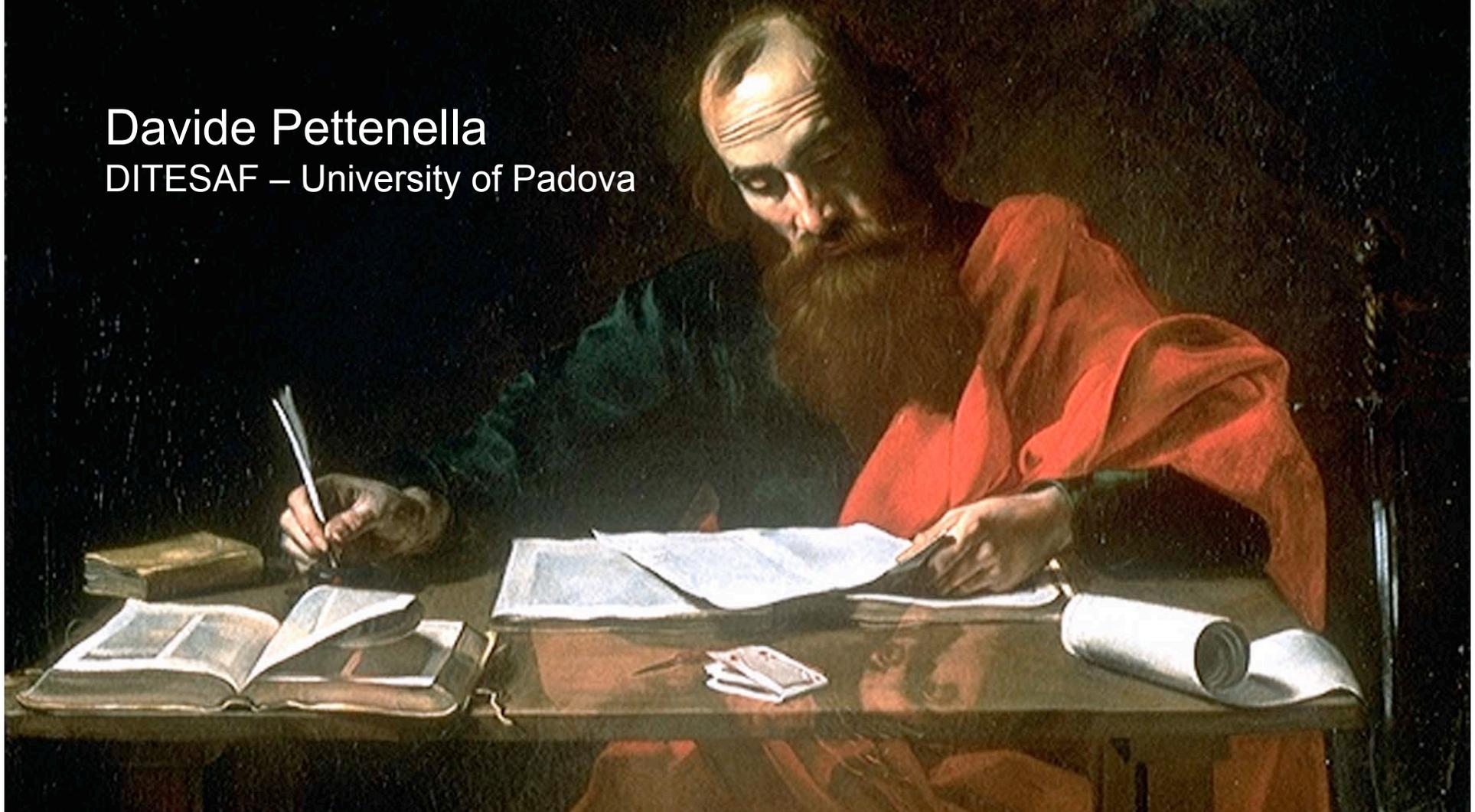


# HOW TO PUBLISH ON A SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL?

(from a lecture by G.Anania  
SIDEA PhD Students School  
Bari 8-10.9. 2008)

10 steps to publish your research results on a good science journal

Daide Pettenella  
DITESAF – University of Padova



# 1. You have discussed your thesis: now the work is starting!

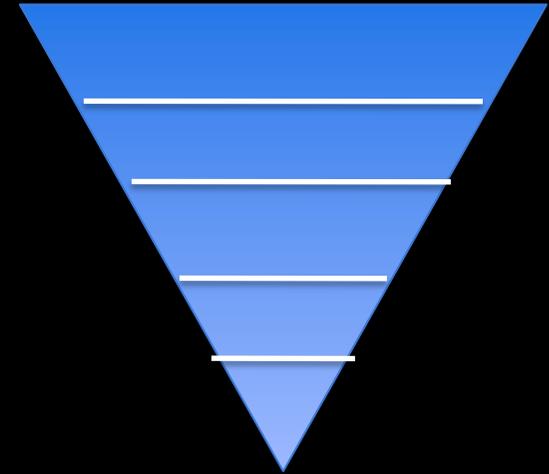


Normally you have a long text that needs to be re-organized for a scientific publication:

- ... reducing the length
- ... focusing on one of few innovative aspects
- ... and so, changing the overall structure of the document

Normally:

- much research is done,
- some is successful,
- less is written up,
- only part could be published,
- and only a small proportion will be read.



So you **need to target your writing and publishing** to maximize the chances of someone reading it and making use of your findings.

