaced font is required. Text should also be designed to be legible when the illustration is scaled to a width of 600 pixels.

### **Formats**

The following file formats can be accepted for supplement articles:

- **EPS** (preferred format for diagrams)
- **PDF** (also especially suitable for diagrams)
- **PNG** (preferred format for photos or images)
- **TIFF, JPEG, BMP**

BioMed Central is *not* able to process figures submitted in GIF format. Please do not send figures created in graphing and technical drawing programs in their native format, but either export them as EPS or print to a Postscript file.

If the large size of TIFF or EPS figures is an obstacle to submission, authors may find that conversion to JPEG format results in significantly reduced file size, while retaining acceptable quality. JPEG is a 'lossy' format, however. In order to maintain acceptable image quality, it is recommended that JPEG files are saved at High or Maximum quality.

Files should not be compressed with tools such as Zipit or Stuffit prior to submission. These tools will in any case produce negligible file-size savings for JPEGs and TIFFs, which are already compressed.

**Please note that it is the responsibility of the author(s) to obtain permission from the copyright holder to reproduce figures that have previously been published elsewhere.**

### Preparing tables

Tables should be sequentially referenced in the text. Each table should be numbered in sequence using Arabic numerals (i.e. Table 1, 2, 3 etc.). Tables may be subdivided into labelled parts, but each table should form a single unit. Tables should have a title that summarizes the whole table, maximum 15 words. Detailed legends may then follow, but should be concise. Tables should not include shading or colour.

Small tables [less than one side of A4 (210mm X 297mm)] that are integral to the manuscript should be pasted into the end of the document text file. These will be typeset and displayed in the final published form of the article. Such tables should be formatted using the 'Table object' in a word processing program to ensure that columns of data are kept aligned when the file is sent electronically; this will not always be the case if columns are generated by simply using tabs to separate text. Columns and rows of data should be made visibly distinct by ensuring the borders of each cell display as black lines.

**Please note that it is the responsibility of the author(s) to obtain permission from the copyright holder to reproduce tables that have previously been published elsewhere.**

## Style and language

### General

Currently, BioMed Central can only accept manuscripts written in English. Spelling should be US English or British English, but not a mixture.

BioMed Central will not edit submitted manuscripts for style or language, so please ensure that inconsistencies in style, and incorrect grammar, spelling and punctuation have been addressed.

Gene names should be in italic, but protein products should be in plain type.

There is no explicit limit on the length of articles submitted to supplements, unless otherwise instructed by the meeting organisers, but authors are encouraged to be concise. There is also no restriction on the number of figures or tables, but note that these should be limited to a reasonable number for the length of the article. Figures and tables should be sequentially referenced. Authors should include all relevant supporting data with each article.

**Avoid including long URLs in the main body of the text, they should be included in the reference section along with the title of the website (see "[References](#)" in [Manuscript Sections](#)).**

### Abbreviations

Abbreviations should be used as sparingly as possible. They can be defined when first used or a list of abbreviations can be provided preceding the acknowledgements and references.

### Typography

- Please use double line spacing.
- **Footnotes to text should not be used.**
- Type the text unjustified, without hyphenating words at line breaks.
- Use hard returns only to end headings and paragraphs, not to rearrange lines.
- **Capitalise only the first word and proper nouns in the title and headings.**
- All pages should be numbered.
- Use the BioMed Central reference format (see "[References](#)" in [Manuscript Sections](#))
- Greek and other special characters may be included. If you are unable to reproduce a particular special character, please type out the name of the symbol in full. **Please ensure that all special characters used are embedded in the text, otherwise they may be lost during conversion to PDF.**

### Units

SI Units should be used throughout (litre and molar are permitted, however).

## **Manuscript sections**

Note that all articles must be structured and include a title page and abstract. Manuscripts should be divided into sections as appropriate to the article. Please do not number the sections or any subheadings. The following sections must be included:

**Title page**  
**Abstract**  
**Background**  
**Main text**  
**List of Abbreviations Used** (if any)  
**Competing interests**  
**Authors' contributions** (Research articles only)  
**Acknowledgements**  
**References**  
**Figure legends** (if any)  
**Tables and captions** (if any)  
**Description of additional data files** (if any)

Research articles must include **Methods**, **Results** and **Conclusion** sections in the main text, with an optional **Discussion** section. An **Authors' contributions** section must also be included in research articles.

