

I. Rational for symposia in the JBI

Symposia are intended to provide a focus for specific issues in a less extended forum than a thematic or special issue. Symposia allow for exploratory discussions of issues that are pressing or are foremost in the public consciousness; they provide a means for the detailed re-examination of 'old' issues through different methodological or disciplinary lenses; they provide a first step for academics to learn valuable editorial skills; and they provide access to new and diverse readerships. The main difference between a symposium and a thematic issue is that the former does not aim for the same kind of depth made possible in the extended format. Rather, they are intended to spark further debate and bring together disparate voices working in related areas. Symposia are intended to provide a means to attract authors of international standing and/or papers of academic excellence.

It is the view of the Editorial Board of the JBI that symposia are, for the reasons outlined above, an important part of the JBI and that the journal should aim to include one symposium per issue, excluding special issues.

II. Editorial responsibility for symposia

Overall editorial responsibility for symposia will rest with the Editor-in-Chief and Executive Committee of the JBI. The Editorial Board will be consulted about topics. Progress on symposia should be reported by the Editor-in-Chief (or his/her deputy) to the Editorial Board at each meeting.

For the purposes of symposia, each one will have a guest convenor or convenors. The role of the convenor is to write a brief proposal to be submitted to the Executive Committee, and if it is accepted, to contact likely contributors and gather together proposed materials as are appropriate for the theme. In effect the convenors act as associate editors over the papers. These materials should undergo peer review in accordance with the normal policy of the JBI.

III. Process for attracting and soliciting submissions of ideas for symposia

The JBI will accept proposals for symposia from anyone – not excluding those already serving on the Editorial Board, International Advisory Board, Executive Committee etc.

The JBI may also actively seek proposals for symposia by a general invitation for example via

- inclusion of a note on symposia in the Instructions for Authors
- inclusions of a prominent call for proposals for symposia on the JBI website
- regular inclusion of calls for proposals for symposia in the printed version of the JBI
- regular circulation of calls for proposals for symposia to relevant professional associations and interest groups.

The Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors, Members of the Editorial Board, etc. may also solicit proposals for symposia from leading or emerging scholars.

IV. Instructions for proposals for symposia

Proposals for a symposium in the JBI should consist of a 1-2 page outline to the Executive Committee of the JBI. This should include:

- the proposed topic
- the proposed Convenor(s), including a description of their previous editorial experience
- the rationale for the proposal
- the significance of the symposium
- the likely readership, including why readers of the JBI would have an interest in this thematic issue and why this thematic issue would attract a new readership to the JBI
- the names of between four and eight potential contributors, taking into account that there is often difficulty in securing academics of international standing and a potential failure rate of up to fifty per cent amongst those approached

- a statement about the kinds of disciplines that will be represented in the symposium and how it will contribute to the commitment of the JBI to promoting interdisciplinary dialogues
- proposed authors and/or papers
- whether any of the manuscripts have previously been published in part or in full in a book, monograph or journal (print or on-line) and status of obtaining permissions to reprint these articles. It is the JBI's preference NOT to publish works in symposia that have been published elsewhere unless there is a compelling justification for doing so.

The Editors-in-Chief will be responsible for keeping an updated file of suggestions for symposia, and a file of worked-up proposals.

V. Process for selecting symposia

The Executive Committee will review proposals for symposia and if necessary establish a process for assessing and comparing competing proposals.

It is expected that Convenors will make every effort to solicit contributions from international experts in the area of their symposia.

Final decisions about which symposia will be undertaken will be the decision of the Editor-in-Chief and Executive Committee of the JBI in consultation with the Editorial Board.

The Editor-in-Chief, with the help of the Executive Committee if required, will notify the Convenors of deadlines, processes for review (see next section), processes for preparation of manuscripts, etc. and affirm that the Editors-in-Chief of the JBI have overall editorial authority.

Where possible, a lead time of at least one year should be maintained from the choice of a theme to publication of the symposia. Ordinarily, a commitment to no more than eight symposia will be undertaken at any time, though a running list of proposed symposia will be maintained that may include as many as twenty topics.

A regular appraisal of proposals will be undertaken at least bi-monthly, allowing flexibility in publication schedules to fit with the stage of preparation of given symposia. Unlike thematic or special issues the timelines for symposia will need to take into account that given symposia may be delayed or need to be rescheduled.

Details of the symposia in preparation will be published from time to time in the journal.

All manuscripts should be submitted through Springer's online submission database, Editorial Manager, and should be prepared in accordance with the JBI 'Instructions to Authors' with the word lengths for articles in compliance with articles of original research (up to 7,000 words).

VI. Peer review process

All individual papers in all symposia will be subject to the appropriate level of independent peer review by reviewers selected in consultation between the Convenor/s and the Editor-in-Chief.

The Editor-in-Chief will rely on advice on possible reviewers from Convenors, or elsewhere, but final responsibility must lie with the Editor-in-Chief.

Convenors will be informed of the outcome of the review process once it has been completed.

More information

For more information on how to submit an expression of interest, or for more information on general submissions, please contact:

Ms Bronwen Morrell (Managing Editor) bronwenmorrell@gmail.com OR Dr Kate Cregan (Editor-in-Chief) kcregan@unimelb.edu.au

ONLINE SUBMISSION

Now you can submit and track your manuscript with ease using Editorial Manager – a secure, web-based manuscript handling system for online manuscript submission and peer-review system. This system allows authors, editors and reviewers the possibility to track the progress of the review and correction process of manuscripts in real time. Submit your manuscript at: <http://jbin.edmgr.com>

For more information on the JBI, its editorial board, international board and peer-reviewing policy go to <http://www.springer.com/medicine/journal/11673>