

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

The *South African Journal of Science* accepts articles from any source on the understanding that they are the original work of the authors named and that they are being offered only to the *South African Journal of Science*.

Various kinds and categories of article are welcome. (Please consult a recent issue of the journal for examples.) Research communications are of three kinds: Research Letters, Research Articles, and Review Articles. Research Letters are shorter reports (normally no longer than 2000 words) and should be up-to-date accounts of interesting and noteworthy scientific developments. Although these reports may be concerned with very particular advances, they should be of wider-than-specialist interest. Research Letters are given priority in terms of rapid publication after acceptance. Research Articles are longer papers (normally no more than 6000 words in length). Here the criteria of intelligibility and wider interest are strictly applied. Review Articles (up to 6000 words long) should be up-to-date surveys of important current developments in science. Preference is given to concise, reader-friendly submissions.

Submission of manuscripts for consideration

Editorial process: To read more about the editorial process, editorial criteria for publication, refereeing policy and how editors handle papers after submissions, visit the journal website.

Pre-submission enquiries: If you wish to enquire whether your submission might be suitable for consideration by the *South African Journal of Science*, please use our online enquiry service, or email the Editor at mic@sun.ac.za. All pre-submission enquiries must include a covering letter to the editor outlining the interest to a broad scientific readership, as well as an abstract.

Readability: As the journal has a multidisciplinary focus, authors are requested to write their papers and reports in a manner and style that is intelligible to specialists and non-specialists alike. Articles are judged by referees at the discretion of the Editor. Contributions should therefore be written clearly and simply so that they are accessible to readers in other disciplines and to readers for whom English is not a first language. **Note:** Please use UK spelling and not US spelling. If in doubt, consult the Oxford English Dictionary.

Presentation of content

Format of articles: One and a half line spacing, 8–10 pages (excluding cover page/s, figures and tables), or no longer than 6000 words in Palatino or Times New Roman font, 12 point size. If other non-Latin/foreign alphabets are used, a covering note should specify which Unicode and HTML fonts have been used in the electronic copy submission. All specialised fonts must be supplied by the author in TrueType or on PostScript Type 1 format and uploaded in Step 4 of the online submission process.

Format of compulsory cover letter: Provide a short title of 50 characters or less and indicate briefly the significance of the work being reported. State the full name(s) and title(s) of the author(s) with the position, affiliation and contact details (postal address, email, telephone and cell number) of each author. Please identify the author to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

For manuscripts with multiple authors, proof of approval to submit the manuscript to the journal, signed by all authors, should be attached and uploaded as a supplementary file – this document can be downloaded from the journal website.

Include a paragraph briefly summarising the nature of the contribution made by each of the authors listed, along the lines of the following:

Author contributions: J.K. was the project leader, L.M.N. and A.B. were responsible for experimental and project design. L.M.N. performed most of the experiments. P.R. made conceptual contributions and S.T., U.V. and C.D. performed some of the experiments. S.M. and V.C. prepared the samples and calculations were performed by C.S., J.K. and U.V. wrote the manuscript.

Authors are encouraged to provide the names and full contact details (including email) of two or three potential referees to evaluate the work (referees should not be people with whom the researcher has recently collaborated or published). Lastly, a list containing the number of pages of the manuscript and the number of tables, figures and/or other supplementary material should accompany the submission.

Title, summary and keywords page (page 2): The article's full title should contain a maximum of 95 characters. At least five keywords should be provided. Articles and letters should begin with a fully referenced summary paragraph of up to 250 words, aimed at readers in other disciplines. This paragraph should start with 2–3 sentences that provide an introduction to the field and the particular problem being investigated. This should be followed by a one-sentence statement of the authors' main findings (or conclusions, in the case of a review paper); and a further 2–3 sentences placing these findings/conclusions in a general context so that readers are made aware of what the implications of these findings are.

Ethical guidelines: Submissions involving research conducted on human or non-human vertebrates should meet the highest standards regarding both the ethical consideration given and reporting of the procedures followed. Full details are necessary so that a non-specialist reader can appreciate the need for the research undertaken.

All reported research involving humans or other animals should be approved prior to commencement of the study by an institutional ethics committee. The name of the approving body and a reference number (if provided) should be included in the Methods section of the manuscript.

In addition, all manuscripts describing research involving human subjects, tissue or data should also indicate that informed consent was obtained and that the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki (<http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/>) were adhered to. All manuscripts describing research involving non-human animals should also indicate that the ARRIVE guidelines (<http://www.plosbiology.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pbio.1000412>) for reporting *in vivo* animal experiments were adhered to. Proper reporting should include the number, sex and health status of the individuals used, as well as full details of anaesthesia and surgical procedures. The Declaration of Helsinki and the ARRIVE guidelines are also available from sajs@assaf.org.za.