### **Title page**

This should list the title of the article, the full names, institutional addresses, and email addresses for all authors. The corresponding author should also be indicated. The title should be typed in sentence case.

### **Abstract**

This should not exceed 350 words and, for research articles, should be structured into separate sections headed Background, Results and Conclusions. Please do not use abbreviations or cite references, figures or tables in the abstract.

### **Background**

The background section should clearly state the background to the article and its aims. The section should end with a very brief statement of what is being reported in the article.

### **Main text**

Main text should be arranged under appropriate subheadings *typed in sentence case*. Research articles should include the following sections: ('Methods' may be placed before 'Results' or after 'Conclusions'):

#### **Results**

The Results and Discussion may be combined into a single section or presented separately. They may also be broken into subsections with short, informative headings, *typed in sentence case*.

#### **Conclusions**

This should state clearly the main conclusions and give a clear explanation of their importance and relevance.

#### **Methods**

This should be divided into subsections if several methods are described.

### **List of abbreviations used (if any)**

If abbreviations are used in the text they should be defined in the text where first used and a list of abbreviations provided.

### **Competing interests**

A competing interest exists when your interpretation of data or presentation of information may be influenced by your personal or financial relationship with other people or organizations. Authors should disclose any financial competing interests but also any non-financial competing interests that may cause them embarrassment were they to become public after the publication of the manuscript.

All authors are required to complete a declaration of competing interests. All competing interests that are declared will be listed at the end of published articles. Where author(s) have no competing interests, please state 'The author(s) [or certain named authors] declare that they have no competing interests'.

When completing your declaration, please consider the following questions:

#### *Financial competing interests*

- In the past five years have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future? Is such an organization financing this manuscript or funding you directly for preparation of this manuscript? If so, please specify.
- Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organization that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future? If so, please specify.
- Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript? Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript? If so, please specify.

- Do you have any other financial competing interests? If so, please specify.

*Non-financial competing interests*

Are there any non-financial competing interests (political, personal, religious, ideological, academic, intellectual, commercial or any other) to declare in relation to this manuscript? If so, please specify.

If you are unsure as to whether you, or one your co-authors, has a competing interest please discuss it with the editorial office.

### Authors' contributions (research articles only)

In order to give appropriate credit to each author of a paper, the individual contributions of authors to the manuscript should be specified in this section.

An "author" is generally considered to be someone who has made substantive intellectual contributions to a published study. To qualify as an author one should 1) have made substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) have been involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) have given final approval of the version to be published. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group, alone, does not justify authorship.

We suggest the following kind of format (please use initials to refer to each author's contribution): AB carried out the molecular genetic studies, participated in the sequence alignment and drafted the manuscript. JY carried out the immunoassays. MT participated in the sequence alignment. ES participated in the design of the study and performed the statistical analysis. FG conceived of the study, and participated in its design and coordination and helped to draft the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgements section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support.

### Acknowledgements

These should be brief. Authors should obtain permission to acknowledge from all those mentioned in the Acknowledgements.

The role of a medical writer must be included in the acknowledgements section, including their source(s) of funding.

For research articles, please acknowledge anyone who contributed towards the study by making substantial contributions to conception, design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, or who was involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content, but who does not meet the criteria for authorship. Please also include their source(s) of funding. Please also acknowledge anyone who contributed materials essential for the study. Please list the source(s) of funding for the study, for each author, and for the manuscript preparation in the acknowledgements section. Authors must describe the role of the funding body, if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; and in the decision to submit the manuscript for publication.

The publisher will include an acknowledgement in this section stating that the article is published as part of a supplement. In the case of industry-sponsored supplements, the publisher will also include a statement about sponsorship in this section.

### References

[If you have referenced other articles included in the Supplement that you are contributing to, please highlight them in red in the submitted manuscript so that we can insert the correct publication details.](#)

All references must be numbered consecutively in square brackets in the order in which they are cited in the text, followed by any in the tables or figure legends. Reference citations should not appear in titles or headings. Each reference must have an individual reference number. Please avoid excessive referencing.

Only articles and abstracts that have been published or are in press, or are available through public e-print/preprint servers, may be cited; unpublished data and personal communications should not be included in the reference list, but may be included in the text. Notes/footnotes are not allowed. Obtaining permission to quote personal communications and published data from the cited author(s) is the responsibility of the author. Journal abbreviations follow Index Medicus/MEDLINE. Citations in the reference list should contain all named authors, regardless of how many there are. There should usually be no more than 50 references per article.

