



# International Journal of Forecasting

Guide for Authors

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# 1 Ethics in publishing

The International Journal of Forecasting adheres to a strict ethics policy to support the dissemination of high-quality peer-reviewed research in the science and practice of forecasting.

For an overview of the publishing ethics rules of Elsevier, publisher for the journal, we refer to

<https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/publishing-ethics>

## Authorship - Vancouver rules

Importantly, the International Journal of Forecasting aims for its authors and publications to follow the Vancouver rules (also referred to as Vancouver protocol) for authorship.

Attribution of authorship should generally be based on criteria a)-d) from the Vancouver rules and all persons that satisfy these criteria should be acknowledged as an author:

- a. Significant contributions to ideas underlying, or the design of, a work or in obtaining, analysing or interpreting data for the work, and
- b. Contributing significant intellectual content in formulating a work or critically revising it, and
- c. Final approval of the version to be published, and
- d. An agreement to be responsible for all aspects of the completed work by ensuring that questions relating to precision or integrity of any part of the work have been satisfactorily investigated and resolved.

The most important factor in describing authorship is for the author to have provided a significant (substantive) contribution to the research on which a publication is based. When establishing the criteria for this factor, the traditions of the individual scientific areas must be respected.

Of key importance, the following forms of attribution of authorship **conflict with the rules on responsible conduct of research**:

- Attribution of authorship solely based on assistance in obtaining funding, gathering data or general supervision of a research team
- Attributing authorship solely on the basis of an individual's non-scientific contributions (guest authorship, for example authorship attributed solely on the basis of having made research facilities available)

For a broader overview of the conditions and implications of authorship, we refer to this exhaustive code of authorship adopted by the University of Copenhagen in 2017:

[https://research.ku.dk/integrity/documents/code\\_for\\_authorship.pdf](https://research.ku.dk/integrity/documents/code_for_authorship.pdf)

## Declaration of interest

All authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. If there are no conflicts of interest, then please state this: 'Conflicts of interest: none'.

Authors are required to disclose papers published or under review in other journals that are based on similar methods or data. Please cite and explain how the current paper differs from these similar papers.

## 2 Submission

An author wishing to submit a paper to the International Journal of Forecasting (IJF) should submit via

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/ijf>

All correspondence, including notification of the Editor's decision and requests for revision, takes place electronically via this website. Our online submission system guides you stepwise through the process of entering your article details and uploading your files. The system converts your article files to a single PDF file used in the peer-review process. Editable files (e.g., Word, LaTeX) are required to typeset your article for final publication. All correspondence, including notification of the Editor's decision and requests for revision, is sent by e-mail.

Submission of a paper implies that it contains original work that has not previously been published and that has not been submitted for publication elsewhere. Publication in a limited distribution "Proceedings", or in a working paper series, does not disqualify a paper. Same goes for academic documents and theses. Evidence of prior peer review is helpful, such as a listing of the occasions on which this paper has been presented, and a list of colleagues who have reviewed the paper.

Authors are required to disclose papers published or under review in other journals that are based on similar methods or data. Please cite and explain how the current paper differs from these similar papers.

## 3 Submission checklist

You can use the following lists to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. It is of utmost importance that submissions be complete and of high quality - otherwise, they will simply not be considered and possibly induce delays in the publication of your research.

Ensure that the following items are reader for your submission:

1. One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:
  - E-mail address
  - Full postal address
2. Manuscript:
  - Include keywords
  - All figures (include relevant captions)
  - All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
  - Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided
  - Indicate clearly if color should be used for any figures in print
3. Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files (where applicable)
4. Supplemental files (where applicable).

Besides those items, be sure to go through the additional considerations

- Manuscript has been 'spell checked' and 'grammar checked'

- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa, while they are also correct and complete
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)
- A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
- Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed
- Referee suggestions and contact details provided, based on journal requirements.

Especially the first point is of the utmost importance: if the quality of the text and presentation of the manuscript submitted is low, it is simply not possible to insure that the editorial analysis and review process will yield constructive feedback, since some parts may be difficult to understand. It is therefore strongly advised to have manuscript proofread by native English speakers and/or professional proofreading/editorial services before submission.

For further information, visit our Support Center.

