

Project Management Journal

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Submission guidelines



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Please read the guidelines in full before submitting your manuscript. Manuscripts not conforming to these guidelines may be returned.

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Author Guidelines

Papers published in *Project Management Journal*[®] must relate to research and provide new contributions to project management theory and/or project management practices. Each paper should contain clear research questions, which the author should be able to state in one paragraph. Authors are expected to describe the knowledge and foundations underlying their research approach, and theoretical concepts that give meaning to data or to proposed decision support methods, and to demonstrate how they are relevant to organizations in the realm of project management. Papers that speculate beyond current thinking are more desirable than papers that use tried-and-true methods to study routine problems, or papers motivated strictly by data collection and analysis.

Authors should strive to be original, insightful, and theoretically bold; demonstration of a significant value-added advance to the understanding of an issue or topic is crucial to acceptance for publication. Multiple-study papers that feature diverse methodological approaches may be more likely to make such contributions.

Project Management Journal[®] considers all papers in the project, program, or portfolio management field and its governance, or in the fields of project-oriented organizations and networks. We do not attach a greater significance to one methodological style over another.

Authors should make contributions of specialized research to project, program, and portfolio management and its governance theory and to the theory of the project-oriented organization or project network. They should define any specialized terms and analytic techniques used. Papers should be well argued and well written, avoiding jargon at all times.

The *Project Management Journal*[®] is not a platform to uncritically promote or denigrate procedures, credentials, or certifications of standard-setting bodies or professional associations. Papers should be balanced, objective, and critical assessments that contribute to the project management field or provide a constructive review of the methodology. Papers that are descriptive or commercial in nature (e.g., those that endorse or disparage specific products or services) will not be published.

We encourage papers derived from dissertations and conference proceedings. However, care should be taken to submit a significantly advanced version. The work embodied in the preparation of a dissertation often represents innovative thought on the management of projects, but expectations are that dissertations will be significantly different in form from the submitted paper due to different standards of reporting between papers and dissertations. Conference proceedings should advance substantially from the original based on modifications, improvements, or further evidence. For guidance, visit <https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/prior-publication>.

For author resources provided by the editors', click [here](#).

Manuscript Organization

For guidance, visit <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/prior-publication>.

Manuscripts should include the following in the order listed:

- *Title page*. Include only the title of the manuscript (do not include authors' names).
- *Abstract*. Outline the purpose, scope, and conclusions of the manuscript in 100 words or less.
- *Keywords*. Select 4 to 8 keywords.
- *Headings*. Use 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-level, unnumbered and unlettered headings.
- *Text*. To permit objective reviews by two or more referees, the abstract, first page, and the rest of the text should not reveal the authors and/or affiliations.
- *References*. Present in a proper, consistent format (APA style required on final version).
- *Illustrations and tables*. These should be titled, numbered (in Arabic numerals), and placed appropriately within the body of the text.
- *Acknowledgments*. Acknowledgments should recognize prior publication as a conference proceeding, indicate grant or other support, and state significant contributions from

non-authors. If your acknowledgements would potentially compromise author anonymity, such as including the name of the conference, please use the “Acknowledgements Not for Review” file type. If your paper is accepted, you will need to update the final version with your acknowledgements.

Manuscript Format/Style

Make sure papers adhere to the theme or question to be answered. Write in clear and concise English (American spelling), using active rather than passive voice. Manuscripts should not exceed 12,000 words, inclusive of figures, tables, appendices (if applicable), and references. Count each figure as 300 words.

To be considered, all manuscripts submitted must meet the following guidelines:

- Use a 12-point Times or Times New Roman font for the text. You may use bold and italics in the text, but do not underline. Use 10-point Helvetica or Arial font for text within tables and graphics.
- Papers should be double-spaced and in a single-column format.
- All margins should be 1 inch.
- Use 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-level headings only. Do not number or letter headings.
- To permit objective double-blind reviews, do not reveal the author(s) or their affiliation(s) in the manuscript (including the title page). When authors cite their own work, they should refer to themselves in the third person.
- Papers must be submitted electronically in a recent Microsoft Word format (.docx).

