In this issue...

Boost your chances of publication by following journals' instructions to authors

– Laura L. Russell

One of the easiest ways to improve your chances of getting your article published is to ensure that the manuscript meets all the requirements stated in your target journal's author instructions. The author instructions, which are found on the journal website, specify how manuscripts are to be formatted and organized and what information needs to be included. Following these instructions is important for many reasons.

• Following instructions demonstrates to editors and reviewers that you are careful with details. This will give editors and reviewers the impression that you have been equally careful in the performance of your research and give you an advantage over other authors who have not been as meticulous.

• Following instructions allows editors and reviewers to focus on the scientific merit of your work rather than its form. At best, papers that do not conform to journal requirements are distracting. At worst, they may irritate editors and reviewers and even cause them to reject a paper outright.

• Following instructions can speed up the review and publication process. If your paper has been carefully prepared, the journal can send it out for review without delay. In contrast, a paper that does not meet the journal's specifications—such as those for file format and inclusion of copyright transfer agreements and patient consent documentation—may be returned unread.

- Following instructions shows editors and reviewers that you prepared the manuscript with their journal in mind. A paper formatted incorrectly may give the impression that you have previously submitted the paper to another journal.

Be especially careful to note journal specifications for page or word counts, as authors often overlook these requirements and may have their papers returned to them as a result. If you [submit your manuscript to the Research Medical Library](#) for editing, your editor will let you know what changes you need to make to meet the requirements of your target journal.

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EndNote, Mendeley, Zotero: which citation management software is best?

– Kate Krause

A good citation management tool is essential for writing. It helps you:

- Store and organize citations and articles
- Share citations with collaborators
- Insert references and bibliographies into documents
- Automatically format references in the style you need

Dozens of different citations management tools are available, but each has different capabilities and price structures. EndNote, Mendeley, and Zotero are three of the best options. How do you know which is right for you? We'll review their pros and cons to help you decide.

EndNote

EndNote is a desktop tool that can handle very large numbers of citations and organize them into groups. It offers the most journal styles to create references and bibliographies in the format you need. An online version is also available with fewer capabilities.

PROS

- EndNote is expensive, but MD Anderson provides:
    - ➢ A free desktop version on MD Anderson–issued computers
    - ➢ A free web-based version on any computer
    - ➢ A [significant discount](#) for EndNote on a personal computer

- With EndNote you can:
    - ➢ Easily export articles from PubMed and other databases
    - ➢ Import multiple article PDFs with one click
    - ➢ Highlight and add searchable notes to PDFs
    - ➢ Store as many PDFs as you need. There's no limit except for your computer's capacity.
    - ➢ Choose from 100 pre-installed journal styles and an additional [6,000 downloadable styles](#)
    - ➢ Change from one journal style to another in Word with the click of a button
    - ➢ Customize journal styles or create your own

- The Research Medical Library provides [support for EndNote](#) with:
    - ➢ Online and face-to-face classes on basic and advanced EndNote features
    - ➢ Instant answers to your questions via [chat, text, or email](#)
    - ➢ An online [help guide](#) answering the most common questions

CONS

- Not as easy to learn as other products
- MD Anderson's desk-top version can't be downloaded to your personal computer
- The web-based version has limited capabilities
- Using both the desk-top version and the web version simultaneously may be problematic
- Stores PDFs locally, not in the cloud
- If you leave MD Anderson, your new institution may not provide it
- Can't download webpage snapshots or create citation information about them
- Difficult to share with collaborators
- No mobile app

To download EndNote, [click here](#).

Mendeley

Mendeley is an online tool that makes it very easy to download, organize, and create citation information simply by downloading PDFs. For an example of a Mendeley collection, see the Research Medical Library's public collection of [articles on COVID-19](#).

PROS

- Free basic version with 2 GB of cloud storage (approximately 700 articles)
- Easy to learn
- Mobile app available
- With Mendeley you can:
  - ➢ Have online access
  - ➢ Sync and use across multiple devices
  - ➢ Easily import, organize, and annotate PDFs
  - ➢ Capture snapshots of webpages along with some citation information
  - ➢ Capture some citation information just by downloading PDFs
  - ➢ Customize journal styles
  - ➢ Generate citations and bibliographies in Word, LibreOffice, and LaTeX
  - ➢ Use social networking features to connect with other researchers in your field

CONS

- Only allows sharing with one group of up to 25 collaborators unless you make your collection publicly available
- A browser add-on must be installed to download citations for webpages
- The Research Medical Library is unable to provide support for Mendeley

To download Mendeley, click here.

Zotero

Zotero is an online tool that is easy to learn and allows for sharing with an unlimited number of collaborators.