## 4 Double-blind review

In order to make the process as fair as possible, reviewing is “double-blind”, which means that both the reviewer and author identities are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa, throughout the review process. We believe that double-blinded review yields a fair and more balanced review process. For an example discussion on the topic we refer this PNAS article from 2017: <https://www.pnas.org/content/114/48/12708>

Consequently, the main manuscript should be prepared accordingly. Please make sure that the title page containing the authors details and the blinded manuscript are submitted as 2 separate files

**Preparation of the title page:** See Section 8

**Preparation of the blind manuscript:** See Section 9. And in addition to those instructions, consider the following guidelines:

- First remove names and affiliations under the title within the manuscript
- Use the third person to refer to work the Authors have previously undertaken, e.g. replace any phrases like “as we have shown before” with “... has been shown before [Anonymous, 2007]”
- Make sure figures do not contain any affiliation related identifier
- Do not eliminate essential self-references or other references but limit self-references only to papers that are relevant for those reviewing the submitted paper
- Cite papers published by the Author in the text as follows: ‘[Anonymous, 2007]’
- For blinding in the reference list: ‘[Anonymous 2007] Details omitted for double-blind reviewing.’
- Remove references to funding sources
- Do not include acknowledgments
- Remove any identifying information, including author names, from file names and ensure document properties are also anonymized.

## 5 Editorial screening and review process

Papers first go through editorial screening, by the Editor-in-Chief and/or by one of the senior Editors. This first step is there to insure that

- the manuscripts submitted fit within the *aims and scope of the journal*
- the *quality of the paper* (in terms of the quality of the text and presentation) are sufficient for the papers to be sent for review
- the *novelty and interest of the contribution* described in the manuscripts are sufficient for consideration by the journal.

Regarding this last point, it is important that manuscripts submitted to the International Journal of Forecasting being new knowledge and insight in the science and practice of forecasting, in a rigorous and methodologically sound manner. Simply applying a given modeling and forecasting approach (without justification) to a given dataset is not in itself sufficient for a manuscript to be considered by the journal. For those manuscripts that are not deemed adequate at the editorial screening stage, the authors will be notified of rejection, most likely within days of the original submission.

Past this editorial screening process, all papers are reviewed by at least two independent expert reviewers. Authors are invited to provide names, addresses, and fields of interest of 4 to 6 persons outside their own institution (and not direct collaborators) who are qualified to act as referees. We will try to use one of these as a referee.

## 6 Preparation software

### LaTeX

You are requested to use the template provided at

<http://forecasters.org/ijf/authors>

to prepare your article, and BibLaTeX or BibTeX to generate your bibliography. Our LaTeX site has detailed submission instructions, templates and other information.

### MS-Word

We also accept files in MS-Word format. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. In particular, do not use the word processor's options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns.

The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the Guide to Publishing with Elsevier). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork.

To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar check' functions of your word processor.

## 7 Language (usage and editing services)

Papers must be in English. American or British English is accepted, but not a mixture of these. Write in a concise manner. Referees will be asked to consider the value of the paper relative to its length. Papers with poor English may be sent back to the author for correction. Authors who feel their English language manuscript may require editing to eliminate possible grammatical or spelling errors and to conform to correct scientific English may wish to use the English Language Editing service available from Elsevier's WebShop.

## 8 Title page

A title page should be included as a separate file, not for review. It should include the following information:

- **Title.** Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible
- **Author names and affiliations.** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author
- **Corresponding author.** Clearly indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. Ensure that the e-mail address is given and that contact details are kept up to date by the corresponding author
- **Present/permanent address.** If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main, affiliation address. Superscript Arabic numerals are used for such footnotes
- **Abstract.** An abstract of 100-150 words is required. The abstract is one of the most important elements of your paper; many people will read only the abstract. Summarize the principal findings and how they were obtained. Explain why the findings are important for researchers and for practitioners. Be specific. Do not include references, jargon or mathematical notation
- **Keywords.** Keywords (at least five) are also required. A list of recommended keywords is available at <https://forecasters.org/ijf/keywords>. There is no point repeating words that are in the title

## 9 Main document

- The main paper should not contain the names of authors, or anything else that might identify them
- Use major and minor headings to aid readability. Headings should be short
- In the introduction, state the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results
- For empirical studies, the description of the method and the data should be sufficient to allow for replication

- Results should be stated clearly and concisely
- Detailed mathematical derivations should be placed in an appendix
- Follow internationally accepted rules and conventions regarding units: use the international system of units (SI). If other units are mentioned, please give their equivalent in SI
- Use simple notation. Our readership crosses many disciplines. Avoid unusual symbols if possible
- Please include math equations as editable text and not as images. Present simple formulae in line with normal text where possible and use the solidus (/) instead of a horizontal line for small fractional terms, e.g., X/Y. In principle, variables are to be presented in italics. Powers of e are often more conveniently denoted by exp. Number consecutively any equations that have to be displayed separately from the text (if referred to explicitly in the text)
- **Footnotes should be used sparingly.** Number them consecutively throughout the article. Many word processors can build footnotes into the text, and this feature may be used. Otherwise, please indicate the position of footnotes in the text and list the footnotes themselves separately at the end of the article. Do not include footnotes in the Reference list
- Tables should be simplified as much as possible. Round numbers to no more than three digits where possible. Align figures within columns on the decimal point
- Quotations should be kept to a minimum. Authors must obtain written permission from the publisher to use a quotation that exceeds 250 words

The number of Tables and Figures should be kept to a reasonable number to support the main point of the manuscript and the results. Possibly some of these Tables and Figures do not need to be in the main part of the article, and pushed to an Appendix instead.