Web links and URLs should be included in the reference list and given a numbered reference in the main text. They should be provided in full, including both the title of the site and the URL, in the following format: **The Mouse Tumor Biology Database** [[http://tumor.informatics.jax.org/cancer\\_links.html](http://tumor.informatics.jax.org/cancer_links.html)]

Examples of the BMC journal reference style are shown below. Please take care to follow the reference style precisely; references not in the correct style may result in delaying publication of the supplement.

*Article within a journal*

1. Koonin EV, Altschul SF, Bork P: **BRCA1 protein products: functional motifs.** *Nat Genet* 1996, **13**:266-267.

*Article within a journal supplement*

2. Orengo CA, Bray JE, Hubbard T, LoConte L, Sillitoe I: **Analysis and assessment of ab initio three-dimensional prediction, secondary structure, and contacts prediction.** *Proteins* 1999, **43**(Suppl 3):149-70.

*In press article*

3. Kharitonov SA, Barnes PJ: **Clinical aspects of exhaled nitric oxide.** *Eur Respir J*, in press.

*Published abstract*

4. Zvaifler NJ, Burger JA, Marinova-Mutafchieva L, Taylor P, Maini RN: **Mesenchymal cells, stromal derived factor-1 and rheumatoid arthritis [abstract].** *Arthritis Rheum* 1999, **42**:s250.

*Article within conference proceedings*

5. Jones X: **Zeolites and synthetic mechanisms.** In *Proceedings of the First National Conference on Porous Sieves: 27-30 June 1996; Baltimore.* Edited by Smith Y. Stoneham: Butterworth-Heinemann; 1996:16-27.

*Book chapter, or article within a book*

6. Schnepf E: **From prey via endosymbiont to plastids: comparative studies in dinoflagellates.** In *Origins of Plastids. Volume 2.* 2nd edition. Edited by Lewin RA. New York: Chapman and Hall; 1993:53-76.

*Whole issue of journal*

7. Ponder B, Johnston S, Chodosh L (Eds): **Innovative oncology.** In *Breast Cancer Res* 1998, **10**:1-72.

*Whole conference proceedings*

8. Smith Y (Ed): *Proceedings of the First National Conference on Porous Sieves: 27-30 June 1996; Baltimore.* Stoneham: Butterworth-Heinemann; 1996.

*Complete book*

9. Margulis L: *Origin of Eukaryotic Cells.* New Haven: Yale University Press; 1970.

*Monograph or book in a series*

10. Hunninghake GW, Gadek JE: **The alveolar macrophage.** In *Cultured Human Cells and Tissues.* Edited by Harris TJR. New York: Academic Press; 1995:54-56. [Stoner G (Series Editor): *Methods and Perspectives in Cell Biology*, vol 1.]

*Book with institutional author*

11. Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification: *Annual Report.* London; 1999.

*PhD thesis*

12. Kohavi R: **Wrappers for performance enhancement and oblivious decision graphs.** *PhD thesis.* Stanford University, Computer Science Department; 1995.

*Link / URL*

13. **Mouse Tumor Biology Database** [[http://tumor.informatics.jax.org/cancer\\_links.html](http://tumor.informatics.jax.org/cancer_links.html)]

**Figure legends (if any)**

The figure legends should be included in the manuscript file, immediately following the references, rather than being a part of the figure file. The following information should be provided, for each figure: Figure number (in sequence, using Arabic numerals - ie Figure 1, 2, 3 etc); Short title of figure (maximum 15 words); detailed legend, up to 300 words.

**Tables and captions (if any)**

Smaller tables that are integral to the manuscript should be included at the end of the manuscript file.

Larger datasets can be submitted separately as additional files. Additional files will not be displayed in the final, published form of the article, but a link will be provided to the files as supplied by the author.

## **Preparing additional files**

### **Additional files**

The maximum file size for additional files is 10MB each. Additional files will be linked to the final published article in the form supplied by the author, but will not be displayed within the paper. If additional files are provided (e.g. movie files, original datafiles), each should be described in this section of the manuscript, providing the following information:

- file name
- file format (including name and URL link of appropriate viewer if format is unusual)
- title of this dataset
- description of this dataset.

Additional data files must be referenced within the body of the article thus, e.g. "See additional data file 1 for the original data used to perform this analysis". Additional files are considered integral to articles published by BMC journals, there is no distinction between the main article and 'supplementary material'. Files will be virus-scanned on submission.

