## SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING

- Writing for Conferences vs Journals
- Authorship
- Manuscript Submission
- Revision
- Reviewing

**Conference Abstracts**

- match the word count exactly (or be shorter)
- create an appetizer
- title & first sentence are key to
  - define the topic & catch interest (stay scientific) > read on
  - be concise, informative, not too broad
- explain exactly your QUESTION OF INTEREST
- give some methods on general experimental approach
- give an OUTLOOK on what can be expected!
- **Do not give away detailed data - counts as a publication!**

**Writing for Conferences**

- Biology: mostly Abstracts for admission to talks
  - rarely - Conference Proceedings
  - Special Issues (invited talks)
  - Meeting Reports
- pick a symposium
- decide for oral vs poster contribution
- write an appealing abstract – oral contributions are highly competitive
  - can expect exciting talk, give one clear message
- start preparation 1-2 weeks BEFORE submission
  - DEADLINE, the 1st version is often not the last!

**Authorship**

Conference Abstracts: only major authors
Journal Papers: everyone important
Order is very important!

In Biology:
1st author: person who performed experimental/theory work
Last author: person who provides scientific background, and financial background (salaries, laboratory)
Middle authors: minor contributions

- Don’t fight but discuss about the order
- What if two authors contributed equally to first or last authorship?
  - swap order in consecutive papers
  - if no other option: draw by lot
  - in any case add: “these two authors contributed equally”
Authorship

Why does it matter?
- Especially first and last authorships count for CV (depending on career stage)
- Corresponding authorship is important!

What are the duties?
- First and last author typically share the writing duty
- Corresponding author is the lead author in submission, revision etc...

Who is a "natural" corresponding author?
- first or last author
- Performance of multiple duties over long time
  - 6-12 months until review / revision is finished
  - proofs: answer within 24-48 hours
  - scientific correspondence: until many years after – scientific stability

Corresponding author responsibilities

BEFORE publication
- lead the publishing effort
- choose the Journal
- correspond with the Journal / Editor:
  - submit the manuscript
  - write the letter to editor
  - correspond in case of problems/questions
  - get agreement by all coauthors for the final version
  - get agreement of all "active" authors on cover letter
  - keep all authors informed of the status of the manuscript
  - send the submitted version to all coauthors

AFTER publication
- perform all correspondence: reply to emails, send pdfs
- distribute required lab protocols & antibodies/mice ...
  (in consultation with supervisor)

Before submission

• send the paper to all coauthors
get their „formal approval“ for submission
as you will submit in their name (corresponding author)

• once the content is clear, check again all formal requirements
given in the Instructions to the Authors
- get the new version from the Journal, they may have changed

Before submission

• produce final figures and tables
- often the quality of figures at the submission stages does not have to be very high

• produce final text:
  often: remove endnote field codes
  some journals want them active though, eg BMC

TRAP !!!
a new file is created that misses line and page numbers
  don’t forget to add them again!

• create a title page following the instructions
- often: short title / header
Before submission

- follow instructions for
  - format types of text (pdf, doc) and figures (jpg, tiff, eps)
  - file sizes
  - naming of files

- have all information on your coauthors at hand
  BEFORE submission
  - current address
  - email address
  - telephone number

- create a LOGIN
  & check for additional information on submission given after login

Cover Letter

- convince the editor that your work
  - is NOVEL compared to current state of the art
    (what are the advances in the field by it)
  - is INTERESTING and RELEVANT
  - FITS to the journal you submit it to

- be brief (no longer than ½ to ¾ of a page)
- be precise, don’t try to cheat or oversell your work
  (show that you are aware of other peoples work and the limits of your work)

Cover Letter

- suggest or exclude Reviewers
  - give details: specialist for XX
  - don’t get personal: due to potential conflict of interest
  - don’t forget full contact details

Presubmission

- some journals have a presubmission policy
  - this can be extremely helpful and saves a lot of time,
    use this option of you can!
    as you will only write the manuscript with the length and format criteria (figures, reference numbers, referenced abstract or not) for this journal, when you know that sending out to review is highly likely

- provide a clear abstract and cover letter
### Presubmission

- Have a nearly finished draft of your manuscript already finished
- Don’t presubmit months before you will be able to deliver the manuscript
- Some journals will ask you when you plan to submit – realize that this process often takes longer than anticipated! – don’t make unrealistic promises

### Submission

- Online
  - Create an account for submission early, it may take some time to become active
  - Have read Submission information recently
  - Have all information and final file versions prepared
  - Use a reliable computer / internet connection
  - You typically have to allow pop-ups!
  - Be patient, don’t submit in a hurry
  - Don’t forget to press the submit button
  - You should receive a confirmation email with the manuscript ID – keep it!

