

Proposal for a theme issue

Continuing its long history of influential scientific publishing, *Philosophical Transactions B* publishes high quality theme issues on topics of current importance and general interest within the life sciences, guest-edited by leading authorities and comprising new research, reviews and opinions from prominent researchers. Each issue aims to create an original and authoritative synthesis, often bridging traditional disciplines, which showcases current developments and provides a foundation for future research, applications and policy decisions.

Potential Guest Editors should consult our web page on **editing a theme issue**:

<https://royalsocietypublishing.org/rstb/submit-proposal>

There is flexibility regarding the number of articles that comprise the theme issue, but the recommended range is 14–18 papers.

As Guest Editor, you are responsible for ensuring the quality of the scientific content of the manuscripts and for managing the peer review process via ScholarOne Manuscripts. In addition to this, the Guest Editors are expected to write an introductory article for the issue, which should provide both the expert and the general reader with the appropriate context for the topic.

Please complete this form with as much information as you have available. When complete, the form should be submitted to <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ptrsb>. Any queries should be addressed to Helen Eaton, Senior Commissioning Editor, at philtransb@royalsociety.org.

Title (maximum 150 characters):

The title of the theme issue should be short, informative, and attract interest from both experts in the field and a general audience.

Theme editor(s) with affiliations:

Summary of topic (100-200 words):

Please provide a brief synopsis of the subject area to be covered in the issue. The description should explain the importance of the topic, be concise, free of jargon and understandable to a non-specialist.

Explain why the topic is appropriate for a theme issue; indicate the new developments that will be presented and discussed, and explain why these are timely (maximum 500 words):

Use this section to explain why a theme issue will be appropriate, rather than papers published individually. Where necessary or appropriate, summarise any relevant background to the subject area, emphasising how the issue will build upon and extend previous work. Tell us why the issue is timely and whether there is anything particular happening in the field at this time.

What is the likely impact of the proposed Theme Issue? (maximum 300 words):

Please explain the benefits of this issue to the scientific community and how it could influence future research in this area. If the topic is likely to have wider public interest or influence policy decisions, then provide further details here.

Please provide 5 key references to recent publications in this area. Please ensure that full references, including all author names, are given.

Please highlight any authors from these publications who are involved in your proposed issue (as authors or Guest Editors).

Please tell us (briefly) about the Editors' contributions to this field, and any editing experience that you have:

Please note that decisions on proposals are not made based on the proposed editors' experience. Early career researchers are encouraged to propose issues. However, this information will help us to provide appropriate guidance.

Are these topics being covered in other publications or in meetings or symposia? (maximum 300 words):

Please provide us with details of recent or forthcoming publications (books, theme issues) covering this topic. If the topic is being covered elsewhere, how will the proposed theme issue be distinct? Are these topics being covered in any meetings or symposia (either by you or by others)?

Why is this project better suited to *Phil Trans B* rather than a more specialist journal or as a book? (maximum 150 words)

List of contributions

The majority of authors should have formally agreed to contribute to the proposed issue according to an approximate timetable that you may have provided. If any contributors have not yet indicated their willingness to contribute, please indicate this.

The proposed contributions should provide a comprehensive coverage of the subject area. You should select authors on the basis of their scientific expertise and, without compromising this, please consider the balance of the authorship in respect of gender and nationality. In addition to the Introduction, each Guest Editor may be the lead or final author on a maximum of one article each (and an author on no more than 3 papers in total).

As a guide, approximately half of the papers should present new research. However, the exact balance of reviews to research will differ by topic so this isn't a fixed requirement.

For each paper, please include the following information:

- A tentative title (this should be short and of broad interest)
- The name and affiliation of the lead author
- The paper type (original research, review, opinion piece etc.)
- A brief description of the information to be presented in the article

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Diversity

The Royal Society is committed to increasing diversity in STEM. Please ensure that you have considered the balance in terms of gender, geographic location and career stage when inviting authors. Please provide an approximate breakdown of your invited authors below.*

	Male	Female	Other / non-binary
Lead author gender (provide number)			

	UK	Rest of Europe	North America	South & Central America	Asia & Middle East	Australasia	Africa
Lead author current location (provide number)							

	Early (<10 years postgrad)	Mid (10-20 years postgrad)	Senior (>20 years)
Lead author career stage (provide number)			

*This will usually be one author per paper, but may be more if you are asking people to write joint contributions. Please just use your judgement to provide an overview of your key contributors.

How do you justify the choice of authors and titles? Please also comment on the diversity data given above if relevant.

Please explain your reasoning for the choice of contributors to this issue. Also, if relevant, please indicate any deliberate omissions and the reasons for them. Please provide any information on diversity if the information given above is not a balanced representation (e.g., unequal gender representation for lead authors, few early career researchers, minimal representation from outside North America and Europe, etc.).

Do you have a particular schedule in mind?

If you have already discussed a potential submission or publication date with the authors, or if you have a particular schedule in mind for the issue, please provide details. Although we will make every effort to accommodate your timeline, this may not always be possible as the publication schedule is planned far in advance.