Graphics and Illustrations

Be sure to number tables and figures with Arabic numerals, include titles for tables and captions for figures, and insert them in their preferred location within the body of the text. In addition, provide artwork in 300-dpi jpg, tiff, or PowerPoint formats.

Tips for creating graphics:

- Provide only the essential details (too much information is difficult to display).
- All figures, graphics, and illustrations must be in grayscale.
- Helvetica or Arial font should be used for text within the graphics and tables.
- Figure numbers and titles are centered and appear in boldface type below the figure.
- Table numbers and titles are centered and appear in boldface type above the table.
- Figures and tables should be cited and numbered consecutively in the order in which they appear in the text.

Tables with lines separating columns and rows are acceptable.

If necessary, use an appendix to provide detailed information.

References, Footnotes, Tables, Figures, and Appendices

Always acknowledge the work of others used to advance a point in your paper. The first submission has no required format for citations and references as long as they are evident and consistently represented. All revised submissions, including the final version, must follow American Psychological Association ([APA](#)) guidelines or will be returned to the author(s) for formatting. For questions regarding format, refer to the current edition (the sixth edition is the most current) of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

Minimal guidelines: Identify text citations with the author name and publication date in parentheses (e.g., Cleland & King, 1983), and listed in alphabetical order as references at the end of the manuscript. Include page numbers for all quotations (page numbers should be separated by an en dash, not a hyphen). Example formats are below:

Baker, B. (1993). The project manager and the media: Some lessons from the stealth bomber program. *Project Management Journal*, 24(3), 11–14.

Cleland, D. I., & King, W. R. (1983). *Systems analysis and project management*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Hartley, J. R. (1992). *Concurrent engineering*. Cambridge, MA: Productivity Press.

Submission Instructions

A submitted manuscript must not be under review for publication in any other outlet including conference proceedings. Submission of an article implies the work has not been previously published. For more information on the ethics of publishing, see <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/ethics-responsibility>.

Submit manuscripts electronically in a Microsoft Word document or (.docx) using *Project Management Journal's* [Manuscript Central](#).

Manuscript Central is a web-based peer-review system (a product of ScholarOne). Authors will be asked to create an account (unless one already exists) prior to submitting a paper. Step-by-step instructions are provided online. The progress of the review process can be obtained via Manuscript Central. Other questions regarding publication may be sent to the Managing Editor at kim.shinners@pmi.org.

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Project Management Journal[®] subjects all submissions to the plagiarism detection software iThenticate[®]. Any paper with a significant level of plagiarism from any source will be desk rejected. It is the practice of some universities to put examined theses online, and iThenticate will also pick these up in a web search and report papers derived from the online thesis as an instance of plagiarism if they are sufficiently similar. Please take care to differentiate the submitted paper from the thesis.

Authors should familiarize themselves with [Sage's Accessibility Guidelines](#) to ensure their manuscripts meet recognized accessibility standards.

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Cover Letter

A cover letter is required only to declare potential conflicts of interest or potential threats to the originality of the manuscript. It is not necessary to include a description or summary of the paper. At the time of submission, a cover letter should declare when:

- A conflict-of-interest exists with a member of the editorial board
- The data appeared in other published papers
- A prior version appeared in conference proceedings (in print or online).
- The paper is a derivative of a longer work, such as a doctoral dissertation
- One or more authors have financial relationships with organizations that could potentially bias their work
- Upon resubmission, the authorship list is changed through the order, addition, or removal

Review Process

The reputation of *Project Management Journal*[®] and contribution to the field depend upon our attracting and publishing the best research. *Project Management Journal*[®] competes for the best available manuscripts by having the largest and widest readership among all project management journals. Equally important, we also compete by offering high-quality feedback. The timeliness and quality of our review process reflect well upon all who participate in it.