# Try to have an objective, accurate and honest evaluation of your thesis (easy to say, difficult to do!)

**How to know** if part of your thesis can be published?

- ask **your supervisor**
- refer to the evaluation made by the **thesis Commission or reviewer(s)**
- take note of the **comments** made during the presentation(s)

**What** can I publish?

- the **literature review?** (not easy)
- the **methodological approach?**
- the **problem, research question?**
- the **results (and discussion)?**

Frequent statements of scope in the journals: *we are looking for **significant results** or papers reporting a **significant advance in knowledge** = first questions that the editors of the journal will ask themselves*

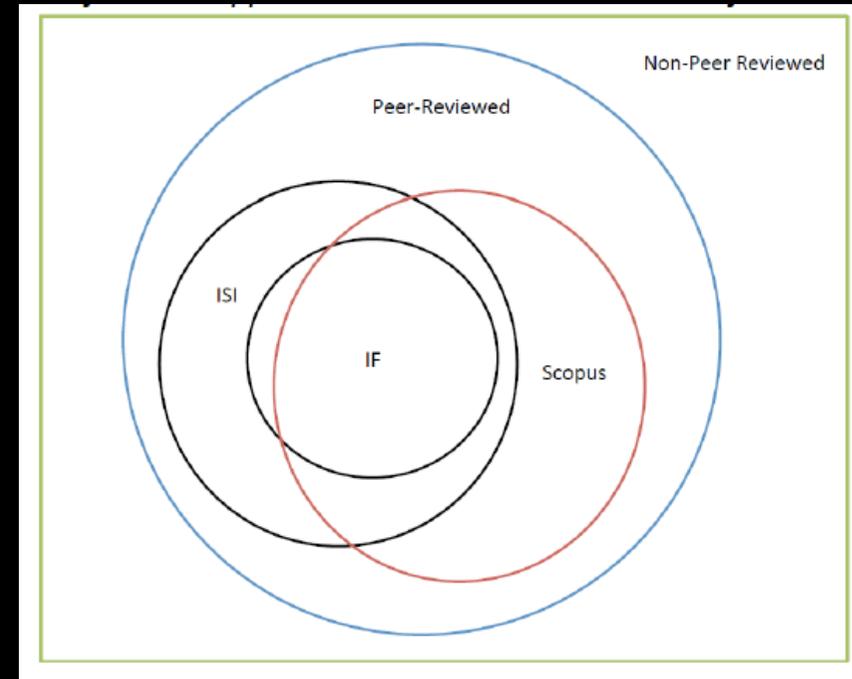
## 2. Where to publish?

- The choice of journal will influence the format and style of your article: **different journals have different styles and different rules of presentation** for the material they publish.
- This is a decision to be taken **before preparing the paper**, not after!
- Young people = high expectations → high quality journals
  - Lot of readers, high reputation (for you and your working group)But...
  - Lot of time needed
  - High risks to have your manuscript refused (frustration)

# How to classify scientific journals?

## There are 4 clusters

- Journals included in the **Journal of Citation Reports (JCR)** with **Impact Factor (IF)**; the list has been developed and is updated by Thomson Reuters;
- Journals included in the **DB of the ISI – Web of Science** by Thomson Reuters; most of them have also the IF and are included in the JCR;
- Journals included in the **DB Scopus** developed by Elsevier (a competitor of Thomson Reuters);
- Journals with **peer review non included** (till now) in the previous clusters.



# What the Impact Factor is?

IF is “*a measure of the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a particular year or period. The annual IF is a ratio between citations and recent citable items published. Thus, the IF of a journal is calculated by dividing the number of current year citations to the source items published in that journal during the previous two years*”

IFs are calculated by Thomson Reuters and published in the [Journal Citation Reports](#)

More information in the [web site](http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/free/essays/impact_factor/): [http://thomsonreuters.com/products\\_services/science/free/essays/impact\\_factor/](http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/free/essays/impact_factor/)

# Where I find information on the journals in one scientific sector and their Impact Factor?

[ISI Web of Knowledge](#) (only if you are an institutional user, i.e. if you are using an IP of the university or similar organizations)

See section: Additional Resources  
Journal Citation Reports)

<http://admin-apps.isiknowledge.com/JCR/JCR?SID=Q2dJ@KJj7NP@984d48m>

ISI Web of Knowledge<sup>SM</sup>

Journal Citation Reports<sup>®</sup>

[Information for New Users](#)

Select a JCR edition and year:	Select an option:
<input checked="" type="radio"/> JCR Science Edition <input type="text" value="2008"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> View a group of journals by <input type="text" value="Subject Category"/>
<input type="radio"/> JCR Social Sciences Edition <input type="text" value="2008"/>	<input type="radio"/> Search for a specific journal
	<input type="radio"/> View all journals
<input type="button" value="SUBMIT"/>	

*This product is best viewed in 800x600 or higher resolution*

*The Notices file was last updated Wed Sep 30 09:45:50 2009*

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# Here the results you get

ISI Web of Knowledge<sup>SM</sup>

## Journal Citation Reports<sup>®</sup>

WELCOME ? HELP

2008 JCR Science Edition

### Journal Summary List

[Journal Title Changes](#)

Journals from: **subject categories FORESTRY** [VIEW CATEGORY SUMMARY LIST](#)

Sorted by:

Journals 1 - 20 (of 39)

Page 1 of 2

Ranking is based on your journal and sort selections.

