



The Optical Society presents:

PUBLISHING YOUR MANUSCRIPT

AN AUTHOR'S GUIDE TO THE
OSA PUBLISHING PROCESS

osapublishing.org

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Optica

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OPTICAL PHYSICS

Advances
Optics and Photonics

INTRODUCTION

Communication of original research results may be one of the most important components of the scientific enterprise. For many researchers however, aspects of the publication process might be unfamiliar.

This brochure is intended to provide authors, particularly early career researchers, with an overview of this process. General information and best practices for article preparation, submission, and peer review are outlined in each section. This brochure is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all aspects of the publication process, but rather a useful starting point. For more information, please visit www.osapublishing.org/author.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES

OSA maintains guidelines for the publication process that conform to accepted ethical principles in publishing. Primary ethical considerations are listed below. Additionally, authors should read OSA's full Ethical Guidelines at www.osapublishing.org/ethics.

- Obtain necessary clearances from co-authors, institutions, and funding agencies prior to submission.
- Do not submit a paper to more than one journal simultaneously.
- Declare any conflicts of interest to the editor at submission.
- Give proper attribution to work that was previously published.
- Word by word copying of text from a published work is strongly discouraged, but if necessary, it must be treated as a quotation and given proper attribution.
- Obtain permission from authors and publishers to reproduce figures from previously published articles and give proper attribution.
- Do not fabricate data.
- Comply with internationally recognized principles for the use of animal and human subjects in research.

DEFINING AUTHORSHIP

Deciding who will be included as an author of the paper is very important and should be considered carefully. Generally, the order in which the authors appear in a paper reflects the importance of their contribution (i.e. most significant contribution first, next most significant contribution second, etc.), however practices vary. Consider these issues when defining authorship:

- Authorship reflects significant involvement in the paper
 - Generating basic physical ideas and/or discussion
 - Undertaking laboratory experiments
 - Performing detailed analysis or calculations
- List the affiliations of each author (e.g. department, university, town, country, postal code).
- Minor contributions, such as helpful discussions, suggestions, etc., can be noted in the Acknowledgements section of the paper.
- All authors should be informed of the submission of the manuscript and given a chance to comment.



Be sure to support the journals you publish in by serving as a peer reviewer; review two papers for every one submission.

SECTIONS OF AN ARTICLE

Listed below are the standard sections of a research article, along with suggestions for what each section should contain. A well-organized manuscript will be easier for reviewers to understand and will help them to appreciate its impact. Practices may differ by type of publication (e.g. letters). Always review the style guide of the journal you select prior to submitting your article.

Title

- Informative, accurate, and concise description of your manuscript of your main results

Abstract

- Problem and objectives
- Methodology used
- Findings and conclusions
- Research's effects on broader scientific issues
- *Note:* often journals have specific requirements for abstract length and creation

Introduction

- Problem to be addressed
- Background and literature review
- New developments and principal results
- Research purpose and method

Main Body of Paper

- Problem, assumptions, and limitations
- Theory and experiment including methods, analysis, derivation, and solution
- Results of the study/experiment
- Figures and multimedia

Discussion

- Discussion of results and how findings can be viewed in the larger context of the research field
- Comparison of results with other related work
- Significance of results

Conclusion

- Summary of principal information (no new material introduced)
- Statement of specific conclusions
- Relevant issues for future consideration

References

- References numbered in order of appearance
- Follow journal's style guide
- *Note:* reference management programs can be useful (e.g. EndNote & Bibtex)

Appendices

- Supplementary material for completeness which could detract from the logical presentation of work
- Material that could be valuable to specialists or those wishing to reproduce your results

Acknowledgments

- Technical assistance and useful comments (e.g. of colleagues, advisors, etc.)
- Financial support and other relevant disclosures



TIP: Give proper attention to the manuscript title, abstract, and keywords because this metadata helps make your paper discoverable by search engines.

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT—LANGUAGE REVIEW

Successfully articulating research findings can be a major challenge for authors, especially when English is not your native language. Articles are sometimes rejected with little review of the scientific merit because the editor or reviewer has difficulty understanding the article. This can be quite frustrating for all involved. OSA has launched a Language-Editing Service to help. Through this service, native English speakers certified to edit optics and photonics content will edit articles prior to journal submission at a discounted price to the author. For more information, visit <http://languageediting.osa.org>.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS

