Guide for Editors (last updated: 29.4.21)

This guide is designed for editors once the editor's contract has been agreed. It explains in more detail what happens next, what we will do and what we need from you as editor. We hope you find it helpful. We will also send you a separate guide on using ScholarOne, the platform we use to manage the process of inviting chapter authors, receiving and reviewing chapters.

Inviting and contracting contributors

As set out in your editor's contract, we will be responsible for contacting and corresponding with all the authors contributing chapters.

We will have listed a series of potential authors for each chapter in the book contents we sent you. We will start by inviting the first author listed. If that author is unable to write the chapter, we will invite the second author listed etc.

We will agree with you the wording of the standard invitation we will send to authors. Since most authors will know of you, they will appreciate a message from you as part of the e-mail. We will agree with you the wording of a message from you about the book.

We will remain the main point of contact for contributors. It will be up to you as to how far you'd like to correspond with any individual contributors yourself. In some cases, they may be immediate colleagues or friends who you may well meet or keep in touch with as part of your professional role.

If you do discuss the book with contributors, we would ask you to copy us in on any correspondence with them. Please avoid agreeing any contractual changes with contributors, e.g. to first draft delivery dates. Please refer these questions on to us. If we are to manage the project effectively, we need to be able to ensure, for example, that delivery dates for first drafts are consistent. It can be a significant problem if the delivery date for one chapter is significantly different from all the rest. If such a problem arises, we are in the best position to agree a date which will work best for both the contributor and the book as a whole.

Project management

We will invite authors and, where there is no immediate reply, we will then send follow-up e-mail after an agreed interval, typically two weeks. If there is still no reply, we will send a second follow-up e-mail. Whilst most authors will reply to accept or decline an invitation to contribute fairly rapidly, a few may not. If need be, we will then move on to inviting the next author listed in the contents.

In some cases, authors may decline but recommend someone else (e.g. a colleague) who they think is better suited for the chapter. Our policy is to take up such recommendations, particularly if they are from a senior figure, and invite the person recommended. Most editors are happy for us to take the initiative in inviting new authors in this way. If you have any concerns about this, and wish to vet any new authors we might add to the contents to invite, please let us know as soon as possible.

Once authors accept an invitation, we will send them the key information they need to write their chapter:

- Our standard contractual terms
- Our 'Guide to Authors' which provides detailed guidance on the content and presentation of their chapter
- The contents of the book for reference

If you want to see any of this documentation, let us know. We typically give authors 4-6 months to write their first draft. Our system is set up to send periodic reminders to authors about the delivery dates for their first draft as well as reminders if their first draft becomes overdue.

We will prepare regular updates for your book. These will list:

- Who has accepted an invitation
- Who has been invited and not yet responded

These updates will be sent to for your information. However, as part of our commitment to taking on the burden of project administration, we will retain overall responsibility for keeping the book on track. We will identify any problems, e.g. chapters without an agreed author, and what action we are taking to deal with the problem. You are welcome to comment as much or as little as you wish.

Our experience is that it can take 1-2 months to contract the majority of chapters. Once contracted, many contributors may need 4-6 months to write a first draft. This is usually not because they need this time to write the chapter itself, but because they have previous writing commitments to complete before starting on the chapter for our book. This suggests first drafts will start to come in about 8 months from the start of sending invitations. Our experience is that they will come in over a number of months rather than all together.

As chapter authors start to write chapters, they may have queries about what to cover. Having worked extensively on the contents with you at the beginning of the process, we will normally be able to deal with basic queries. If contributors contact you direct, please let us know so we can either deal with them on your behalf or track any changes you agree with them

Reviewing first drafts

We will have agreed in your editor's contract how many chapters we might review on your behalf, e.g. because the subject they covers falls outside your area of expertise. It may be best for you to identify in advance which chapters you want us to review up to the agreed limit. This will allow you to focus on the remaining chapters.

We will ask authors to submit first drafts on ScholarOne. Developed by Thomson Reuters, ScholarOne may well be familiar to our editors and authors since it is used by many academic journals to manage submission and review of journal articles. We also ask you to use ScholarOne to review first drafts. As noted, we have produced a separate guide for editors on using SchloarOne which we will send you.

We ask authors to submit a first draft to ScholarOne with a complete text and references for you to review. We also ask them to supply as many of the figures or tables they would like to use as possible.

As set out in the editor's contract, we ask you to complete a review of a chapter within one month of being notified of a chapter to review. If a significant number of first drafts arrive at the same time, we can agree a separate schedule with you for dealing with them which is realistic for you without delaying the book too much.

Please note, we only need you to read the chapter for its **technical content** i.e. how well it covers its subject, whether it discusses all the key research effectively etc. Issues you might want to address include:

- Does the introduction cover all the main themes you'd expect to see discussed in the chapter?
- Do all the sections in the chapter provide a sufficient coverage of the themes identified in the Introduction?
- Does each section cover all the relevant recent research (e.g. in the last 5 years)?
- Are all the key statements in each section adequately supported by references?
- Does there need to be a conclusion and future trends section summarising the key areas for further research?

