

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

### Submission Checklist

Please:

1. Read the [Aim & Scope](#) to gain an overview and assess if your manuscript is suitable for this journal;
2. Use the [Paper Template \(Microsoft Word\)](#) to prepare your manuscript and apply the requirements about text, figure formats, data and references format and all other paper parts;
3. Read carefully the [Authors' Honor Code](#) that includes information about publication ethics, copyright and authorship.
4. Ensure that all authors have approved the content of the submitted manuscript and have signed the [Terms and Conditions of Authors](#).

### Manuscript Submission Overview

#### Types of Publications

*International Journal of Balkan Studies (IJBS)* has no restrictions on the length of manuscripts, provided that the text is concise and comprehensive. Full experimental details must be provided so that the results can be reproduced. *IJBS* requires that authors publish all experimental controls and make full datasets available where possible.

Manuscripts submitted to *IJBS* should neither be published previously nor be under consideration for publication in another journal. The main article types are as follows:

- *Articles*: Original research manuscripts. The journal considers all original research manuscripts provided that the work reports scientifically sound experiments and provides a substantial amount of new information. Authors should not unnecessarily divide their work into several related manuscripts, although Short *Communications* of preliminary, but significant, results will be considered. Quality and impact of the study will be considered during peer review.
  - *Reviews*: These provide concise and precise updates on the latest progress made in a given area of research.
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### Submission Process

Manuscripts for *IJBS* should be submitted online at [www.ijbs.unyt.edu.al](http://www.ijbs.unyt.edu.al). The submitting author, who is generally the corresponding author, is responsible for the manuscript during the submission and peer-review process. The submitting author must ensure that all eligible co-authors have been included in the author list and that they have all read and approved the submitted version of the manuscript. To submit your manuscript, [click here to go to the submission form for IJBS](#). All co-authors can see the manuscript details in the submission system, if they register and log in using the e-mail address provided during manuscript submission.

### Accepted File Formats

Authors must use the [Paper Template \(Microsoft Word\)](#) to prepare their manuscript. Using the template file will substantially shorten the time to complete copy-editing and publication of accepted manuscripts. Accepted file formats are:

- *Microsoft Word*: Manuscripts prepared in Microsoft Word must be converted into a single file before submission. When preparing manuscripts in Microsoft Word, the [Paper Template \(Microsoft Word\)](#) file must be used. Please insert your graphics (schemes, figures, etc.) in the main text after the paragraph of its first citation. All text and metadata identifying the authors should be removed before submission.

### Manuscript Preparation

#### General Considerations

- **Research manuscripts** should comprise:
    - Front matter: Title, Author list, Affiliations, Abstract, Keywords
    - Research manuscript sections: Introduction, Results, Discussion, Materials and Methods, Conclusions (optional).
    - Back matter: Supplementary Materials, Acknowledgments, Author Contributions, Conflicts of Interest, References.
  - **Review manuscripts** should comprise the front matter, literature review sections and the back matter. It is not necessary to follow the remaining structure.
  - **Abbreviations** should be defined in parentheses the first time they appear in the abstract, main text, and in figure or table captions and used consistently thereafter.
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- **Equations:** If you are using Word, please use either the Microsoft Equation Editor or the MathType add-on. Equations should be editable by the editorial office and not appear in a picture format.
- **Research Data and supplementary materials:** Note that publication of your manuscript implies that you must make all materials, data, and protocols associated with the publication available to readers. Disclose at the submission stage any restrictions on the availability of materials or information.
- **Preregistration:** Where authors have preregistered studies or analysis plans, links to the preregistration must be provided in the manuscript.

### Front Matter

These sections should appear in all manuscript types

- **Title:** The title of your manuscript should be concise, specific and relevant. It should identify if the study reports (human or animal) trial data, or is a systematic review, meta-analysis or replication study.
- **Author List and Affiliations:** Authors' full first and last names must be provided. The initials of any middle names can be added. At least one author should be designated as corresponding author, and his or her email address and other details should be included at the end of the affiliation section.
- **Abstract:** The abstract should be a total of about 250 words maximum. The abstract should be a single paragraph and should follow the style of structured abstracts, but without headings: 1) Background: Place the question addressed in a broad context and highlight the purpose of the study; 2) Methods: Describe briefly the main methods or treatments applied. Include any relevant preregistration numbers, and species and strains of any animals used. 3) Results: Summarize the article's main findings; and 4) Conclusion: Indicate the main conclusions or interpretations. The abstract should be an objective representation of the article: it must not contain results which are not presented and substantiated in the main text and should not exaggerate the main conclusions.
- **Keywords:** Three to ten pertinent keywords need to be added after the abstract. We recommend that the keywords are specific to the article, yet reasonably common within the subject discipline.

