

How to Use a Journal's Aims and Scope to Find the Right Fit for Your Research

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Editorial Note

When choosing a journal to submit your article to, it's important to make sure it's the right fit. To help with this, every journal on Computer Science and Systems Biology Online has an aims and scope statement. This is a powerful resource that you can use to choose the best journal for your research.

Read on for guidance on how to use the aims and scope of an academic journal, and the important points you'll need to consider when deciding if the journal is right for you.

What are the journal aims and scope statement?

A journal's aim is the objective or purpose of what the journal is trying to accomplish. The scope is how the journal will accomplish this.

The aims and scope statement includes:

- A brief introduction to the journal
- An outline of the subjects covered
- The type of articles published (and what it doesn't publish)
- Its peer-review policy
- Information about publishing options

How to use the aims and scope to see if a journal is the right place for your research

Once you have read the journal's aims and scope, consider the following points:

Is your research relevant to the journal's audience?

Consider whether the language is too technical for a journal that has a large, general readership, or if your research is too country-specific for a journal with a global audience. Are the journal's readers experts in several subjects, or more specialized in one?

Is your manuscript type appropriate for the journal?

For example, the journal may not accept editorials, or clinical studies.

Is your work too similar to other articles in the journal?

Your manuscript needs to be a good fit, but the journal may not accept your article if there are too many similarities with existing articles.

Why is peer review important?

Despite its flaws, peer review is vitally important for upholding the high standards of scholarly communications, for maintaining the quality of individual journals, and for support of the researchers who've authored the papers.

Every journal depends on the hard work of reviewers who test and refine each article before publication. Even for very specialist journals, the editor can't be an expert in the topic of every article submitted. So, the comments of carefully selected reviewers are an essential guide to inform the editor's decision on a manuscript.

There are also practical reasons why peer review is beneficial to you, the author. Review can alert you to any errors in your work or gaps in the literature you may have overlooked. Researchers consistently tell us that their final published article is better than the version they submitted before peer review.

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