Mark	Rank	Abbreviated Journal Title <i>(linked to journal information)</i>	ISSN	JCR Data <sup>i</sup>						Eigenfactor <sup>TM</sup> Metrics <sup>i</sup>	
				Total Cites	Impact Factor	5-Year Impact Factor	Immediacy Index	Articles	Cited Half-life	Eigenfactor <sup>TM</sup> Score	Article Influence <sup>TM</sup> Score
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<a href="#">AGR FOREST METEOROL</a>	0168-1923	7232	3.668	4.486	0.800	160	7.4	0.02204	1.622
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<a href="#">AGROFOREST SYST</a>	0167-4366	1442	0.845	1.164	0.162	68	9.2	0.00262	0.345
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<a href="#">ALLG FORST JAGDZTG</a>	0002-5852	163	0.444	0.435	0.069	29	>10.0	0.00030	0.099
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<a href="#">ANN FOREST SCI</a>	1286-4560	1312	1.554	1.592	0.141	92	5.3	0.00452	0.428
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<a href="#">APPL VEG SCI</a>	1402-2001	579	1.305	1.629	0.273	44	6.1	0.00191	0.515
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<a href="#">CAN J FOREST RES</a>	0045-5067	9619	1.434	2.058	0.252	278	9.8	0.01979	0.687
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<a href="#">CIENC FLOREST</a>	0103-9954	100	0.103		0.040	25	6.5	0.00012	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	<a href="#">EUR J FOREST RES</a>	1612-4669	265	1.556	1.567	0.319	47	2.7	0.00171	0.492
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	<a href="#">FOREST CHRON</a>	0015-7546	965	0.737	0.873	1.086	70	8.1	0.00224	0.298
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	<a href="#">FOREST ECOL MANAG</a>	0378-1127	14451	2.110	2.633	0.296	697	6.3	0.04188	0.747
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	<a href="#">FOREST PATHOL</a>	1437-4781	332	1.225	1.161	0.158	38	4.4	0.00115	0.279
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	<a href="#">FOREST POLICY ECON</a>	1389-9341	440	0.768	1.132	0.122	41	3.9	0.00247	0.378
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	<a href="#">FOREST PROD J</a>	0015-7473	1959	0.550	0.669	0.093	129	>10.0	0.00380	0.227
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	<a href="#">FOREST SCI</a>	0015-749X	3536	1.664	2.171	0.081	62	>10.0	0.00592	0.789
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	<a href="#">FORESTRY</a>	0015-752X	927	1.472	1.385	0.130	46	8.1	0.00211	0.436
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	<a href="#">HOLZFORSCHUNG</a>	0018-3830	2369	1.278	1.336	0.278	115	9.5	0.00569	0.485
<input type="checkbox"/>	17	<a href="#">JAWA J</a>	0928-1541	794	1.000	1.176	0.031	32	>10.0	0.00137	0.376
<input type="checkbox"/>	18	<a href="#">INT FOREST REV</a>	1465-5489	236	0.597	1.058	0.000	57	5.1	0.00138	0.401
<input type="checkbox"/>	19	<a href="#">INT J WILDLAND FIRE</a>	1049-8001	1133	1.432	2.280	1.000	69	5.6	0.00385	0.705
<input type="checkbox"/>	20	<a href="#">J FOREST</a>	0022-1201	1676	1.263	1.550	0.053	38	>10.0	0.00367	0.592

Journals 1 - 20 (of 39)

Navigation icons: back, forward, search, etc.

Page 1 of 2

# Is the journal where I am publishing an ISI one?

Go to:

[Thomson Reuter Master Journal List](#)

Search Terms: FOREST\*  
Total journals found: 81

THE FOLLOWING TITLE(S) MATCHED YOUR REQUEST:

Journals 1-10 (of 81) FORMAT FOR PRINT

**AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST ENTOMOLOGY**  
Quarterly ISSN: 1461-9555  
WILEY-BLACKWELL, COMMERCE PLACE, 350 MAIN ST, MALDEN, USA, MA, 02148  
[Coverage](#)

**AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST METEOROLOGY**  
Monthly ISSN: 0168-1923  
ELSEVIER SCIENCE BV, PO BOX 211, AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS, 1000 AE  
[Coverage](#)

**ANNALS OF FOREST RESEARCH**  
Annual ISSN: 1844-8135  
EDITURA SILVICA, FOREST RESEARCH MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE ICAS, SOS STEFANESTI NR 128, VOLUNTARI, ROMANIA, ILFOV, 077190  
[Coverage](#)

**ANNALS OF FOREST SCIENCE**  
Bimonthly ISSN: 1286-4560  
SPRINGER FRANCE, 22 RUE DE PALESTRO, PARIS, FRANCE, 75002  
[Coverage](#)

**ANNALS OF FORESTRY**  
Semiannual ISSN: 0971-4022  
JYOTI PUBLISHERS DISTRIBUTORS, 374, MOHIT NAGAR, LANE NO. 13,, DEHRA DUN, INDIA, UTTARANCHAL, 248 006  
[Coverage](#)

**ARBORICULTURE & URBAN FORESTRY**  
Bimonthly ISSN: 1935-5297  
INT SOC ARBORICULTURE, P O BOX 3129, CHAMPAIGN, USA, IL, 61826-3129  
[Coverage](#)

**ARTHROPODS OF CANADIAN FORESTS**  
Irregular ISSN: \*\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*  
CANADIAN FOREST SERVICE, NORTHERN FORESTRY CENTRE, 5320 - 122 ST, EDMONTON, CANADA, ALBERTA, T6H 3S5  
[Coverage](#)

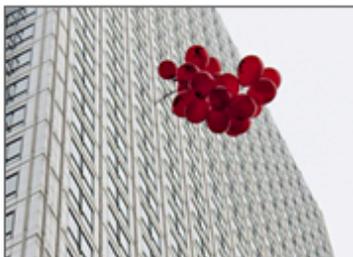
**AUSTRALIAN FORESTRY**  
Quarterly ISSN: 0004-9158  
INST FORESTERS AUSTRALIA, P O BOX 2, YARRALUMLA, AUSTRALIA, ACT, 2600  
[Coverage](#)

## SCIENCE

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[IP & Science](#) > [Master Journal List](#) > [Journal Search](#)

