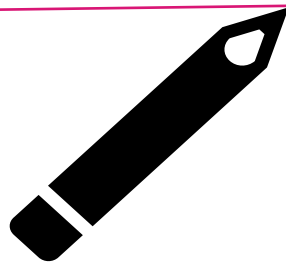


Publishing in Academia



**PROFESSORS
WITHOUT
BORDERS**

A Toolkit for Publishing in Academia

On the 31st of May, Prowibo held a webinar on Publishing in Academia as part of the Access in Higher Education Initiative. The webinar was composed of two panels; “How to Publish and Where” followed by “Tips and Tools for Academic Writing”. The panelists included affiliates of internationally renowned academic publishers as well as educators with experience from various professional fields. The following toolkit was assembled from the information provided by the panellists and can be referred to for some tips when looking to get work accepted for publication.

Panelists

Prof. Dries Velthuisen: Co-editor-in-chief of the African Security Review Journal.

Joanna Godfrey: Senior Commissioning Editor, History and Current Affairs at Yale University Press.

Helena Hurd: Editor for Global Development & African Studies at Routledge.

Sibabalwe Oscar Masinyan: Head of Researcher Services & Networks in Africa at the Taylor & Francis office in South Africa.

Prof. Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso: Co-Editor at Journal of Contemporary African Studies.

Rachel Warnick: Trustee for Professors Without Borders.

Dr. George E. Richards: Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at Edinboro University, USA.

Dos and Don'ts when submitting work for academic publishing

To a book publisher

In general, legitimate publishers will look for work that adheres to specific standards of international publishing, namely work that is original, relevant and carries an impact. Book publishers assess work based on a book proposal form and one or two sample chapters. The book proposal form is essentially the ‘packaging’ for your work.

Do

- State the original contribution that you want to make with your book – why is this something different/interesting?
- Hone the central pitch of your book – who needs to read this and why? Is it designed for the scholarly community, students, or a crossover between different audiences?
- Make sure you are submitting to the right publisher for your subject area, so do some research on the publisher beforehand – e.g. to ascertain what they are looking for and see if they have published on your topic before
- Proofread your work!

Don't

- Bury your argument far down into the proposal
- Repack somebody else's work
- Address your proposal to the wrong publisher

To an academic journal

Journals will look for a complete and finalised article for submission.

Do

- Find a relevant gap that is interesting and can be applied to the real world for solutions
- Focus on making your abstract interesting
- Write your paper tailored for a specific journal. In this case, it is important to know your readership and who you are talking to as well: are you talking to a specific group of people or across audiences?
- Proofread your work!

Don't

- Skip the instructions intended for authors – this contains specific style guides (e.g. on font and citation styles) that can make or break the acceptance of your submission

How to identify a legitimate publisher

1. Research the leading publishers in your field and comb through their websites
2. Talk to colleagues and ask who they have enjoyed working with
3. Can you easily identify and contact the publisher?
4. Look at what the publishers are offering and make sure the charges are transparent and clearly expressed

Be aware that a legitimate publisher does not have to be a big global publisher; it can be small or locally based while also adhering to international standards of publication. Visit this [link](#) for further tips on choosing the right journal or publisher for your research.

Tip: As a rule, publishers tend to prefer that you submit your work to one publisher at a time and wait for the process to run its course before submitting again. This is taken quite strictly for journal article submissions. With book publishing, it is more acceptable to approach different publishers, although, you should be mindful of etiquette and inform the publishers when you are submitting your work to more than one publisher.

Negotiating your contract

Contracts vary between different types of publishers and depending on what audience it is aimed for. Contracts are negotiated individually with your editor where you may have (limited) room for manoeuvre. However, academic publishing is generally tailored to a more limited audience, and because of this you may not have as much leeway when it comes to contract negotiation.

Some important things to keep in mind regarding rejection

You will likely encounter a lot of rejection, since top-tier academic journals have a very high rejection rate. For example, the top journals in Criminal Justice have a 93% rejection rate, meaning only 7% of applicants actually have their articles approved for publication. Do not let this discourage you, though! While rejection might be disheartening, take it as a learning experience, and if you receive any feedback in your rejection, use it to revise and resubmit

your work. Because of this, it can be advantageous to submit your articles to the most highly regarded journals first.

Tip: If you are just starting out in the field, search for frequently cited academics and study their styles of writing to help formulate your own style. You can also reach out to them!

Resources to improve your writing

As a universal tip: If you want to be a good writer – read more! The more you read, the more you expand your vocabulary, encounter different styles of writing to gain inspiration from, and the better academic you will become. Prowibo has also assembled a manual that can help hone your academic writing skills. These include courses on:

- [Writing your World: Finding yourself in the academic space](#)
- [Writing and Editing: Structure and Organization](#)
- [Academic Writing Essentials: University Writing Crash Course](#)
- [Effective Academic Writing: Write Papers that Gets Results](#)
- [Double Your Academic Writing Quality: Tips to get finished](#)
- [How to Write an Effective Research Paper](#)
- [Write a Killer Literature Review](#)

You can also take a look at Prowibo's list of free [Software](#) that can be useful for students – these include citation generators and open access academic journals and books. Additionally, visit our blog on [How to Structure Your Academic Paper](#).

Plagiarism

The [American Psychological Association](#) defines plagiarism as the act of presenting the words, ideas, or images of another as your own. All of the following acts are said to fall under plagiarism:

- Fully copying someone's work word for word or simply turning in someone else's work as your own
- The absence of quotation marks or incorrectly referencing the source of a quotation
- Rewording someone else's work or sentence structures and presenting it as your own
- When the bulk of your work is built on sentences and ideas copied from another source, regardless of whether credit is given or not
- Copying images from other websites into your own work or using/performing copyrighted music

Incorrect citations, e.g. misspelling or typos when providing references, or even providing in-text citation without it then appearing in the reference list, is not considered plagiarism so long as the error is minor and unintentional.

Self-Plagiarism

Refers to presenting your own, previously published work as original. It is perceived unethical, as it gives readers the impression that you are presenting an entire new contribution to research. There are exceptions to cases of self-plagiarism, for example when describing an original analytical approach, in which rewording might take away from the accuracy, while

continued self-referencing would be unwelcome. You can also contact your instructor or editor for further clarification and guidelines if you are unsure about self-plagiarism.

For more information on self-plagiarism and why/how to avoid it [visit this link](#).

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