### Paper formatting

- Add page numbers
- Add line numbers – be nice to the reviewer
- Text in Times New Roman 12, figures and tables in Arial
- Line spacing: 1.5 or double spaced
- Fulfill exactly the guidelines given by the journal
- Be consistent throughout the text e.g. in use of
  - Abbreviations
  - Numbering systems
  - Fig. versus Figure.
  - American versus UK English (ize ise)
- Check where the Journal comes from

### Revision

- In 99% of the cases, your paper will not be accepted as is
deadline to deal with referees’ and editorial comments
  - Simultaneously
    - Revised manuscript
    - Response to comments
  - Systematically address all comments
  - Explain in the response letter how you have implemented the changes; give line numbers and copy the specific part of the changed manuscript, so that they don’t have to search it in the manuscript
### Revision

- if a reviewer asks a question, don’t just answer in your response letter. The reviewer has highlighted something that was confusing in the text, so change the manuscript accordingly.
- if a reviewer didn’t understand what you wanted to say, you have to explain it better. It is your responsibility to write a good text, not the reviewers’.
- if you don’t want to follow some suggestions or think a suggestion is wrong, explain why.
- don’t get personal if you disagree with the referees; try to suggest a compromise.
- use a neutral and professional tone.

### Acceptance

Inform your co-authors!

Next steps:
- final figures
- proofs
- copyright forms
- (reprint orders)
- manuscript or colour picture charges
- lay summary, press release
- cover pictures

### Revision

- ask for editorial help in cases where you feel the referee has been unfair.
- the editor has the final decision and may overrule the referee.
- don’t reply in the first flush, but take your time to respond (strictly keep time limits – otherwise you may have to completely resubmit).
- inform your co-authors of the process, involve them in the review process when needed.

### Proofs

- the copyeditor will have changed your text at many places.
- the text often reads better, but: the copyeditor is no specialist in your field, so some sentences may get a different or wrong meaning.
- check the proof sentence by sentence against your latest version – you should have kept a copy.
- check all cross references to figures, supplemental material, references - provide information on papers that have been in press and are now published.
- check corresponding author’s email address.
Proofs

- check all numbers given
  (statistics, sample sizes, values of measurements)
  - go back to your data and statistical analyses you performed;
  - always keep this information

- before you send it off, read the whole paper again for sense
  as if it was a published article you are reading for the first time

- proof reading is a tedious process,
  but changes cannot be made later!

- time pressure: 24-48 hours!

Cover pictures

can often be contributed;
  ! it takes a long time and some luck to make
  good photos (and to process them)
  – take this time alongside with your current work,
  rushed pictures often dont come out nicely.

  it is worth putting some effort into it,
  it will give your paper additional attention
  and it is nice to look at

Press work

write a non-specialist summary (for journal web page)
  - as if you would explain your work to your CS colleague
  - introduce your topic generally
  - give some link to daily life or humans if possible
  - try to explain only the single major finding
  - add a picture if possible - eye catcher
  - only provide low quality pictures for free to journalists
  - inform press office at institute – embargo policy !
  - keep your web page updated

Reviewing other peoples work

- Journals or grant giving agencies will contact you
  - when you have been corresponding author in the field

- Scientific duty
  - accept it if you can
  - benefit: critical investigation of other peoples work
    get to read related work early

- Be detailed
- Be thoughtful and honest,
  don’t destroy a competitors work if it is good
- Constructive criticism
- Mention to the editor if there are parts you can’t judge…
### Reviewing manuscripts

- Brief summary of the approach and results
- Major comments: important criticisms
- Minor comments: wording, small stuff

- Do not mention to the authors if you recommend acceptance or rejection
- Comment on this in the confidential comments to the editor
- Get help from your supervisor if needed
- The context is CONFIDENTIAL, don’t spread it to others (except the above case)
- Discussion: Reviewer blind – double blind? Should you reveal your identity?

### Homework

1. Correct abstract of your table neighbour
2. Choose a journal for your rotation project manuscript – which criteria do you apply?