### JOURNAL SEARCH



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### THOMSON REUTERS MASTER JOURN

\*\*\*\*\* No matches found for the query. \*\*\*\*\*

forest\*  
Title Word

[SEARCH](#)

Another source of information: SCOPUS, the largest abstract and citation database for high quality scientific journal (now >90% overlapping with Web of Science)

The screenshot shows the SciVerse website interface. At the top left is the SciVerse logo with the tagline "Open to accelerate science". To the right are links for "Contact Us" and "RSS Feed". A search bar is located in the top right corner. A navigation menu below the header includes "HOME", "WHAT IS SCIVERSE?", "KEY BENEFITS", "COMMUNITY", "RESOURCE LIBRARY", "NEWS & EVENTS", and "FAQ". The main content area features a sidebar on the left with a "What is SciVerse?" section containing a list of links: "SciVerse Hub", "SciVerse ScienceDirect", "SciVerse Scopus" (highlighted), "Why Scopus?", "Scopus in Detail", "Scopus Services", "Scopus Training", "About Scopus", "How to get access", "CSAB", "Scopus: en français", and "Releases". Below these are "SciVerse SciTopics" and "SciVerse Applications". The main content area is titled "About Scopus" and includes a sub-header "Search millions of abstracts and index data with SciVerse Scopus". Below this is a paragraph: "SciVerse Scopus is the world's largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature and quality web sources." followed by a bulleted list of features: "Contains 41 million records, 70% with abstracts", "Nearly 18,000 titles from 5,000 publishers worldwide", "70% of content is pulled from international sources", "Includes over 3 million conference papers", "Provides 100% Medline coverage", and "Offers sophisticated tools to track, analyze and visualize research". A large SciVerse logo is on the right, with a smaller Scopus logo below it. Below the logo is a "Next Steps" section with links: "View Demo", "How to get access", "Contact us", "Resource Library", and "Subscribe to newsletters". At the bottom right is a "News & Events" section.

Contact Us | RSS Feed

Search this site  
SEARCH

HOME | **WHAT IS SCIVERSE?** | KEY BENEFITS | COMMUNITY | RESOURCE LIBRARY | NEWS & EVENTS | FAQ

**What is SciVerse?**

- ▶ SciVerse Hub
- ▶ SciVerse ScienceDirect
- ▶ SciVerse Scopus**
- ▶ Why Scopus?
- ▶ Scopus in Detail
- ▶ Scopus Services
- ▶ Scopus Training
- ▶ About Scopus
- ▶ How to get access
- ▶ CSAB
- ▶ Scopus: en français
- ▶ Releases

▶ SciVerse SciTopics

▶ SciVerse Applications

## About Scopus

Search millions of abstracts and index data with SciVerse Scopus

SciVerse Scopus is the world's largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature and quality web sources.

- Contains 41 million records, 70% with abstracts
- Nearly 18,000 titles from 5,000 publishers worldwide
- 70% of content is pulled from international sources
- Includes over 3 million conference papers
- Provides 100% Medline coverage
- Offers sophisticated tools to track, analyze and visualize research

The largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature...

**Next Steps**

- View Demo
- How to get access
- Contact us
- Resource Library
- Subscribe to newsletters

**News & Events**

<http://www.scopus.com>

# 3. Now write the paper, starting (almost) from zero

First rule: follow carefully the editorial rules and submission procedures (normally available on line)

Related Sites ▼

Search Help About Products

Contact

Elsevier Customer Support for Authors, Editors & Reviewers

Home Browse All Solutions FAQ Glossary EES Training Resources EMSS Book Author Resources Contact Us

1520 : EES User Guide for Authors  
Reviewed: 12/11/2009

← ↻ ↵ ↶ ↷

A A

ELSEVIER

Is this the first time you have submitted a paper using the Elsevier Editorial System (EES)? This user guide can show you how to do the following:

1. [Register as a new user](#)
2. [Log in to EES](#)
3. [Submit a manuscript/paper](#)
4. [Track the progress of your submission](#)
5. [Revise your manuscript](#)
6. [Troubleshooting](#)

On occasion, you may be invited to do one of the following:

1. [Submit an invited article](#)
2. [Submit a commentary on another article](#)

If you are unsure where to submit your manuscript, please see the article below:

[Which journal is most appropriate for my article?](#)

← here an  
example

# Another example: The Development Economies - Wiley

## For Authors

### Instructions To Authors

#### EDITORIAL REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE

The acceptance criteria for all papers are the quality and originality of the research and its significance to our readership. Manuscripts are peer reviewed by anonymous reviewers. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editorial Board, who reserves the right to refuse any material for publication.

#### SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

All articles submitted to the Journal must comply with these instructions. Failure to do so will result in return of the manuscript and possible delay in publication.

The original manuscript and one copy should be submitted to:

Editorial Office, *The Developing Economies*  
Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO  
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Chiba 261-8545  
Japan  
Email: [journal@ide.go.jp](mailto:journal@ide.go.jp)  
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#### STYLE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

##### Spelling

The Journal uses US spelling and authors should therefore follow the latest edition of the *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.

#### PARTS OF THE MANUSCRIPT

The length of an article (including references, footnotes, tables, figures, and appendices) should not exceed 10 000 words.

Manuscripts should be presented in the following order: (i) title page, (ii) abstract and key words, (iii) text, (iv) acknowledgments, (v) references, (vi) footnotes, (vii) appendices, (viii) figure legends, (ix) tables (each table complete with title and footnotes), and (x) figures.

##### Title page

The title page should contain (i) the title of the paper, (ii) the full names and affiliations of the authors, and (iii) the full postal and email address, plus facsimile and telephone numbers, of the author to whom correspondence about the manuscript should be sent. The title should be short, informative, and contain the major key words. A short running title (less than 40 characters) should also be provided.