You **do not** need to try to correct the style, language or grammar. We will be responsible for this as well as suggesting any improvements to structure e.g. to the order of material or the number and type of headings. You don't need to make any changes to format or try to correct references (e.g. by looking for missing reference details). We will be responsible for all of this. We will also be responsible for identifying and chasing any missing material not supplied with the first draft. We want to make the best use of our valuable time by taking responsibility for issues of this kind relating to presentation.

Though this should rarely be an issue, if, whilst reading the text, you come across what you think might be plagiarised material (i.e. text copied from another author's work without proper acknowledgement), or anything you think might be libellous, please let us know. We will investigate the matter and take appropriate action.

To handle material effectively, ScholarOne converts all the material sent by an author into one of two standard formats:

- HTML format
- PDF format

You will be able to read the chapter in one of these formats. ScholarOne will also give you the choice of one of a range of standard replies for your review:

- Accept
- Minor Revision
- Major Revision
- SE Needs to Review
- Reject

All these options are explained in more detail in the ScholarOne guide for editors.

How the project will evolve

We typically ask authors to write to a maximum of 9,000 words of text. This will produce a chapter of 20-30 pages. Some may be longer. We avoid imposing a potentially arbitrary limit on the length of chapters. Readers are looking for a comprehensive coverage which may mean some chapters need to be longer to be complete. If so, books with a significant number of chapters might then run to over 1,000 pages. Once we reach this limit, the book will be too big to bind. This means it would be sensible to allow the possibility of publishing books in two volumes of more manageable size. We will discuss this with you if this looks to be the best way forward.

Our experience of big projects as this is that the contents will evolve in practice. Ways this will happen include:

- Authors suggesting changes to chapter titles and coverage which, as subject experts, they think will provide a better coverage of their subject
- Authors suggesting alternative topics where e.g. they think we may have missed a topic they think important
- Authors suggesting alternative authors where they cannot undertake a chapter themselves
- Failing to get authors for some chapters (despite inviting a number of candidates)
- Authors failing to deliver chapters they've promised, potentially delaying publication. In some cases we may need to make a pragmatic decision to proceed without a chapter rather than keep all the other contributors waiting, providing we think the book will still work without it
- Reordering the contents to allow for changes in chapter titles/coverage or gaps because we don't have a draft

We will handle any changes of this kind by alerting you to them as soon as they arise and discussing them with you. Such differences are to be expected as a project evolves. Our experience is that, even with some changes, we will produce a book which is far superior to any competitor and makes a substantial contribution to its subject. We will both need flexibility in responding to them if such changes will still produce a good book of value to readers.

The fundamental principle is of a project like this to provide a comprehensive review of key research. Whilst the traditional output is a book, this need not be the only way of publishing the material in a modern, online environment. Our experience is that readers of a book like this read chapters in isolation as the need arises rather than in sequence. To account for this, we encourage chapter authors to provide a complete, self-sufficient coverage of their topic. In practice, this means we will have a database of chapters which readers could access in a variety of ways, depending on what was best for them.

In this new environment, we are planning to typeset and publish each chapter as it is completed (i.e. the final version after incorporating changes from peer review). Readers could then have access to a chapter that interested them in advance of the book being published. Once we had enough chapters, they will be assembled and repaginated to produce the printed book for those customers who wanted the material this way. In the long run, we anticipate all the chapters from all our books will form part of an agricultural science database users can search to identify chapters that interest them, irrespective of which book they may originally have come from.

The Editor's Introduction

Once we have the all the chapter material we need, we will assemble the final manuscript for the book, including a final contents list which we will send you for any comments you might have. As noted, this final contents may be different from the original contents e.g. because of the way chapters have evolved in the process of writing or where some chapters have had to be dropped rather than delay the rest of the book e.g. because we failed to find an author.

Once the manuscript is ready, we will then agree a short editor's Introduction for the book. Readers value an introduction to explain the background to the book and what it covers. The Introduction needs only be about 2000 words or a few pages. It can briefly review such issues as:

- The importance of the subject the book covers
- The key issues/challenges which research is trying to address
- The key themes covered by the book e.g. what each Part discusses

Because they are short, Introductions of this kind do not usually require features such as section headings, illustrations or references.

Production and publication

The production process for individual chapters is explained in our 'Guide to Authors'. If you have contributed an Introduction or chapter, you may receive copyediting queries to answer and proofs to check. We would ask you to keep to the requested schedule for answering queries or correcting proofs. Our policy is also to send you proofs for the complete book for reference. These proofs are for your information. You do not need to read or correct chapters written by contributors. We will ask them to check their own chapters.

Our standard approach, in common with other publishers, is to publish the electronic version of the chapter in colour but the printed book in black and white (also known as 'mono' because it involves printing in one colour). Colour print costs are significantly higher than mono printing and, in many cases, readers will have access to the online version in colour if they want this. In most cases this is an acceptable solution to readers since many chapters don't critically depend on colour to get their key points across (e.g. in a graph, figure or, in many cases photo).

As set out in your editor's contract, we will assume responsibility for the design of the cover for the book. We will suggest a description for the book and a short editor biography to go on the back cover. We will send a draft of these for your comments. The description and biography may also be used in promotional material about the book.

Once the book is published, we will arrange to send you complimentary copies as agreed in the editor's contract.