PROS

- Free basic version with 300 MB of cloud storage
- Easy to learn
- With Zotero, you can:
  - ➢ Have online access
  - ➢ Easily share with an unlimited number of collaborators
  - ➢ Capture snapshots of webpages along with some citation information
  - ➢ Easily tag and annotate citations
  - ➢ Choose from 20 pre-installed journal styles and many more available for download
  - ➢ Generate citations and bibliographies in Word, LibreOffice, and Google Docs

CONS

- The free version offers only the most basic functions
- Offers only 300 MB of free cloud storage
- No mobile app
- The interface is slightly clunky and can slow down your computer
- Doesn't allow highlighting or annotating of PDFs
- Difficult to customize journal styles or change citation formats
- Occasionally doesn't download all citation information correctly
- The Research Medical Library is unable to provide support for Zotero

To download Zotero, [click here](#).

Building your data management plan

– Bryan Tutt

Data management is the process of storing, protecting, and preserving scientific data and making it accessible. A data management plan typically outlines who will be responsible for specific aspects of data stewardship and describes how data will be collected, documented, stored, secured, and backed up. Data management plans help ensure research transparency and reproducibility, and such plans are typically required for government-funded research.

Funding agency requirements

Since 2003, the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) has required investigators who apply for funding of $500,000 or more to submit a data management plan that includes a strategy for data sharing, i.e., making research data available to the public at large or to researchers who request it, or a statement explaining why data sharing is not possible. In an effort to further expand research openness, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy issued a [memorandum](#) in 2013 requiring data management plans for all federally funded research. Specifically, NIH and other funding agencies were directed to: "Ensure that all extramural researchers receiving Federal grants and contracts for scientific research and intramural researchers develop data management plans, as appropriate, describing how they will provide for long-term preservation of, and access to, scientific data in digital formats resulting from federally funded research, or explaining why long-term preservation and access cannot be justified."

Grants funded by entities other than the federal government may or may not require a formal data management plan, but they typically have requirements for the management, security, and sharing of data. For example, the Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) states in its 2019 [Policies and Procedures Guide](#), "To help advance science and improve public health, it is CPRIT's policy that the public has access to CPRIT-funded research, as well as needs assessment information and cancer control data collected pursuant to prevention program awards." Likewise, Stand Up to Cancer's 2020 [Program Guidelines](#) for its SU2C Health Equity Breakthrough Team Research Grant proposals require a "clear commitment by the Team

that all data resulting from their work will be available to the scientific community at large at the earliest opportunity, as allowed under patient privacy and other applicable laws."

Benefits and resources

Even if your funding agency does not require a formal data management plan, developing such a plan early in the planning process has several benefits. Your plan helps ensure that you keep patients' protected health information private and that you comply with the policies of the institution as well as those of the funding agency. When you are ready to publish your findings, your data management plan can help you organize and preserve data so that it is accessible for review or data sharing, which is required by many scientific journals.

Resources to help you prepare your data management plan include:

- The Research Medical Library's Data Management site offers information and answers to questions about sharing and citing data, storing data, and data management plans. One-on-one assistance is available at (713) 792-2282 or RML-Help@mdanderson.org.

- MD Anderson's Data Governance Program provides guidance and tools to help ensure data quality, security, and accessibility and can be reached at DataGovernance@mdanderson.org.

- The journal article "A beginner's guide to avoiding Protected Health Information (PHI) issues in clinical research – With how-to's in REDCap Data Management Software" (Bowman MA & Maxwell RA, *J Biomed Inform*. 2018;85:49-55. doi: 10.1016/j.jbi.2018.07.008) includes examples of data management plans and provides tips on protecting PHI in clinical research.

- The DMPTool is an application that helps you build your data management plan and includes data management plan templates for major funding agencies.

- Coming soon: MD Anderson's institutional repository. To help faculty and staff with their data management needs, the Research Medical Library is developing an institutional repository whose many features will include options for both secure data storage and data sharing.

Search for funding opportunities with Pivot

– Amy Ninetto

Have a research project in mind, but not sure how to fund it? The Research Medical Library provides free access to Pivot, the most comprehensive tool for identifying grant opportunities. Pivot indexes thousands of grants from public and private funds across a wide range of fields: from basic cancer biology and clinical trials to education and social work.

From Pivot's start page, you can get an overview of the amount of funding available in various broad research areas. To get started, select the "Funding" tab and enter your search terms. A basic keyword search can narrow the results to your specific interests. Pivot returns a list of

grants with detailed descriptions, contact information for the sponsors, grant amounts, deadlines, and eligibility requirements. With more refined searches, you can home in on grants that are directly relevant to your professional stage and your work.

Pivot allows you to filter results by sponsor type (e.g., government agency, professional society, nonprofit foundation), grant type (e.g., research, training, postdoctoral fellowship, prize or award), and investigator career stage. Pivot can even find MD Anderson internal funding opportunities if they have been added via the Research Medical Library.