### Research Manuscript Sections

- **Introduction:** The introduction should briefly place the study in a broad context and highlight why it is important. It should define the purpose of the work and its significance,
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including specific hypotheses being tested. The current state of the research field should be reviewed carefully and key publications cited. Please highlight controversial and diverging hypotheses when necessary. Finally, briefly mention the main aim of the work and highlight the main conclusions. Keep the introduction comprehensible to scientists working outside the topic of the paper.

- **Results:** Provide a concise and precise description of the experimental results, their interpretation as well as the experimental conclusions that can be drawn.
- **Discussion:** Authors should discuss the results and how they can be interpreted in perspective of previous studies and of the working hypotheses. The findings and their implications should be discussed in the broadest context possible and limitations of the work highlighted. Future research directions may also be mentioned. This section may be combined with Results.
- **Materials and Methods:** They should be described with sufficient detail to allow others to replicate and build on published results. New methods and protocols should be described in detail while well-established methods can be briefly described and appropriately cited. Give the name and version of any software used and make clear whether computer code used is available. Include any pre-registration codes.
- **Conclusions:** This section is not mandatory, but can be added to the manuscript if the discussion is unusually long or complex.
- **Patents:** This section is not mandatory, but may be added if there are patents resulting from the work reported in this manuscript.

### Back Matter

- **Supplementary Materials:** Describe any supplementary material published online alongside the manuscript (figure, tables, video, spreadsheets, etc.). Please indicate the name and title of each element as follows Figure S1: title, Table S1: title, etc.
  - **Acknowledgments:** All sources of funding of the study should be disclosed. Clearly indicate grants that you have received in support of your research work and if you received funds to cover publication costs.
  - **Author Contributions:** Each author is expected to have made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data; or the creation of new software used in the work; or have drafted the work or substantively revised it; AND has approved the submitted version (and version substantially edited by journal staff that involves the author's contribution to the study);
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AND agrees to be personally accountable for the author's own contributions and for ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work, even ones in which the author was not personally involved, are appropriately investigated, resolved, and documented in the literature.

For research articles with several authors, a short paragraph specifying their individual contributions must be provided. **Authorship must include and be limited to those who have contributed substantially to the work.**

- **Conflicts of Interest:** Authors must identify and declare any personal circumstances or interest that may be perceived as inappropriately influencing the representation or interpretation of reported research results. If there is no conflict of interest, please state "The authors declare no conflict of interest." Any role of the funding sponsors in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results must be declared in this section. If there is no role, please state "The founding sponsors had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, and in the decision to publish the results".
- **References:** A reference list is always arranged alphabetically. All sources are listed by the last names of the authors and listed individually at the end of the manuscript. We recommend preparing the references with a bibliography software package to avoid typing mistakes and duplicated references.
- Citations and References in Supplementary files are permitted provided that they also appear in the main text and in the reference list. All the references mentioned in the text should be cited in the "Author-Date" format, for example (Woodward 1987), (Schuman and Scott 1987); An author-date citation in running text or at the end of a block quotation consists of the last (family) name of the author, followed by the year of publication of the work in question. In this context, author may refer not only to one or more authors or an institution but also to one or more editors, translators, or compilers. No punctuation appears between author and date. Abbreviations such as ed. or trans. are omitted
- The Reference list should include the full title as recommended by the Chicago style guide. References should be described as follows depending on the type of work:
- Journal Articles:

1. Author 1, and Author 2. Year. Title of the Article. *Journal Title* 6: 100–10.

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- Books and Book Chapters:
  2. Author 1, and Author 2. 2008. *Book Title*, rev. ed. Publication place: Publisher, pp. 154–96.
  3. Author 1, and Author 2. 2008. Title of the chapter. In *Book Title*, 2nd ed. Edited by Editor 1 and Editor 2. Publication place: Publisher, vol. 3, pp. 54–96.
- Unpublished work, submitted work, personal communication:
  4. Author 1, and Author 2. Title of Unpublished Work. *Journal Title*, phrase indicating stage of publication.
  5. Author 1 (University, City, State, Country), and Author 2 (Institute, City, State, Country). Year. Personal communication.
- Conference Proceedings:
  6. Author 1, Author 2, and Author 3. Year. Title of Presentation. In *Title of the Collected Work* (if available). Paper presented at Name of the Conference, Location of Conference, Date of Conference. Edited by Editor 1, Editor 2 and Editor 3 (if available). Publication place: Publisher (if available); Abstract Number (optional), Pagination (optional).
- Thesis:
  7. Author 1. Date of Completion. “Title of Thesis.” Level of thesis, Degree-Granting University, Identification information (if available).
- Websites:
  8. Author 1, and Author 2. Year. Title of the article. *Magazine/Journal Name*. Available online: URL (accessed on Day Month Year).  
Unlike published works, websites may change over time or disappear, so we encourage you create an archive of the cited website using a service such as [WebCite](#). Archived websites should be cited using the link provided as follows:
    9. Title of Site. Available online: URL (archived on Day Month Year).

#### Preparing Figures, Schemes and Tables

- File for Figures and Schemes must be provided during submission in a single zip archive and at a sufficiently high resolution (minimum 1000 pixels’ width/height, or a resolution of 300 dpi or higher). Common formats are accepted, however, TIFF, JPEG, EPS and PDF are preferred.
  - *IJBs* can publish multimedia files in articles or as supplementary materials. Please contact the editorial office for further information.
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- All Figures, Schemes and Tables should be inserted into the main text close to their first citation and must be numbered following their number of appearance (Figure 1, Scheme I, Figure 2, Scheme II, Table 1, *etc.*).
- All Figures, Schemes and Tables should have a short explanatory title and caption.
- All table columns should have an explanatory heading. To facilitate the copy-editing of larger tables, smaller fonts may be used, but no less than 6 pt. in size. Authors should use the Table option of Microsoft Word to create tables.
- Authors are encouraged to prepare figures and schemes in color (RGB at 8-bit per channel). There is no additional cost for publishing full color graphics.

### **Supplementary Materials, Data Deposit and Software Source Code**

#### *Data Availability*

In order to maintain the integrity, transparency and reproducibility of research records, authors must make their experimental and research data openly available either by depositing into data repositories or by publishing the data and files as supplementary information in this journal.

#### *Computer Code and Software*

For work where novel computer code was developed, authors should release the code either by depositing in a recognized, public repository or uploading as supplementary information to the publication. The name and version of all software used should be clearly indicated.

#### *Supplementary Material*

Additional data and files can be uploaded as "Supplementary Files" during the manuscript submission process. The supplementary files will also be available to the referees as part of the peer-review process. Any file format is acceptable; however, we recommend that common, non-proprietary formats are used where possible.

#### *Unpublished Data*

Restrictions on data availability should be noted during submission and in the manuscript. "Data not shown" should be avoided: authors are encouraged to publish all observations related to the submitted manuscript as Supplementary Material. "Unpublished data" intended for publication in a manuscript that is either planned, "in preparation" or "submitted" but not yet accepted, should be cited in the text and a reference should be added in the References section. "Personal Communication" should also be cited in the text and reference added in the References section. (see also the MDPI reference list and citations style guide).

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### *References in Supplementary Files*

Citations and References in Supplementary files are permitted provided that they also appear in the reference list of the main text.

### **Reviewer Suggestions**

During the submission process, please suggest three potential reviewers with the appropriate expertise to review the manuscript. The editors will not necessarily approach these referees. Please provide detailed contact information (address, homepage, phone, e-mail address). The proposed referees should neither be current collaborators of the co-authors nor have published with any of the co-authors of the manuscript within the last five years. Proposed reviewers should be from different institutions to the authors. You may identify appropriate Editorial Board members of the journal as potential reviewers. You may suggest reviewers from among the authors that you frequently cite in your paper.

### **English Corrections**

To facilitate proper peer-reviewing of your manuscript, it is essential that it is submitted in grammatically correct English.

If you are not a native English speaker, we recommend that you have your manuscript professionally edited before submission or read by a native English-speaking colleague. Professional editing will enable reviewers and future readers to more easily read and assess the content of submitted manuscripts.

### **Conference Papers**

Expanded and high quality conference papers can be considered as articles if they fulfill the following requirements: (1) the paper should be expanded to the size of a research article; (2) the conference paper should be cited and noted on the first page of the paper; (3) if the authors do not hold the copyright of the published conference paper, authors should seek the appropriate permission from the copyright holder; (4) authors are asked to disclose that it is conference paper in their cover letter and include a statement on what has been changed compared to the original conference paper. *IJBBS* does not publish pilot studies or studies with inadequate statistical power.