- OSA's policy is to obtain two reviews per paper; however, papers first undergo an initial quality/relevance assessment by the editor.
- The editor selects a topical/associate editor with expertise in the appropriate technical subfield of your manuscript, who then sends your manuscript to anonymous reviewers.
 - When submitting to an OSA journal, you will be requested to suggest three potential suitable reviewers.
 - The editor selects reviewers who are experts in the field of your manuscript.
- Reviewers are allowed time to complete their review and submit comments to the editor.
- Reviewers provide comments with the goal of creating a better manuscript. Reviewers may recommend that:
 - The manuscript is acceptable for publication.
 - The manuscript requires revision.
 - The manuscript is not acceptable for publication.
 - The manuscript is more appropriate for another journal.
- The editor makes a publication decision based on the reviews and sends a decision letter.
- If your manuscript needs modifications, you may resubmit after your revisions have been made (use a response letter to explain each change, point by point). The editor will then decide whether to accept the revised manuscript or refer it back to reviewers for further comment before making a final decision.
- If your manuscript is rejected:
 - Before submitting elsewhere, act on the reviewers' reports as this will lead to a better paper.
 - OSA editors strongly discourage resubmitting rejected manuscripts to other OSA journals, except by invitation from the editors.



BASIC ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA FOR RESEARCH JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Work is relevant to the scope of the journal.
- Results are significant to the field.
- Many journals discourage incremental work.
- Discussion and conclusions are supported by the data presented.
- Work is placed in proper context.
 - Related work is adequately referenced.
- Equations, figures, tables, and multimedia enhance the research presentation.
- Manuscript is well-written and logically organized.

JOURNAL SELECTION AND SUBMISSION

Selecting the appropriate journal for your submission is an important step in the publication process. When choosing where to submit your manuscript, consider these factors:

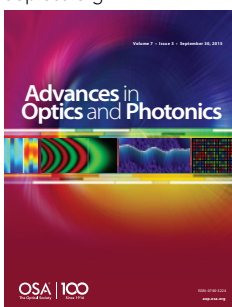
- Is your manuscript targeted towards a specialized audience, or would publication in a journal with a broad scope help you reach other sub-disciplines?
- Does your manuscript present fundamental results or are they more applied?
- Is your manuscript full-length or a letter? Does it review the field or present new results?
- Do you want your results to be freely available in an open-access journal?
- Is it important to communicate your results to the community quickly?
- Is the journal well-known and respected by the researchers in your field who will be interested in your results?
- Do you understand the journal's procedures for online submission?

OSA JOURNALS—UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

Visit each journal's website for complete journal scope descriptions.

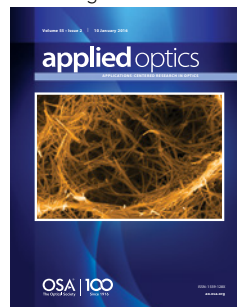
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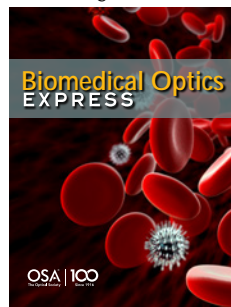
Comprehensive review articles and tutorials

ao.osa.org



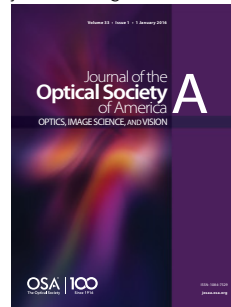
Applications-centered research

boe.osa.org



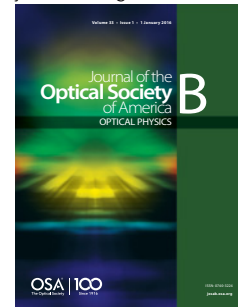
Open access, biomedical optics

josaa.osa.org



Classical optics, image science, and vision

josab.osa.org



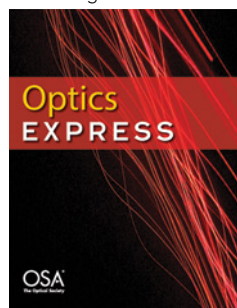
Interaction of light with matter

optica.osa.org



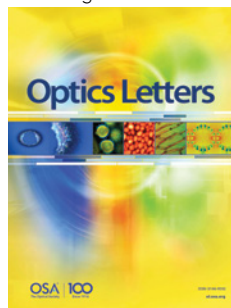
Open access, rapid dissemination of high-impact results in all areas of optics and photonics

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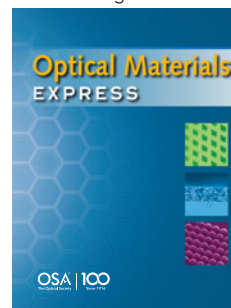
Open access, scientific innovations in all fields of optics

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Open access, advances in optical materials

osac.osa.org



Open access, inclusive format covering all areas of optics and photonics



TIP: Review the publisher's style guide for your selected journal to understand the manuscript preparation requirements.

ABOUT OSA

Founded in 1916, The Optical Society (OSA) is the leading professional organization for scientists, engineers, students, and entrepreneurs who fuel discoveries, shape real-life applications, and accelerate achievements in the science of light. Through world-renowned publications, meetings, and membership initiatives, OSA provides quality research, inspired interactions, and dedicated resources for its extensive global network of optics and photonics experts. For more information, visit osa.org.



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