One of Pivot's most useful features is the ability to set up alerts to be notified of new grants and upcoming deadlines relevant to your work. These alerts can be customized to be as broad or specific as you like. Departments and research groups can also curate lists of grants that are of interest to their members and set up periodic alerts to be sent to the whole group. For individuals, Pivot can create a researcher profile and automatically suggest funding opportunities on the basis of your previous publications.

For help getting started with Pivot, designing searches, and setting up alerts, contact the Research Medical Library at RML-Help@mdanderson.org.

Expanding use of digital object identifiers in scientific publishing

– Stephanie Deming

The digital object identifier (DOI) system, introduced in the late 1990s, is a system by which unique and permanent digital identifiers are assigned to objects on the internet (1). A user can find an object by entering its DOI in a search engine or in the search box on the International DOI Foundation website (https://doi.org/).

The DOI system emerged from the world of publishing, and the first application of the DOI system was Crossref, introduced by publishers in 2000 (2). Crossref assigns DOIs to the electronic versions of journal articles available on publishers' websites. These DOIs can be styled as URLs and included in reference lists of published articles; readers can click such URLs to instantly go to a cited source.

Although you might be most familiar with the assignment of DOIs to full published articles, DOIs can also be assigned to other objects, including protocols (e.g., the ones published in protocols.io), preprints (e.g., those posted on bioRxiv), data sets (3), parts of articles (e.g., PLoS journals assign DOIs to individual figures) (4), and peer reviews. The expanding use of DOIs was the focus of a session at the 2020 Council of Science Editors annual meeting.

Assigning DOIs to objects makes finding and citing these objects easier. Expect to see increasing use of DOIs in the scientific publishing ecosystem.

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Editing services

Scientific Publications, Research Medical Library, is here to help MD Anderson faculty and trainees get published and get funded. We provide a wide range of editorial, educational, and publishing services, free of charge, to the MD Anderson community, including

- editing grant proposals and research articles;

- editing book chapters (as workload permits);

- providing one-on-one consultations with authors at any stage of the writing process;

- teaching workshops and giving lectures on writing research articles and grant proposals;

- teaching scientific English for non-native speakers;

- providing writing advice and support, including online writing advice.

For more information about our editing services and how to use them, please visit Our Editing Services, or contact us at scientificpublications@mdanderson.org.

Upcoming events for authors

Please see the Research Medical Library Classes & Events Calendar website for more information on our educational courses.

Webinars Presented by Scientific Publications. Scientific Publications continues to host a series of webinars on various topics. Webinars previously presented and recorded by Scientific Publications are available here. Links to upcoming webinars will be posted as they become available on the Research Medical Library website.

Tool Time Tuesday with the Research Medical Library. In this WebEx series, our librarians, editors, or special guests from around the institution discuss at least three tools, resources, or services available for MD Anderson faculty, staff, and students. These discussions include technology tools, apps, and more to help you in your work.

Presentations run every Tuesday from 10:00 to 10:30 am and are currently scheduled through August 25. Click here to register and to receive the handout and a link to the archived recording after the event.

Writing and Publishing Scientific Articles (WAPSA). WAPSA is a structured, practical, in-depth writing-education program for postdoctoral fellows and clinical trainees at MD Anderson taught by Scientific Publications, Research Medical Library. This workshop, currently being offered via Zoom online, provides an excellent opportunity for advancing participants' skills in writing and publishing research articles while developing their in-progress manuscripts under the guidance of scientific editors.

Locations and times to be announced. Registration is required through the Research Medical Library. Details: John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.

Online Courses in Scientific English for Non-Native Speakers of English. The Research Medical Library offers two completely online courses for non-native speakers of English on the Study@MDAnderson platform. Both courses are **self-study** and **self-paced**, but students have access to an instructor (Dr. Mark Picus) for support and questions. For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

Online Conversation Group. This informal conversation group, offered via WebEx online, provides an informal atmosphere for non-native speakers of English to practice their conversational abilities, learn more about American culture, and meet new friends. The group meets at 2:00 pm every Monday and Friday. Registration is open to all on the [Library Calendar](#).

INTEREST Program. The INTEREST program is a series of mock study sections that leverage the expertise of experienced MD Anderson faculty in writing fundable research proposals. It involves a rigorous review of extramural grant proposals to improve, critique, and offer experience in the grant review process, from the applicant's and the reviewer's points of view. For more information, contact INTEREST@mdanderson.org.

Important upcoming dates:

August 21, 2020 – Deadline to submit your [INTEREST Intent Form](#) and a copy of your grant abstract

September 1, 2020 – Full application submission deadline

September 15, 2020 – Online INTEREST Review Meeting