##### Abstract and keywords

All articles must have a brief abstract that states in 150 words or fewer the major points made and the principal conclusions reached. The abstract should not contain abbreviations or references. JEL classification numbers and keywords should be provided.

##### References

The Harvard (author, date) system of referencing is used (examples are given below). In the text give the author's name followed by the year in parentheses: Smith (2000). If there are two authors use "and": Smith and Jones (2001). When reference is made to a work by four or more authors, the first name followed by "et al." should be used: MacDonald et al. (2002). In the reference list, references should be listed in alphabetical order.

All citations mentioned in the text, tables or figures must be listed in the reference list in alphabetical order. Full (not just initials) first name of all authors should be provided.

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the references.

##### Journals

Ranis, Gustav, and Frances Stewart. 2001. "Growth and Human Development: Comparative Latin American Experience." *Developing Economies* 39, no. 4: 333-65.

##### Books

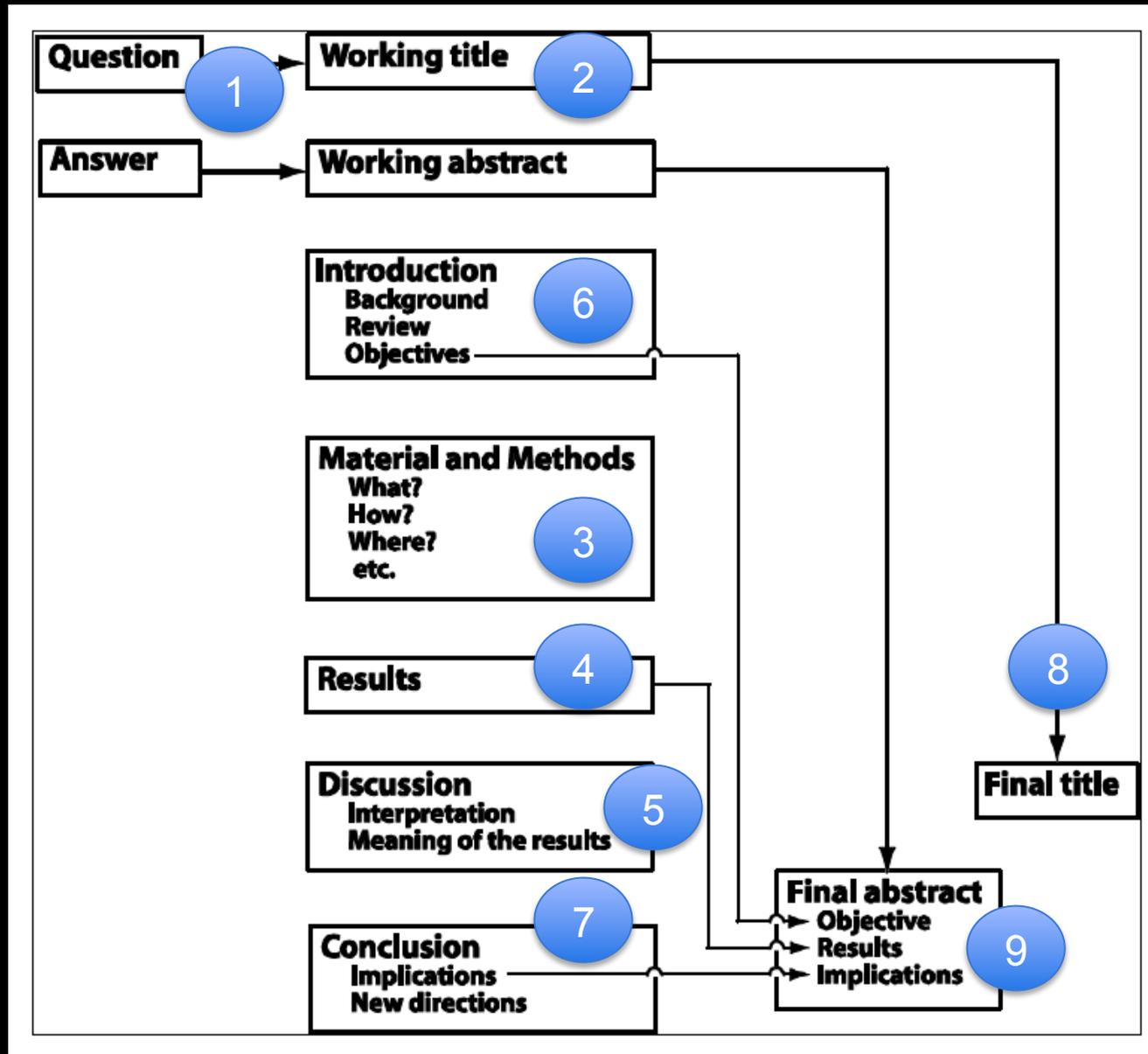
Fujita, Masahisa; Paul Krugman; and Anthony J. Venables. 2001. *The Spatial Economy: Cities, Regions, and International Trade*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

# Check the structure of your paper

The structure of a scientific paper is not the same as in a thesis!

Section heading	Answering the questions:
Introduction	What led to the work and what are my objectives?
Materials	What did I use?
Methods	What did I do?
Results	What happened?
Discussion	What does it mean?
Conclusions	What are the implications?
Acknowledgements	Who helped?
References	Who have I referred to in the text?

# Steps in writing your paper



Source: Stapleton et al., 2004

# A basic rule: max length (relax a bit!)

Oh no, your paper exceeds the maximum number of pages allowed! What do you do??