### **Reviewers Recommendation**

Authors can recommend potential reviewers. Journal editors will check to make sure there are no conflict of interests before contacting those reviewers, and will not consider those with competing interests. Reviewers are asked to declare any conflicts of interest. Authors can also enter the names of potential peer reviewers they wish to exclude from consideration in the peer review of their manuscript, during the initial submission progress. The editorial team will respect these

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requests so long as this does not interfere with the objective and thorough assessment of the submission.

#### **Editors and Journal Staff as Authors**

Editorial independence is extremely important and their decisions are independent.

Editorial staff or editors shall not be involved in the processing their own academic work. Submissions authored by editorial staff/editors will be assigned to at least two independent outside reviewers. Decisions will be made by other editorial board members who do not have conflict of interests with the author. Journal staff are not involved in the processing of their own work submitted to IJBS

#### **Editorial Procedures and Peer-Review**

##### ***Initial Checks***

All submitted manuscripts received by the Editorial Office will be checked by a professional in-house *Associate Editor* to determine whether they are properly prepared and whether they follow the ethical policies of the journal. Manuscripts that do not fit the journal's ethics policy or do not meet the standards of the journal will be rejected before peer-review. Manuscripts that are not properly prepared will be returned to the authors for revision and resubmission. After these checks, the *Associate Editor* will consult the journals' *Editor-in-Chief* to determine whether the manuscript fits the scope of the journal and whether it is scientifically sound. No judgment on the potential impact of the work will be made at this stage. Reject decisions at this stage will be verified by the *Editor-in-Chief*.

##### ***Peer-Review***

Once a manuscript passes the initial checks, it will be assigned to at least two independent experts for peer-review. A double-blind peer-review process is applied, where authors' identities are not known to reviewers.

In the case of regular submissions, in-house assistant editors will invite experts, including recommendations by an academic editor. These experts may also include *Editorial Board members* and Guest Editors of the journal. Potential reviewers suggested by the authors may also be considered. Reviewers should not have published with any of the co-authors during the past five years and should not currently work or collaborate with any of the institutions of the co-authors of the submitted manuscript.

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### ***Editorial Decision and Revision***

All the articles, reviews and communications published in IJBS go through the peer-review process and receive at least two reviews. The in-house editor will communicate the decision of the academic editor, which will be one of the following:

- ***Accept after Minor Revisions:***

The paper is in principle accepted after revision based on the reviewer's comments. Authors are given five days for minor revisions.

- ***Reconsider after Major Revisions:***

The acceptance of the manuscript would depend on the revisions. The author needs to provide a point by point response or provide a rebuttal if some of the reviewer's comments cannot be revised. Usually, only one round of major revisions is allowed. Authors will be asked to resubmit the revised paper within a suitable time frame, and the revised version will be returned to the reviewer for further comments.

- ***Reject and Encourage Resubmission:***

If additional experiments are needed to support the conclusions, the manuscript will be rejected and the authors will be encouraged to re-submit the paper once further experiments have been conducted.

- ***Reject:***

The article has serious flaws, and/or makes no original significant contribution. No offer of resubmission to the journal is provided.

All reviewer comments should be responded to in a point-by-point fashion. Where the authors disagree with a reviewer, they must provide a clear response.

### ***Author Appeals***

Authors may appeal a rejection by sending an e-mail to the Editorial Office of the journal. The appeal must provide a detailed justification, including point-by-point responses to the reviewers' and/or Editor's comments. The *Associate Editor* of the journal will forward the manuscript and related information (including the identities of the referees) to the Editor-in-Chief, or Editorial Board member. The academic Editor being consulted will be asked to give an advisory recommendation on the manuscript and may recommend acceptance, further peer-review, or uphold the original rejection decision. A reject decision at this stage is final and cannot be reversed.

In the case of a special issue, the *Associate Editor* of the journal will forward the manuscript and related information (including the identities of the referees) to the *Editor-in-Chief* who will be

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asked to give an advisory recommendation on the manuscript and may recommend acceptance, further peer-review, or uphold the original rejection decision. A reject decision at this stage will be final and cannot be reversed.

***Production and Publication***

Once accepted, the manuscript will undergo professional copy-editing, English editing, proofreading by the authors, final corrections, pagination, and, publication on the [www.ijbs.unyt.edu.al](http://www.ijbs.unyt.edu.al) website.