Manuscripts failing to adhere to these instructions will not be considered for publication.

Acknowledgements: If, during your study, you received any significant help in conceiving, designing, or carrying out the work, or received materials from someone who did you a favour by supplying them, you must acknowledge their

assistance and the service or material provided. Authors always acknowledge **outside reviewers** of their drafts and any **sources of funding** that supported the research.

References: Begin the reference list on a separate page, with no more than 60 references. The *South African Journal of Science* uses the Vancouver referencing style, details of which can be downloaded from the journal website. **Note:** No other style will be permitted. Key points include:

- Your reference list should appear at the end of your assignment/report with the entries listed numerically and in the same order that they were cited in the text.
- It is very important that you use the right punctuation and that the order of details in the reference is also correct.
- No use of '&' between author names.
- Book and journal titles are not italicised or placed in quotation marks.
- Abbreviate page numbers to p. (e.g. p. 12–25).
- Only first words of the article title and words that normally begin with a capital letter are capitalised.
- Journal titles are abbreviated according to the official ISSN abbreviations.
- If a source has more than 6 authors, only the first 3 authors are listed; thereafter add an et al.
- If the journal has continuous page numbering, you may omit the month/issue number.

Please consult the journal website for more details on the application of this referencing style.

General specifications of manuscripts

Layout: Start each paragraph at the margin (no tabs to indent first line). Include a line space between paragraphs to separate.

Heading styles: First level headings: (Boldface, normal case, centred, on a separate line, 14pt). Second level headings: (Boldface, normal case, justified at left margin, on a separate line, 14pt). Third level headings: (Boldface, normal case, justified at left margin, on a separate line, 12pt)

Quotations in the text: Single quotation marks are used for all quotations; to highlight a quote within a quote, please use double quotation marks. If citations are longer than 30 words, please do not use single quotation marks; rather indent the citation and italicise it.

Tables and figures: In Step 4 of the online submission process, upload all tables, figures, images, and supplementary files. Tables should be saved and uploaded as separate Excel (.xls) files, no more than 10 figures and tables in total per article. Ensure all personal identifying information is removed from the supplementary files as per the provided instructions. All captions should be provided together on a separate page. Tables and figures should use numerical numbers. Please note that this is not required for articles which are not peer reviewed (book reviews, commentaries, profiles, obituaries, news and views). Figures and images should be saved and uploaded using high quality image formats: BMP, TIFF, EPS, JPEG (uncompressed); not GIF or compressed JPEG. Audio and video files should be saved and uploaded using the MPEG format (MP3 for audio and MPEG for video). At least two large originals of each figure in greyscale and colour at 600 dpi format should be submitted. Black and white line drawings should ideally be supplied in 1200 dpi (but no less than 800 dpi).

Acronyms: If a phrase with an established acronym or abbreviation is used, and appears more than five times in your article, please include the acronym/abbreviation in brackets after first mention of the phrase, then use the acronym/abbreviation only. Please note that you should not define acronyms or abbreviations in any of your headings. If either have been used in your abstract, you need to define them again on their first use within the main text.

Units: The use of units should conform to the SI convention and be abbreviated accordingly. Metric units and their international symbols are used throughout, as in the decimal point (not the decimal comma), and the 24-hour clock.

Spacing and punctuation: There should be one space (not two) between sentences; one space before unit terms (e.g. 5 kg, 5 cm, 5 mmol, 5 days, 5 °C); but no space before %. Thousands/millions are marked with a space, not a comma, from 10 000 (e.g. 10 000, 1 000 000 but 1000) Ranges are expressed with an extended hyphen, not with a short hyphen (e.g. 1990–2000).

Dates, italics: Dates are written in the following style: 12 July 1908. Phrases within the text that are not English (e.g. *inter alia*) should be italicised.

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Proofs: Authors can provide feedback on the publication process of their manuscript, at two stages:

1. Copy-editing queries in Word Document
2. Final PDF proof approval

These must be returned promptly to the Title Operations Coordinator within 48 hours to avoid delays in publication. Substantial changes made at PDF proof stage will be charged to the author.

Submissions and correspondence: All submissions must be made online at <http://www.sajs.co.za>, where authors can track the progress of their manuscripts online. Other enquiries regarding manuscripts should be addressed to: The Editor, *South African Journal of Science*, email: mic@sun.ac.za

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This set of guidelines and supplementary documentation is available on <http://www.sajs.co.za>