

P&P Supplements: a guide for guest editors

The ambition for P&P supplements is for them -

- to make a significant intervention in an important field of historical study: that is, for them to be useful to think with for a wide variety of different historians in different fields (as is intended for the journal);
- to have a coherent agenda, conceptual framework and set of questions, pursued consistently across all contributions: though the conclusions of individual contributors do not necessarily have to be aligned or even mutually compatible, they do have to be talking about the same thing;
- to gather contributions that are individually of a very high standard as well as fulfilling a function as part of the wider whole.

This is obviously a lot to ask, and we do not expect an initial proposal to have everything lined up ready-made from the start to match these ambitions: what we are looking for in the initial stages is the potential for it to do so. It typically takes a long time to develop a supplement, and fairly intense back-and-forth exchanges between the supplement series editor, guest editors, and contributors are a normal part of the process. Members of the publications committee, and individual members of the board of P&P according to expertise, are also typically involved in an advisory capacity. Editing a supplement is, therefore, a significant job, and nearly always takes longer than guest editors had originally planned on. This is worth bearing in mind when starting to put together a proposal.

Putting together an effective proposal

The initial proposal should be around 10-15 pages (or as long as it needs to be), and should include:

- a draft table of contents;
- individual abstracts for each of the contributions;
- the expected date of the full draft submission;
- a rough projected word count;
- a relatively detailed outline of the intellectual project for the volume, and how each contribution fits into that project.

For this last section, it is important to show the rationale behind the selection of topics: why each article is there, and what function it fulfils as part of the whole. In that sense, it is best to think of this section of the proposal as the kernel of the introduction the guest editor(s) will eventually write. Introductions to supplements are meant to be substantial think pieces in their own right, and to set out an agenda that is then fulfilled in the articles. Introductions to supplements are made available freely through the P&P website, and so function as an important showcase for the supplement (though the introduction need not necessarily include a summary of each piece). Ideally, introductions should have the potential to become an important go-to reference-point article for the general subject treated in the supplement.

Word count and number of chapters are very much negotiable, though exceptionally large-scale proposals will almost certainly require pruning. The ballpark in previous issues has been between 10 and 15 articles of 8,000 to 10,000 words each.

The submission and review process

Please email your initial proposal to the P&P supplements editor, copying in <editors@pastandpresent.org.uk> . Once a proposal has been received, it is circulated to the P&P publications committee, and sometimes also to other members of the P&P board according to expertise, in order to gather views. At this stage we aim to give a relatively swift initial answer about whether we are interested in reading a full draft, as well as (if we are interested) an initial steer about what changes need to be made. If guest editors are happy to proceed on the basis of this initial steer, we then wait for the first draft.

The first draft submission should be emailed to the P&P supplements editor (copying in <editors@pastandpresent.org.uk>). Contributions are expected to have already undergone an initial round of editing by the guest editor and revision by authors. The submission should include all contributions, including the introduction, ideally submitted in Word format, as separate files, with the name of the author in the file name preceded by a number to make it easy to see what order they are meant to be read in (e.g. 01 Holmes and Standen, etc). For referencing guidelines etc, please refer to the style guide for the journal, downloadable here: https://academic.oup.com/past/pages/General_Instructions .

We then send the first draft for review to three readers: two internal to the board, and one external subject specialist. If the readers' reports are positive, the supplements editor and guest editors discuss which changes need to be made in light of the reports, and which are optional. Guest editors and contributors then proceed to make revisions. When the second draft is submitted, it is sent to one reader for further comment, after which further revisions may still need to be made before the final draft can be accepted.

Since we reserve the possibility of dropping contributions at any stage of the process if contributors are unable or unwilling to make the changes required, no contract can be issued to guest editors or contributors until the final manuscript is delivered. That said, we certainly do not want to waste anyone's time, and we aim to give the guest editor(s) a final, albeit informal, commitment after receiving a response to the reports on the first complete draft.

Timeline to publication

Supplements are sent out at the same time as one of the four normal issues of the journal: in February, May, August, and November. Deadlines therefore vary according to which issue is being planned for, although the following timeline may help editors to form a sense of which year of publication to aim for in their proposal.

Counting from the submission of the first draft, it is sensible to allow the following lengths of time as a minimum for each stage of the process:

- from submission of the first draft to receipt of readers' reports: 3 months
- first round of revisions: 3-4 months
- from submission of the second draft to receipt of reader's report: 1 month
- second round of revisions: 1-2 months
- clearance read: 1 month
- copy-editing: 2 months
- type-setting to first round of proofs: 6 weeks
- first round of proofs to online publication (on the first of the month of the print issue): 6 weeks (though please allow longer if the manuscript is especially complex).

Guest editors should therefore allow 14-16 months to ensure a smooth process from first draft submission to publication. It is also worth factoring in likely delays: the majority of these tend to occur during the revision stages, as individual contributors rarely all meet the same deadline.

What we can do to help

Guest editors may request advice at any time from the supplements editor, and solicit from P&P board members – through the supplements editor – more comment and feedback on particular pieces (especially, but not limited to, the introduction).

Guest editors may wish to take charge of all communication with contributors, and they are of course free to do so if that is what they prefer. Some of these communications, however, may be more delicate than others, for instance when it comes to dropping particular pieces, or requesting especially demanding revisions. In such cases, and in order to avoid guest editors ending up between a rock and hard place, we are happy, at the guest editors' request, to correspond with contributors ourselves in order to lay out the reasons for the decision.

A note on images and permissions

It is the guest editor's responsibility to provide high-definition images of any illustrations. Please note the relatively small page-size of *Past and Present* (max. 6.75 x 4 inches) when considering possible illustrations for inclusion. Images submitted in colour will be reproduced in colour online, and in black and white in the print journal. Colour images may exceptionally be included in the print version (e.g. if necessary for legibility), but the guest editor will be responsible for the extra cost.

It is also the guest editor's responsibility to make sure that any permissions to reproduce copyright material are secured for print and online publication in perpetuity. Evidence in writing that such permissions have been secured from the rights-holder must be made available to the editorial office. Further information on permissions can be found at

https://academic.oup.com/journals/pages/access_purchase/rights_and_permissions

Guest editors are responsible for meeting all costs involved in securing images and copyright permissions (though we may, in exceptional circumstances, be able to provide some assistance).