## TIPS AND TRICKS FOR KEEPING YOUR PAPER WITHIN THE PAGE LIMIT

### Shrink font size to limits of human perception

If a minimum font sized is imposed, use a font that is 0.2pt smaller. They won't notice, will they?

### Take out excessive details of your methodology

Let's face it, nobody really cares (and if they do, why help your competition?)

### Border size Rule-of-thumb:

If there is paper exposed, it can be filled (Nature, and other journals, abhors a vacuous submission). If limit exists, apply 0.2pt rule.

### Use Max. Abbrev. in Ref. Sec.

Spelling out the journal names will only make it easy for people to look up your competitors' papers.

### Rewrite entire paper to make it more concise and easier to understand

Yeah right. Prodigious verbiage establishes your superior intelligence. Also, who has the time?



# 4. Language editing

- If your English is decent, **it's better to write directly the manuscript in English** (it's a learning exercise!)
- Always ask for a revision by a **professional translator** (or a mother tongue scientist)
- Many editors provide information on **language editing services** (sometimes a reduced costs for scientists from DCs)
- A common best practices: in research organizations **costs for language editing** for manuscript prepared by PhD students or young scientists are fully covered by the institution

# An example

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See also the [Editors' Update Pamphlet](#) which details how authors can use and post their Elsevier-published articles.

**Publish your book**

In addition to our journals, we publish scientific, technical and medical books.

Doug Haynes, Director of UC-Irvine's Program for Faculty Equity and Diversity, talks about a program [supporting researchers who balance family life with research](#) in **Editors' Update**, Issue 23, August 2008.



# 5. Suggestions

- Try to organize a **seminar** and to involve as many competent scientists as possible to have their comments on your draft paper. Try also to present your paper in a **workshop or congress**
- Take advantage of the **pre-submission option made available by some Editors**
- Make sure that you have a good system to **track and save** the different versions of the manuscript and of the correspondence. Make sure you have a **backup copy**.

# Suggestions (2/3)

- **Check the bibliography** (← Mendeley, Refworks, Endnote, ...):
  - References can be quickly checked with Google Scholar (but it contains many mistakes!)
  - Have a look to papers published by the members of the editorial committee and those published by the journal on the same topic
  - Don't forget to refer to the papers of the “*big potatoes*” (i.e. the famous, well know scientists in the sector)

# Refer to publisher standard for citations

For the *List of Title Word Abbreviations* see:

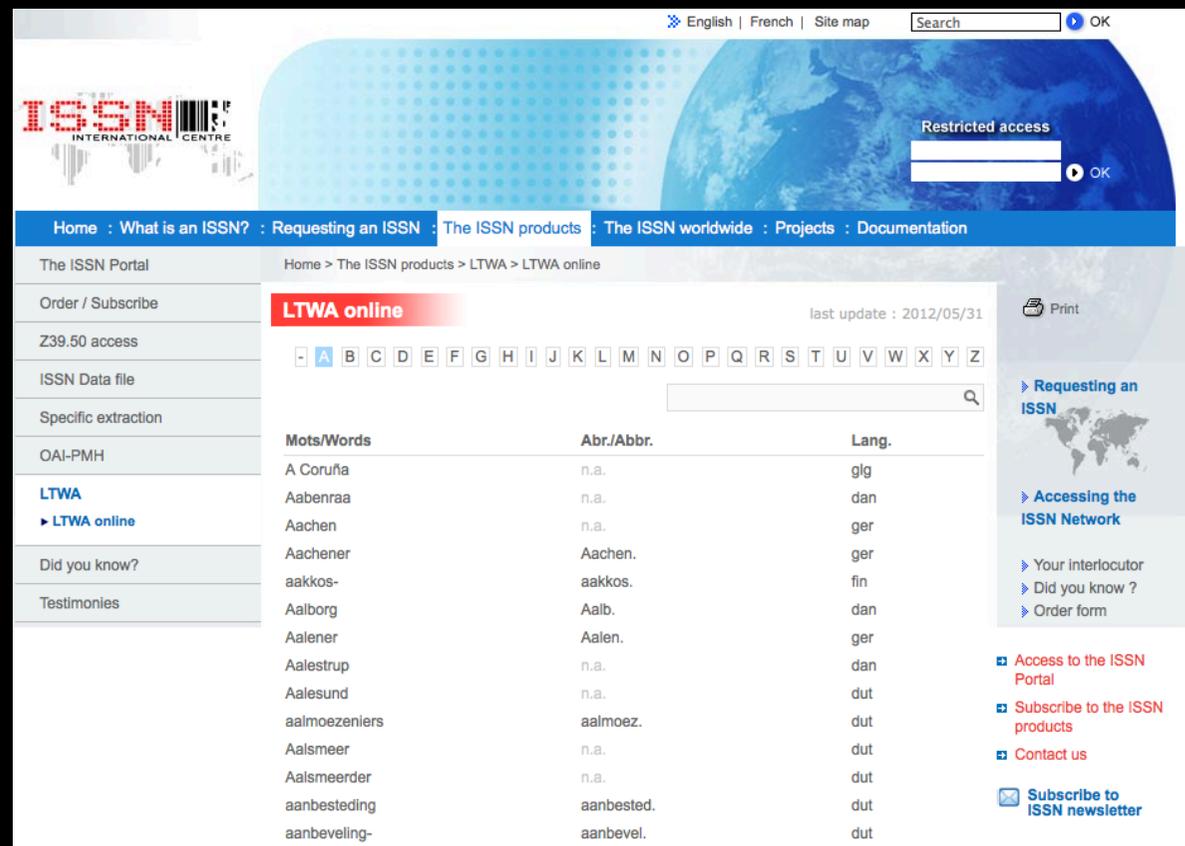
<http://www.issn.org/2-22661-LTWA-online.php>.