Even though acknowledgements and funding source information should not included in the manuscript, for double-blind review, after the manuscript is accepted for publication, be ready to add:

- **Acknowledgements.** Collate acknowledgements in a separate section at the end of the article before the references and do not, therefore, include them on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. List here those individuals who provided help during the research (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.)
- **Funding sources.** List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements: Funding: This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa]. It is not necessary to include detailed descriptions on the program or type of grants and awards. When funding is from a block grant or other resources available to a university, college, or other research institution, submit the name of the institute or organization that provided the funding. If no funding has been provided for the research, please include the following sentence: This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

## 10 Figures and images

- Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your figures
- Embed the used fonts if the application provides that option
- Aim to use the following fonts in your illustrations: Arial, Courier, Times New Roman, Symbol, or use fonts that look similar



- Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text
- Use a logical naming convention for your figure files
- Size the illustrations close to the desired dimensions of the published version
- Submit each illustration as a separate file
- Ensure that each illustration has a caption. Supply captions separately, not attached to the figure. A caption should comprise a brief title (not on the figure itself) and a description of the graphic. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum but explain all symbols and abbreviations used
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- TIFF (or JPEG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones), keep to a minimum of 300 dpi.
- TIFF (or JPEG): Bitmapped (pure black & white pixels) line drawings, keep to a minimum of 1000 dpi.
- TIFF (or JPEG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale), keep to a minimum of 500 dpi.

Please do not:

- Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); these typically have a low number of pixels and limited set of colors;
- Supply files that are too low in resolution;
- Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

A detailed guide on electronic artwork is available. You are urged to visit this site; some excerpts from the detailed information are given here.

## 11 References

References should include only relevant sources; for example, those papers that proposed and developed the methods used, papers that clarify the methodology, and papers that add further

evidence. Do not include references simply to increase the length of your bibliography or to increase citation rates.

## Reference style

In the text, references should appear for papers as “Klein (1984)”, or for books as “Box & Jenkins (1970, p.245)”. At the end of the manuscript, the references should be listed alphabetically by surname of the first author. Use the following format:

- For articles: Armstrong, J.S. & Collopy, F. (1992). Error measures for generalizing about forecasting methods: Empirical comparisons. *International Journal of Forecasting*, 8, 69-80
- For books: Cook, T.D. & Campbell, D.T. (1979). *Quasi-Experimentation*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin
- For collective works: Kahneman, D. & Tversky, A. (1982). Intuitive prediction: Biases and corrective procedures. In: D. Kahneman et al. (Eds.) *Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 414-421
- For web sites: Hyndman, R.J. & Athanasopoulos, G. Forecasting: Principles and Practice <http://OTexts.org/fpp/>. Accessed on 4 July 2017
- For datasets: [dataset] Oguro, M, Imahiro, S, Saito, S, Nakashizuka, T. Mortality data for Japanese oak wilt disease and surrounding forest compositions, Mendeley Data, v1; 2015. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17632/xwj98nb39r.1>

Authors should ensure that there is a strict one-to-one correspondence between the authors' names (years) in the text and those in the reference list. In general, only published references should be cited. If unpublished, indicate how copies may be obtained. Please check all references against their original sources.

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As a minimum, the full URL should be given and the date when the reference was last accessed. Any further information, if known (DOI, author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given.

## Data references

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Please ensure that the words ‘this issue’ are added to any references in the list (and any citations in the text) to other articles in the same Special Issue.

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<http://open.mendeley.com/use-citation-style/international-journal-of-forecasting>

When preparing your manuscript, you will then be able to select this style using the Mendeley plug-ins for Microsoft Word or LibreOffice.

## 12 Online supplements

Online supplements for accepted articles are available on the ScienceDirect site.

Authors will normally be expected to submit a complete set of any data used in electronic form, or provide instructions for how to obtain them. The provision of code as well as data is also strongly encouraged. Upon acceptance, data and code will be posted as online supplements to the paper.

Appendixes containing additional results, or more detailed derivations, can also be made available as online supplements.

This journal enables you to show an interactive plot with your article by simply submitting a data file.

### Full instructions

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This journal has an embargo period of 24 months.

## **16 Proofs**

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