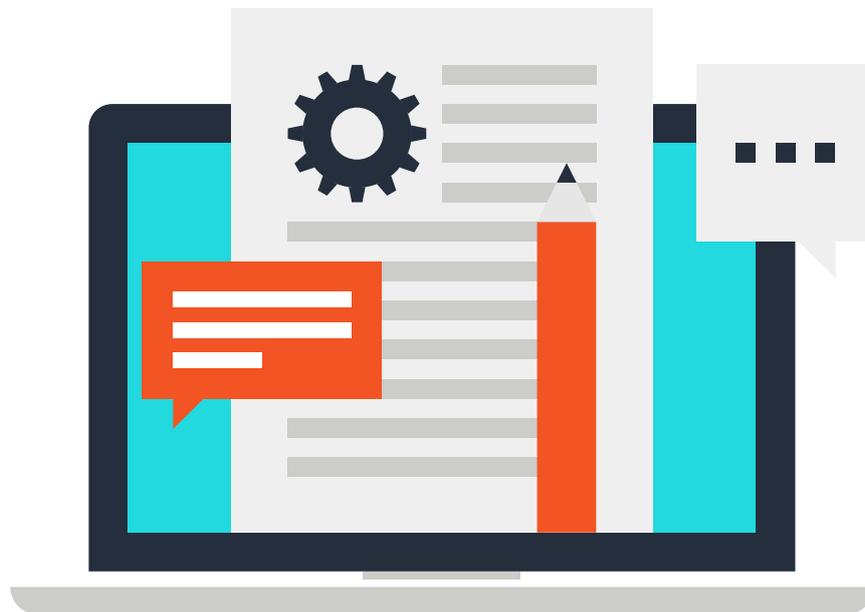


A GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

BLOGGING



WHY BLOG?

More and more academics rely on online sources and communities to start their research on any given topic. Blogging is therefore a great way to raise awareness for your work, communicate with your peers and establish yourself as a voice of influence in your academic field. Finally, but importantly, blogging is a great way to hone your writing skills.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

It goes without saying that writing blog posts can't be a substitute for publishing work in academic journals and books. But blogging has a number of advantages over traditional forms of publishing, making it an ideal addition to an academic's publishing portfolio.

Blogging is

- ▶ **Quick:** While writing & publishing a book or paper can take years, a blog post takes only days
- ▶ **Easy:** Platforms like Wordpress make it easy and intuitive to run a blog without much technical knowledge
- ▶ **Interactive:** Through comment functions and social media, blogs allow you to communicate with your peers directly
- ▶ **Discoverable:** Search engines respond well to blogs, so publishing one heightens your chances of being found online

HOW TO GET STARTED

You can either start your own blog or write a blog post for an existing platform. If you're completely new to blogging you might start out with a guest post for an existing blog and build your own blog from there.

GUEST BLOGGING FOR EXISTING BLOGS

There is now a vast number of blogs about academic topics and catering to academic audiences online.

If you're not sure where to start, search for your discipline or sub-discipline on Google and add the keyword "blog."

You can approach choosing a blog much like you would search for a suitable academic journal to publish your research article.

- ▶ Search for a blog that seems relevant to your discipline or that your peers/colleagues are reading
- ▶ Aim for a blog that has published posts similar to the one you would like to write
- ▶ Look for blogs that show an active community of authors and readers, with posts that have regular comment and debate

Remember that there are usually no strict rules about how to submit a guest post to a blog. Just search for a contact page on the blog and send a friendly email with your article pitch.

Want to flex your blogging muscle? Our online magazine → De Gruyter Conversations is a great way to start! Open to intellectually curious readers from all walks of life, De Gruyter Conversations turns academic research into exciting stories that deepen readers' understanding of our complex world. Would you like to write a post for Conversations? That's great! Just send an email with your article idea to [conversations \[at\] degruyter.com](mailto:conversations[at]degruyter.com).

STARTING YOUR OWN BLOG

Starting your own blog isn't hard. There is a good selection of software that is free and easy to use, so you don't need technical knowledge or programming skills to build a simple website or blog.

→ Wordpress.com is probably the most popular site that lets you build your own blog quickly.

→ Medium.com allows you to write a post and publish it with a great design with just a couple of clicks.

Before you start your own personal blog, you'll want to think about a blog name and a domain name. Both could be your real name (John Doe's Blog/john-doe.wordpress.com), but you could also choose a more descriptive title that includes keywords from the topics you want to write about or the discipline where you work (e.g. → nano-research.blogspot.com).

Ideally, make your blog and domain name short and easy to remember.

RUNNING A BLOG

Just like setting up a blog, running a blog isn't that hard. Ideally, you'll want to make sure that you publish on a somewhat regular basis. Perhaps more importantly, you'll want to find topics that you'd like to talk about and are relevant to your audience. The content of your blog posts will probably suggest itself from your research and teaching topics.

After publishing your posts, spread them via social media and discuss them with your peers.

WHAT TO WRITE

You've set up your blog, so what should you write about? The possibilities are endless, so now it's time to get creative! Here are some basic post ideas to get you started.

You could write

- ▶ An explorative article on an idea or a topic related to your current research
- ▶ A post that highlights a concept or theme from your current book
- ▶ An opinion piece relating to a current news topic
- ▶ A comment on the current state of higher education or academic politics
- ▶ An in-depth interview with an influential or controversial peer
- ▶ An advice column for students, researchers or authors

HOW TO WRITE

Blogging differs from purely academic writing in tone and form. Make sure you consider online reading habits when writing your blog posts. Remember, for example, that people usually scan online text.

Make sure you

- ▶ Find a short and intriguing headline
- ▶ Use short paragraphs
- ▶ Use subheadings
- ▶ Let your personality shine through

The great thing about blogging is that you can easily add *multimedia content* to your posts. Once you've written your post, think about what extras you can add to make your post more interactive.

You could add:

- ▶ Photos
- ▶ Videos
- ▶ Audio clips or podcasts
- ▶ A poll or quiz
- ▶ Links to related content

IMPORTANT: When adding multimedia content make sure that you're not infringing copyright! If you are unsure, you should contact the owner of the materials to request permission.

HOW TO ADVERTISE YOUR BLOG

Readers can find your blog in many different ways, but the ones that you can influence most easily are probably search engines (SEO) and social media traffic.

SEO (SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION)

Without having heard of you or your blog before, readers may simply be searching for certain keywords on Google and see one of your blog posts on that topic.

To make it easy for your intended audience to find your blog posts through a search engine, it's vital to put yourself in your readers' shoes when writing a post. If you were to search for the topic of your post on Google, which search terms would you most likely use? Ideally, these search terms should appear in your title and throughout your blog post.

The headline of your post is among the most important factors when it comes to search engine visibility. If you want to be found online, try to make the headline as factual as possible, and not too cryptic or poetic. While this might work in print publications, online users and search engines will find it difficult to find your post if your headline doesn't describe the topic unambiguously.

For more info on SEO, check our → [author's guide](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA

Increasingly, academics are using social media platforms to communicate with their friends, families and peers. This makes "social" a vital channel through which to advertise your blog posts.

You should try to make it as easy as possible for your readers to notice your blog posts in their social media feeds. Here are some simple ways to do this:

- ▶ Tweet the link to your article on Twitter
- ▶ Share the link to your article on Facebook
- ▶ Publish the link to your article on LinkedIn
- ▶ Engage in conversations related to the topic of your article in LinkedIn or Facebook groups

For more info on Social Media for Academics, check our → [author's guide](#).