

I. Rational for thematic (special) issues in the JBI

Thematic (“special”) issues fulfil an important function in many journals. They provide a means for extending the focus and depth of examination of specific issues; they allow exploration 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 opportunities for academics to learn valuable editorials skills; and they provide access to new and diverse readerships.

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

II. Editorial responsibility for thematic issues

Overall editorial responsibility for thematic issues will rest with the Editors in Chief of the JBI. All proposals must be agreed to by the Editorial Board. Progress on thematic issues should be reported by the Editor in Chief to the Editorial Board at each meeting.

For the purposes of thematic issues, each one will have a guest editor or editors. The role of the guest editor is to write the proposal, and if it is accepted, to gather together proposed materials, including original papers, editorials, commentaries, ‘in that case’ scenarios and responses, as are appropriate for the theme. These materials should undergo peer review in accordance with the normal policy of the JBI. The guest editor is also responsible for the ordering and layout of the thematic issue, within the constraints of the layout of the journal.

III. Process for attracting and soliciting submissions of ideas for thematic issues

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

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

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

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

IV. Instructions for proposals for thematic issues

Proposals for a thematic issue in the JBI should consist of a 3-5 page proposal to the Editor(s) of the JBI. This should include:

- the proposed topic
- the proposed Guest Editor(s), including a description of their previous editorial experience and a brief CV
- the rationale and background for the proposal
- the significance of the thematic issue
- 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 proposed structure of the thematic issue, including the number of original articles, the methodology and discipline mix of the proposed manuscripts, the number of review articles (where relevant), the inclusion of sub-themes or symposia (where appropriate)
- a statement about the kinds of disciplines that will be represented in the proposed issue 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

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

V. Process for selecting thematic issues

The Executive Committee will review proposals for thematic issues and if necessary establish a process for assessing and comparing competing proposals. This must include an element of external review. External review is review of the proposal by someone who is an acknowledged authority in the field of the thematic issue who is not involved in the proposed issue and has no conflict of interest with respect to the guest editor/s or other journals. This external element of review should be carried when a completed proposal is received by the Editor-in-Chief.

Final decisions about which thematic issues will be undertaken will be the decision of the Editors-in-Chief of the JBI in consultation with the Editorial Board.

The Editor in Chief, with the help of the Executive Committee if required, will prepare a written agreement with the Guest Editors outlining the nature of the issue proposed, deadlines, processes for review (see next section), processes for preparation of manuscripts, etc. and affirming that the Editors-in-Chief of the JBI have overall authority and can assume control of the editorship of the issue at any time.

Where possible, a lead time of at least two years should be maintained from the choice of a theme to publication of the issue. Ordinarily, a commitment to no more than three thematic issues will be undertaken at any time.

An annual deadline for proposals should be set, after which a decision about the next thematic issue to be undertaken should be made.

Details of the thematic issues 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 thematic issues will be subject to the appropriate level of independent peer review by reviewers selected in consultation between the guest Editor and the Editor-in-Chief. This review is additional to the external review of the proposal as a whole.

The Editor-in-Chief may seek advice on possible reviewers from guest Editors, or elsewhere, but final responsibility must lie with the Editor-in-Chief.

Guest editors 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

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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>