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## ***Language Testing* – Special Issue Instructions for Guest Editors**

The editors of *Language Testing* invite proposals from prospective guest editors for the annual special issue of the journal. Each year *Language Testing* devotes a special issue to papers focused on an area of current importance in the field. [Click here to view upcoming and past special issues of Language Testing.](#)

### ***General instructions***

As special issue editors you will be responsible for managing the entire production of one issue of the journal. This will include commissioning papers for your issue, overseeing the internal and external review processes, checking final proofs, and ensuring that a full set of manuscripts has been submitted in time for production prior to publication. During this time you will liaise with the journal editors, Paula Winke and Luke Harding. You will also liaise with our editorial assistant, Dylan Burton.

### ***Key questions***

#### **How many papers should we include?**

In planning the special issue, please aim for 1 introductory editorial in addition to 5-7 contributed papers. Special issues often have at least one closing post-script or discussion paper which can be useful, but the decision on whether to include this will be up to you. It is probably better to aim for 7 papers from the outset so that you have a safety net in the event that an author is unable to complete a paper according to the schedule or some papers do not make it through the review process. Both of these unfortunate circumstances can arise in the process for various reasons. The published page length of the special issues should be approximately 160 pages.

#### **How long should each paper be?**

All submissions should follow normal guidelines: "Original submissions should be 9,000 words maximum in length, inclusive of Notes, MS Word formatted Figures or Tables, and References. The abstract does not count toward the 9,000-word limit." We can allow some more flexibility at the revision stage to allow the authors to respond to reviewers' requests for additional information, but initial submissions should not exceed the 9,000 word limit. *Language Testing* allows for supplemental files which do not count toward the word limit. Authors are encouraged to adhere to Open Science practices, and preregister their study and/or publish their materials and data in Open Access repositories with DOIs. Special issue editorials and post-scripts are normally less than 4,000 words.

#### **How will the review process work?**

The following steps are taken to ensure that the review process is both expedient and thorough:

- (1) Special issue editors are invited to be guest editors within the ScholarOne Manuscript system for *Language Testing*. An initial, internal review of the manuscripts is undertaken by the special issue (SI) editors to help the authors improve the papers as much as possible, giving them the best chance of a successful external review. The SI editors need to decide

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whether the paper has materialized in a way that makes it still relevant to the special issue, and whether it is of high enough quality to send out for review. The SI editors may also want to request a shift in emphasis in view of the other papers in the issue. If special issue editors are submitting full papers themselves, the *Language Testing* Editors will handle the review.

(2) An external review requires at least two double-blind external reviews for each paper. The SI editors send papers out to external reviewers through the ScholarOne Manuscript system for *Language Testing*. It is advisable to line up commitments from at least some reviewers for the special issue prior to making the requests. The SI editors guide the papers through the review process, communicating with reviewers and authors, and then evaluating the authors' revisions. Throughout this process the SI editors are welcome to communicate with the *Language Testing* editors for advice and assistance.

(3) The complete special issue is reviewed by the *Language Testing* editors. Editors will communicate with SI editors about any issues and requests for revisions that they have based on this review. This external view of the whole project can raise issues that then need to be resolved relatively quickly.

### What are the deadlines in the process?

The special issue is generally scheduled for issue 3 of the journal (the Fall issue). For publication in the fall, the SI editors will need to submit the complete manuscript (i.e., all final, *accepted* versions of manuscripts) by **December 31<sup>st</sup>** of the year prior to publication.

The following example schedule outlines the deadlines that would need to be observed to manage the process:

Month	Tasks
Late June 2021	LT Editors notify selected SI editors that special issue has been approved and inform them of the next steps.
Early July 2021	Release call for papers (open call) if needed – provide deadline for submission of abstracts to consider for selection (deadline should be a date in August).
September 2021	Invite successful entrants of open call (if occurring) and inform them of the deadline for full article submission.
Early January 2022	Authors' first submission of full manuscripts to online system.
January 2022	Review process (1): Special issue editors read submissions and provide feedback to authors.
February 2022	Authors submit revised manuscripts.
March 2022	Review process (2): Special issue editors check revised papers for readiness and send them out to external reviewers.
April 2022	External reviewers' feedback due (final date).

June 2022	Authors submit revised manuscripts in response to external reviewers' comments.
July 2022	Special issue editors review revised manuscript or send for second round of external review (if needed).
August 2022	External reviewers' feedback due (final date).
October 2022	Authors make final revisions, and complete set of manuscripts sent to LT editors (by <b>October 15, 2021</b> ) for final editorial review .
November 2022	Additional time to allow for further review, delays, etc.
December 2022	All approved manuscripts marked as "accept" in online system and articles move to production.
January 2023	Production team, authors, and editors do copy editing. Contributor agreements signed.
February 2023	All manuscripts uploaded to Online First and Table of Contents submitted.
July 2023	Special Issue published.

### *Directions for Submission of a Special Issue Proposal*

Special issue proposals should be uploaded to the *Language Testing* ScholarOne Manuscripts submission system (<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/lti>). *Language Testing's* ScholarOne Manuscripts submission system involves the following proposal-submission steps:

#### Step 1:

- Select "Special Issue Proposal" as the submission type;
- Enter a Title of 50 words or less;
- Enter an Abstract summarizing the proposal in 200 words or less.

#### Step 2:

- Upload a Title Page with the (or each) guest editor's name, position, affiliation, and contact information.
- Upload a Main Document that includes:
  - Definition of the proposed topic and explanation of the need and rationale for this special issue;
  - Description of the source of potential papers for inclusion in the special issue and their origin (e.g., an open call, a colloquium from a conference, researchers working on the theme who have agreed to submit...);
  - Information on the planned degree of transparency that the collective research papers will have;
  - Proposed timeline (actual timeline will need to be agreed upon with the editors).
  - Qualifications of the editor(s) (please include previous editing and managerial experience);
  - A draft of the call for abstracts for the issue (to be used in soliciting papers from prospective contributors).

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Step 3: Provide a minimum of five, and up to ten, keywords for the special issue proposal.

Step 4: Enter the (or each) special issue editor's name (listed here as "author"), with institutional affiliation and ORCID (<https://orcid.org/>) ID.

Step 5: You may add suggested proposal reviewers.

Step 6: Upload a Cover letter (optional); and answer all required responses to questions about the proposal manuscript.

*When submitting a special issue proposal online, please note that the abstract (less than 200 words) need not be in the Main Document: The abstract is to be entered in a text box during "Step 1" of the submission. Within "Step 1," special issue proposal submitters should click "No" to the question "Is this manuscript a candidate for a special issue?" Within "Step 1," Open Science Badges should remain unselected.*

### ***Proposal Evaluation***

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of (1) their scholarly quality, (2) the degree of compelling need presented for developing a particular area of language testing and assessment, (3) the prospect for obtaining a sufficient number of papers of excellent quality, typically including an open call to the field for participation, (4) the degree of transparency the collective research papers will have, (5) the record of the proposing editor(s), and (6) the prospect of the proposed issue to make a significant impact by providing important, novel perspectives. Proposals will be evaluated and double-blind peer-reviewed by members of the *Language Testing* editorial board.

Questions may be posed to Luke Harding and Paula Winke, Editors, *Language Testing*

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