

Resource 5A: Strategies for attracting authors

Summary: Editors and publishers should have strategies for attracting the type of content that they want to publish – not only the types of articles, but also the topics, authorship, location of authors, etc. This resource guide presents some suggestions for how to attract and invite the type of articles that a journal wishes to publish.

Resource 1A discussed development of a journal strategy. This resource looks at how to ensure that the content in the journal reflects the aims and scope identified in Chapter 1.

Note that many of these activities are "marketing" – raising the visibility of your journal. These suggestions should be read in conjunction with Section E: Journal promotion.

Generally increasing submissions

For new journals, or those which cannot rely on regular submissions of sufficient quality it is important to ensure that you reach out to authors – instead of relying on them coming to you. There are various methods of doing this.

- Advertising – advertising your journal on relevant websites, journals and newsletters can be a useful way of raising awareness of your journal – and if the message is right, it can attract authors. Methods may include:
 - Reciprocal advertising – you exchange adverts with another journal in your area (placing adverts for each other's journals in your own print version, and perhaps a small advert on your websites).
 - Placing an advert in an Association webpage or newsletter (there may be relevant associations whose members would be suitable authors).
 - Conference advertising – including journal information in the handouts given at suitable conferences or meetings.
- Giving talks about the journal
 - At meetings, at conferences. Think about meetings where relevant authors will be.
 - Consider offering to speak on topics of interest for authors – for example "How to get your research published".
- Writing about the journal
 - Write and submit editorials or other items to other journals, newsletters, websites, etc., which include mention of your journal. These should not be "advertising" but may cover issues such as writing, reviewing, publishing, etc.
 - Consider contributing to blogs, etc.
- Supporting authors
 - Consider running workshops for authors "how to get your research published", etc.
 - Produce helpful guidelines and hints-and-tips for authors which can be placed on appropriate websites or printed items.
- Sending out mailshots – "call for authors"
 - Emails or printed, to members of associations, conference delegates, etc.
 - Note – be careful of sending out too many "calls for authors", it can make the journal sound desperate.

- Thematic issues
 - Themed issues (on a particular topic) can be attractive to authors – and encourage them to submit.
 - Sending out a “calls for authors” for thematic issues can be done as more frequently than normal author communication without sounding desperate!
- Invited articles
 - You can invite individuals to write for you – commissioning content (see below).

Commissioning content

Why: if you want a particular person to write something for you, or want to include a particular article/topic, you can invite someone to write for you. These are not usually original research articles, but are more commonly review articles, opinion pieces, editorials, case studies, etc. It can be a good way to get a well-respected person to publish something in your journal, even when they would not give you their original research.

How: Identify the person you want to write for you and what you want them to write (you may need to consult your editorial team). Don't forget that you can contact the potential author by writing to them, emailing or even telephoning. Asking people who have given a talk at a conference (to write something based on their talk) is a good way to invite them to submit.

Remember to tell authors:

- What you want them to write about
- How many words
- If the item will be peer reviewed (and if it may possibly be rejected)
- When you want it and when it will be published



KEY POINTS

Journals should reach out to authors to raise the profile of the journal and ensure that the best authors will submit their best work.