Each manuscript is first reviewed by the Managing Editor for compliance with submission requirements. A manuscript failing the requirements review may be resubmitted when brought into compliance. Manuscripts passing this stage will be reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief and may be desk-rejected for four primary reasons: (1) it has a high similarity index or another misconduct issue, (2) it does not fit the mission and the scope of the journal, (3) it has major flaws, and (4) it does not provide sufficient contribution to knowledge and theory in managing projects. The manuscript is then passed on to a department editor for more specialized content review. Should the editor pass the manuscript, it is then sent to a minimum of two reviewers.

Developmental Reviews

It is important that authors learn from the reviews and feel that they have benefited from the *Project Management Journal*[®] review process. Therefore, reviewers will strive to:

- **Be Specific.** Reviewers point out the positives about the paper, possible problems, and how problems can be addressed. Specific comments, reactions, and suggestions are required.
- **Be Constructive.** In the event that problems cannot be fixed in the current study, suggestions are made to authors on how to improve the paper on their next attempt. Reviewers should document whether the issue is with the underlying research, the research conclusions, or the way the information is communicated.
- **Identify Strengths.** One of the most important tasks for a reviewer is to identify the portions of the paper that can be improved in a revision. Reviewers strive to help an author shape a mediocre manuscript into an insightful contribution.

- **Consider the Contribution of the Manuscript.** Technical correctness and theoretical coherence are obvious issues for a review, but the overall contribution that the paper offers is also considered. Papers will not be accepted if the contribution it offers is not meaningful or interesting. Reviewers will address uncertainties in the paper by checking facts; therefore, review comments will be as accurate as possible.
- **Consider Submissions from Authors Whose Native Language Is Not English.** Reviewers will distinguish between the quality of the writing, which may be fixable, and the quality of the ideas that the writing conveys.

Respectful Reviews

PMI recognizes that authors have spent a great deal of time and effort on every submission. Reviewers will always treat an author's work with respect, even when the reviewer disagrees or finds fault with what has been written.

Double-Blind Reviews

Submissions are subjected to a double-blind review, whereby the identity of the reviewer and the author are not disclosed. In the event that a reviewer is unable to be objective about a specific manuscript, another reviewer will be selected for this manuscript. Reviewers will not discuss a manuscript with anyone (other than the *Project Management Journal*[®] editor) at any time.

Pointers on the Substance of the Review TheoryAuthorship

- Does the manuscript has a well-articulated theory that provides conceptual insight and guides hypotheses formulation?
- Does the study inform or improve our understanding of that theory?
- Are the concepts clearly defined?
- Does the manuscript critically engage with the classic and recent literature in the field and provide proper credit to existing work on the topic? Has the author offered critical references? Does the paper contain an appropriate number of references?
- Do the sample, measures, methods, observations, procedures, and statistical analyses ensure internal and external validity? Are the statistical procedures used correctly and appropriately? Are the author's major assumptions reasonable?
- Does the empirical study provide a good test of the theory and hypotheses? Is the method chosen appropriately for the research question and theory?
- Does the paper make a new and meaningful contribution to the project management literature in terms of theory, empirical knowledge, and management practice?
- Has the author given proper citation to the original source of all information given in the work or in others' work that was cited?



Revisions

Authors receiving a “revise and resubmit with major revisions” will have three months to complete the revision. Authors receiving a “revise and resubmit with minor revisions” will have one month to complete the revision. Authors receiving a “conditional acceptance” will have two weeks to complete the revision. An extension may be requested of the Managing Editor or Editor-in-Chief. With any revision, authors must address in a separate response how they resolved the issues raised by the reviewers and editor.

Accepted Manuscripts

Upon acceptance of a manuscript, *Project Management Journal*® will provide instructions on sending biographical details for each author, completing a copyright agreement, proofing a final version, tracking a paper through the production process, and posting of an early view online (to include the DOI).

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Authors using their own previously published or submitted material as the basis for a new submission are required to cite the previous work and explain how the new submission differs from the previously published work. Any potential data overlap with previous studies should be noted and described in the submission letter to the editor. The editorial team makes software-supported checks for identifying plagiarism, including self-plagiarism.

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