Journal → J.

Ecosystem → Ecosyst.

Forest → For.

...



The screenshot shows the ISSN LTWA online page. The page has a blue header with the ISSN logo and navigation links. A search bar is visible in the top right. The main content area is titled "LTWA online" and includes a list of abbreviations. The list has three columns: "Mots/Words", "Abr./Abbr.", and "Lang.". The list includes entries for various languages and words, such as "A Corufa", "Aabenraa", "Aachen", "Aachener", "aakkos-", "Aalborg", "Aalener", "Aalestrup", "Aalesund", "aalmoezeniers", "Aalsmeer", "Aalsmeerder", "aanbesteding", and "aanbeveling-".

Mots/Words	Abr./Abbr.	Lang.
A Corufa	n.a.	glg
Aabenraa	n.a.	dan
Aachen	n.a.	ger
Aachener	Aachen.	ger
aakkos-	aakkos.	fin
Aalborg	Aalb.	dan
Aalener	Aalen.	ger
Aalestrup	n.a.	dan
Aalesund	n.a.	dut
aalmoezeniers	aalmoez.	dut
Aalsmeer	n.a.	dut
Aalsmeerder	n.a.	dut
aanbesteding	aanbested.	dut
aanbeveling-	aanbevel.	dut

# Suggestions (2/3)

- Check the bibliography (← Mendeley, Refworks, Endnote, ...):
  - References can be quickly checked with Google Scholar (but it contains many mistakes!)
  - Have a look to papers published by the members of the editorial committee and those published by the journal on the same topic
  - Don't forget to refer to the papers of the “*big potatoes*”
- A common (very serious) mistake: cut and paste sentences from papers and books without quoting them. **Plagiarism** is not only a good reason to have your paper rejected, but it is an illegal act! (we will discuss this topic in the last E-lesson)

# Suggestions (2/3)

- Check the bibliography (← Mendeley, Refworks, Endnote, ...):
  - References can be quickly checked with Google Scholar (it contains many mistakes!)
  - Have a look to papers published by the members of the editorial committee and those published by the journal on the same topic
  - Don't forget to refer to the papers of the “*big potatoes*”
- A common (very serious) mistake: cut and paste sentences from papers and books without quoting them. Plagiarism is not only a good reason to have your paper rejected, but it is an illegal act! (we will discuss this topic in the last E-lesson)
- Acknowledgments: **don't forget any person or institution** (this is also a mean to show that you had relevant and appropriate input to your work!)

# Suggestions (3/3)

- Co-authors: if you are a un-known researcher, it may be useful to include as a co-author a **well known and authoritative scientist**
- **Credit** should in this case clearly defined and reported
- Be aware about your **copyrights**
- ... and now relax a bit!

**THE AUTHOR LIST: GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE**

The first author  
Senior grad student on the project. Made the figures.

The third author  
First year student who actually did the experiments, performed the analysis and wrote the whole paper. Thinks being third author is "fair".

The second-to-last author  
Ambitious assistant professor or post-doc who instigated the paper.

Michaels, C., Lee, E. F., Sap, P. S., Nichols, S. T., Oliveira, L., Smith, B. S.

The second author  
Grad student in the lab that has nothing to do with this project, but was included because he/she hung around the group meetings (usually for the food).

The middle authors  
Author names nobody really reads. Reserved for undergrads and technical staff.

The last author  
The head honcho. Hasn't even read the paper but, hey, he got the funding, and his famous name will get the paper accepted.

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## 5. OK, now I submit the paper! (NO! ...please wait)

- Ask an **experienced colleague to read** your paper and make comments with no limitations

... not so easy: good scientists (who can make good comments) have many things to do, and your paper is not a priority task

- **Read again your paper after some days:** you can be sure you will find something that can be improved

## 6. Now I submit the paper

- **Normally: on line submission with username and pw** (not always so easy: different rules for different journals; be prepared to spend quite a lot of time)
- Check that your **paper has been received** by the journal (a msg is normally sent to the corresponding author and/or this information is provided in the web site)
- Some journals, in the submission phase, ask the author to suggest a **peer reviewer**: not your supervisor (but maybe one of his friends...), that person met in a congress, a person who knows your study area/country, ...
- You can normally **follow the revision process** on the web site of the journal

# 7. The Journal is not replying ... what can I do? Do I write?

- **Wait at last 6 months!**
- If you do not receive a letter from the publishers within six months, you should write kindly asking them to confirm that they received the manuscript and **the state of the review process**
- **After 12 months** you are allowed to make a clear-cut request, asking for a time schedule in your manuscript revision

# 8. Results of the review: addressing reviewers' comments



## 1. Your paper has been accepted!

- ... forget it (very rare condition for a young scientist)

## 2. Your paper has been accepted with minor changes to be done

... congratulations! Your revision work will be easy and quick

3. **“Revise and resubmit”**: the paper has not been accepted in the present version but, if you change it in accordance with the reviewers’ comments, the journal is willing to re-consider it. This is the most frequent case.

Is it **a good or bad news**?

... you have to consider it as a good news, if the reviewers are asking you **reasonable changes** and adaptations

## 4. Your paper has not been accepted

- They write you to send the manuscript to a “more appropriate” journal



- Read the comments and ask yourself: why?
  - reviewers **didn't understand anything** (do I need to write to the Editor? This is possible, but remember to be always humble and objective)
  - reviewers are **substantially right**: my work is not of high scientific quality. I tried, but I was not lucky
  - reviewers are right, but **I still can work** on the manuscript ...

... and you try with another journal  
Relax a bit now!

## ADDRESSING REVIEWER COMMENTS

BAD REVIEWS ON YOUR PAPER? FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES AND YOU MAY YET GET IT PAST THE EDITOR:

### Reviewer comment:

"The method/device/paradigm the authors propose is clearly wrong."

