

Help us help you

Save yourself money and time by following these 12 guidelines when working with us on hard-copy publications that we will edit and produce.

1. What to give us and when. Make sure any document you send to us for editing is the final draft and has been approved by all who need to see it before we start editing. Ditto when we return the edited file: make sure everyone who needs to approve it does so before we go into layout. Send us the entire manuscript – including artwork and photos – all at once rather than section by section or paper by paper.

2. How to provide it. Keep the MS Word file simple, using a minimum of formatting. The document should be single column, single line spaced, and in one font throughout (Times New Roman is fine). Use different point sizes to make the hierarchy of headings clear. Indicate the beginning and end of any boxed text, either in words ("Box starts here..... End of box") or by using a smaller point size. Tables should not have shading or complex lines: just make it clear which are column/row headings by using bold face. Don't use cross-links for references or the table of contents.

3. Figures in text. Please don't embed artwork in the Word file. Supply all figures as separate files, preferably in the program in which they were created. Name the artwork files with numbers rather than descriptions (e.g., "fig1.jpg" rather than "goats.jpg"). In the Word file, include a note indicating where the artwork is to be inserted. Make sure all figures – and tables too – are cited in the text and occur in numerical order.

4. Photos in text. To print properly, photos must have a minimum resolution of 300 dots per inch (dpi) at the final size. Ask scientists to set their digital cameras on 'high resolution' when taking pictures in the field or lab.

5. Contacts. Supply contact details for authors and others who need to be sent edited drafts or proofs. For multi-authored works, please nominate a coordinating author/editor on your side who will amalgamate corrections and who can be contacted to make decisions. Please also let us know of any travel commitments or other expected absences of those involved, so that we can adjust the schedule if necessary.

6. Deadlines. Let us know early on about any relevant deadlines, such as a meeting or launch event at which the product will be needed. Make sure deadlines are set realistically.

7. References. Ensure all references cited in the text are in the reference list and vice versa, including any that are cited as sources for tables or figures. Also ensure references are complete, including authors' and/or editors' surnames and initials, year of publication, full title, publisher and location of publisher, and page numbers if applicable.

8. Acronyms. Spell out all acronyms in full at the first instance in the text (in the original language) and use the acronym thereafter.

9. Permissions. Obtain permission to reproduce any artwork/text protected by copyright. Provide complete credits for all photos supplied.

10. Logos. Supply high-resolution (vector format) versions of any logos you want to appear on the cover or inside the publication. Logos downloaded from websites are normally of low resolution and cannot be used for printing. If partners' logos are to appear, please supply these early on so that we can check their quality. If logos must appear in a specific colour (Pantone), please let us know.

11. Checking edited text. When providing feedback on the edited manuscript, supply all corrections and answers to queries in one go. Allowing us to deal with a single set of corrections is more efficient than sending them to us in batches, and reduces the chance of corrections being accidentally missed.

12. Proofreading. Make all final changes on first page-proofs. Second proofs are provided simply for you to check that all the changes requested on the first proofs have been made correctly.