### **File formats**

Files should not be platform-specific, and should be viewable using free or widely available tools. The following are examples of suitable formats:

- additional documentation - PDF (Adobe Acrobat) or TXT (plain text)
- animations - SWF (Shockwave Flash)
- movies - MOV (Quicktime) and MPG (MPEG)
- tabular data - XLS (Excel spreadsheet) and CSV (Comma Separated Values)

### **File extensions**

It is recommended that files be given the appropriate standard three letter file extension for their file type (e.g. spreadsheet.xls or table.csv). This is especially important for Macintosh users, since the Macintosh operating system does not enforce the use of standard extensions.

## **BMC biology journals – Author presubmission checklist**

Before submission to your supplement organiser, please go through the list of points below and make sure your manuscript conforms with each point. You should be aware that we are not charging for access to your article, and therefore require you to submit your files in the correct format to allow for efficient production online. If we have to make any changes in proof due to incorrect formatting of the original files, these will be at the discretion of the Editors, and may incur a charge.

When you have checked each of the points, please make the required changes to your files.

***Wrongly formatted manuscripts cause problems and delays during the production process.***

### **Title page of manuscript**

1. Authors' affiliations should be in the following format: Department, Institute, City, (Post/Zip code), Country.
2. Each affiliation must be linked to an author.
3. All authors must be linked to their corresponding affiliation(s) using superscript numerals.
4. Authors should not list their qualifications on the title page.
5. One corresponding author should be indicated.
6. A contact email address should be listed for each author.

### **Manuscript sections**

7. Abstracts should be no longer than 350 words.
8. Abstracts should not cite references, figures or tables, and the use of abbreviations should be minimized.
9. Abstracts must be structured into sections for research articles.
10. All articles should include the following sections (in order): Abstract; Background; Main text with appropriate subheadings – for research articles these should include Results, Discussion, Conclusions, Methods; List of abbreviations (if any); **Competing interests**; Acknowledgements; References; Figure legends (if any); Tables (if any), Additional data files (if any). Do not number the sections.  
For more information on these sections please refer to the *Instructions for preparation of manuscripts*.
11. **Please use sentence case for titles, headings and subheadings – no unnecessary initial capital letters.**
12. Figures must be supplied as separate files (see below).
13. **Do not use footnotes.**
14. **Do not include URLs in the main body of the text, put them in the reference section with the name of the website** (see reference style section in *Instructions for preparation of manuscripts*).

### **References**

15. References must be cited in the text using consecutive numbers in square brackets.
16. References to other articles from within the same Supplement as your article must be highlighted in red.
17. The reference list should be provided in the journal style, we will then be able to create links to the article's abstract on PubMed.

Example journal reference:

1. Chomczynski P, Sacchi N: **Single-step method of RNA isolation by acid guanidinium thiocyanate-phenol-chloroform extraction.** *Anal Biochem* 1987, **162**:156-159.

For further examples of the journal's reference style, please see our *Instructions for preparation of manuscripts*.

### **Figures**

18. **Each figure must be provided as a separate file, not embedded in the main manuscript file.**
19. If a figure consists of separate parts e.g. A and B, it is important that these parts are submitted in a single figure file and not as individual figure files.
20. The image file should not include the figure number, title or legend, these should be included in the manuscript file after the References. Sub-labelling (e.g. A, B, C) should be included in the figure file.
21. Figures must be closely cropped so that only a small white border appears around the image. For detailed advice about cropping figures, please see our *figure cropping page* at (<http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/fora/cropping>).
22. Please name figure files so it is easy to identify which manuscript they belong to. Figure filenames should indicate the figure number.

### **Tables**

23. Tables less than one side of A4 (210mm X 297mm) can appear within the main article; if authors wish them to do so they must be included at the end of the manuscript file, in the order that they are referred to in the text.
24. Tables must be divided into cells/fields, the borders of which must be visible with black lines in order to delineate the separate cell contents. Tables generated with tabbed text are not acceptable.
25. Tables should not include colour or shading.

### **Additional files**

26. These may consist of larger tables or other files, such as movies, PDF files, etc, that are not intended to appear within the body of the article.
27. If authors have uploaded additional files, they must include a separate section in the manuscript that lists: file name(s), file format(s), type(s) of data and short description(s) of data.
28. Additional files **must** have the appropriate three letter file extension for the programme you have used to generate them (e.g. .xls for Excel; .pdf for Acrobat files etc). Additional files must be cited in the text in the following way, eg: "see Additional file 1".