### How NOT to respond:

✗ "Yes, we know. We thought we could still get a paper out of it. Sorry."

### Correct response:

✓ "The reviewer raises an interesting concern. However, as the focus of this work is exploratory and not performance-based, validation was not found to be of critical importance to the contribution of the paper."

### Reviewer comment:

"The authors fail to reference the work of Smith et al., who solved the same problem 20 years ago."

### How NOT to respond:

✗ "Huh. We didn't think anybody had read that. Actually, their solution is better than ours."

### Correct response:

✓ "The reviewer raises an interesting concern. However, our work is based on completely different first principles (we use different variable names), and has a much more attractive graphical user interface."

### Reviewer comment:

"This paper is poorly written and scientifically unsound. I do not recommend it for publication."

### How NOT to respond:

✗ "You #&@\*% reviewer! I know who you are! I'm gonna get you when it's my turn to review!"

### Correct response:

✓ "The reviewer raises an interesting concern. However, we feel the reviewer did not fully comprehend the scope of the work, and misjudged the results based on incorrect assumptions."

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## 9. ...“*revise and resubmit*”

- Probably the **most boring and more frustrating** part of your work as a young scientist (...but, often, the **most useful**)
- Your target: **make the Editor and the reviewers happy!**
- All the **suggestions and criticisms have to be accepted?**
- No, but if you don't accept some suggestions you need to **motivate your decision** → write clear (very kind) explanatory notes to your reviewers or to the Editor

- Sometimes the Editor is making a distinction between the **most relevant mistakes** and the minor ones.
- Take into consideration the **Editor's comments and suggestions**: they are the more important ones (and at the end the Editor has the last word... )
- If some of the comments or requests are not clear, you are allowed to write to the Editor and **ask for clarifications**

# Get some fun out of life! Have a look to this journal:

## *Journal of* Universal Rejection



[About the Journal](#) | [Instructions for Authors](#) | [Subscriptions](#) | [Archives](#)

**Editor-in-Chief:** [Caleb Emmons](#)

### About the Journal

The founding principle of the Journal of Universal Rejection (JofUR) is rejection. Universal rejection. That is to say, all submissions, regardless of quality, will be rejected. Despite that apparent drawback, here are a number of reasons you may choose to submit to the JofUR:

- You can send your manuscript here without suffering waves of anxiety regarding the eventual fate of your submission. You know with 100% certainty that it will not be accepted for publication.
- There are no page-fees.
- You may claim to have submitted to the most prestigious journal (judged by acceptance rate).
- The JofUR is one-of-a-kind. Merely submitting work to it may be considered a badge of honor.
- You retain complete rights to your work, and are free to resubmit to other journals *even before our review process is complete*.
- Decisions are often (though not always) rendered within hours of submission.

### Instructions for Authors

The JofUR solicits any and all types of manuscript: poetry, prose, visual art, and research articles. You name it, we take it, and reject it. Your manuscript may be formatted however you wish. Frankly, we don't care.

After submitting your work, the decision process varies. Often the Editor-in-Chief will reject your work out-of-hand, without even reading it! However, he might read it. Probably he'll skim. At other times your manuscript may be sent to anonymous referees. Unless they are the Editor-in-Chief's wife or graduate school buddies, it is unlikely that the referees will even understand what is going on. Rejection will follow as swiftly as a bird dropping from a great height after being struck by a stone. At other times, rejection may languish like your email buried in the Editor-in-Chief's inbox. But it will come, swift or slow, as surely as death. Rejection.

Submissions should be emailed to [J.Universal.Rejection@gmail.com](mailto:J.Universal.Rejection@gmail.com). Small files only, please. Why not just send the first couple pages if it is long?

### Subscriptions

An individual subscription may be secured for £120 per year (four issues). Institutional and library subscriptions are also available; prices will be provided upon enquiry. It is unknown whether the subscription will be delivered in print or as electronic content, because no one has yet ordered one.

### Archives

- March 2009 (Vol 1, No 1) contents:

*(empty)*

- June 2009 (Vol 1, No 2) contents:

*(empty)*

<http://www.universalrejection.org/>

# 10. Check carefully the proofs!

After all the time spent in preparing and revising your paper, it's a pity if you find some stupid mistakes in your printed work

*“A random check of 300 references in six medical journals showed that 15% of them misquoted the original author's name. So do not be so confident that the reference you copied out of a journal months ago is right. Go back and check it”*

Source: Stapleton et al., 2004

# One last word... be prepared to a changing scientific communication environment

Elsevier in 2011 launched the **Article of the Future project** aiming to change the traditional format of the academic paper with regard to three key elements: presentation, content and context. To achieve this, a three-pane article view has been proposed, which separates **navigation (left pane)** and **value-added enhancements (right pane)** from the **core article (middle pane)**.

- The project web site: <http://www.articleofthefuture.com/about>

The screenshot displays a three-pane article view for 'The Leadership Quarterly' journal. The left pane contains an 'Outline' section with a 'Show thumbnails' checkbox and an 'Article top' link. Below this is an 'Abstract' section with two video thumbnails. The main middle pane shows the journal title, volume information, and the article title: 'Scholarly leadership of the study of leadership: A review of The Leadership Quarterly's second decade, 2000-2009'. It lists authors and provides a 'Research highlights' section with several bullet points. The right pane features a 'Sidebar content' dropdown set to 'Overview', a 'Your Library' section, and an 'Explore' section with links to related articles and applications. At the bottom of the right pane is an 'Additional article content and features' section with links to article information, journal information, author information, related articles, tables, videos, data analysis, and references.

... and now,  
it's your turn...

