DESCRIPTION

*International Journal of Surgery Case Reports (IJSCR)* is the companion journal to the highly-regarded *International Journal of Surgery*.

*International Journal of Surgery Case Reports* is an open access, broad scope journal covering all surgical specialties. It is dedicated to publishing case reports and case series. Articles must be authentic, ethical, educational and clinically interesting to an international audience of surgeons, trainees and researchers in all surgical subspecialties, as well as clinicians in related fields.

All case reports and case series submitted need to comply with the relevant reporting criteria. The journal is published monthly and focuses on rapid submission to decision times. All articles are peer reviewed and if accepted for publication, authors are notified of this decision and requested to pay an Article Processing Fee. Following payment of this fee, the article is made universally available to all on *ScienceDirect*. The final authoritative version of each case report is also sent to PubMed Central.

The journal covers the following areas of surgery: Cardiothoracic surgery General surgery Neurosurgery Oral and maxillofacial surgery Otolaryngology (ENT) Paediatric surgery Plastic surgery Trauma and orthopaedic surgery Urology Vascular surgery

**Benefits to authors**

We also provide many author benefits, such as free PDFs, a liberal copyright policy, special discounts on Elsevier publications and much more. Please click here for more information on our author services.

Please see our *Guide for Authors* for information on article submission. If you require any further information or help, please visit our *Support Center*.

IJSCR is indexed in: AcademicPub The British Library Cancerlit Directory of Open Access Journals EMBASE Google Scholar ProQuest PubMed Central SCOPUS PubMed Web of Science - Emerging Sources Citation Index SciVal ScienceDirect ClinicalKey EBSCO

**Disclaimer**

The information and opinions presented in the Journal reflect the views of the authors and not of the Journal or its Editorial Board or the Publisher. Publication does not constitute endorsement by the
Neither *IJS Case Reports* nor its publishers nor anyone else involved in creating, producing or delivering *IJS Case Reports* or the materials contained therein, assumes any liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information provided in *IJS Case Reports*, nor shall they be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, special, consequential or punitive damages arising out of the use of *IJS Case Reports*. *IJS Case Reports*, nor its publishers, nor any other party involved in the preparation of material contained in *IJS Case Reports* represents or warrants that the information contained herein is in every respect accurate or complete, and they are not responsible for any errors or omissions or for the results obtained from the use of such material. Readers are encouraged to confirm the information contained herein with other sources.

**ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING**

AcademicPub  
Web of Science  
Embase  
Scopus  
Google Scholar  
PubMed/Medline  
Cancerlit  
The British Library  
ProQuest  
PubMed Central  
ClinicalKey  
Academic Search (EBSCO)

**EDITORIAL BOARD**

*Editor-in-Chief*  
David Rosin, Bridgetown, Barbados  

*Managing and Executive Editor*  
Riaz Agha, London, United Kingdom  

*Senior Editors*  
R.Y. Afifi, Cairo, Egypt  
H. B. Alam, Ann Arbor, United States of America  
J. P. Barret, Barcelona, Spain  
B. Challacombe, London, United Kingdom  
X-P. Chen, Wuhan, China  
R.L. De Wilde, Oldenburg, Germany  
B. Ekser, Indianapolis, United States of America  
H.B. Hechtman, Boston, United States of America  
J. W. Y. Lau, Hong Kong, Hong Kong  
O. Muensterer, Mainz, Germany  
S. Rogers, Chicago, United States of America  
J. Talati, Karachi, Pakistan  
M. Thorat, London, United Kingdom  
F.C. Wei, Taoyuan, Taiwan  

*Associate Editors*  
A. Baram, Sulaymaniyah, Iraq  
R. Coppola, Roma, Italy  
V. Kasivisvanathan, London, United Kingdom  
R Keižer, Winnipeg, Canada  
B Kirshtein, Be’er Sheva, Israel  
J.A. McCaul, Bradford, United Kingdom  
E.R. McGlone, London, United Kingdom  
F. Millham, South Weymouth, United States of America  
H. Miyamoto, Rochester, United States of America  
D. Muzumdar, Mumbai, India  
A Petroianu, BELO HORIZONTE, Brazil  
S.G. Raja, London, United Kingdom
K Raveendran, Ipoh, Malaysia
S. Wakefield, Middlesbrough, United Kingdom
D. Yeh, Boston, United States of America

Assistant Editors
R. Al-mahfoudh, Oxford, United Kingdom
H. M. Atta, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America
M. Bashashati, Calgary, Texas, Canada
S. Basu, Varanasi, India
A.J. Beamish, Göteborg, Sweden
A. G. Charles, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States of America
A. Das, Mohanpur, India
M.E. Erdil, Istanbul, Turkey
S. A. Esquivel Gaón, Ciudad de México, Mexico
S. Feng, Shanghai, China
J. Gómez Rivas, Madrid, Spain
H. Kaafarani, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America
Y. D. Kamat, Mangaluru, India
O. Khan, London, United Kingdom
T. Manning, Heidelberg, Victoria, Australia
I. Mukherjee, Staten Island, Florida, United States of America
E Ofo, Adelaide, South Australia United Kingdom
S. Pai, Mumbai, India
L. Perger, Albuquerque, New Mexico, United States of America
A. Smailys, Kaunas, Lithuania
D.G. Weber, Perth, Australia
H. Zhu, Shanghai, China

Statistical Editors
N. Donaldson, Cali, Colombia
M.W. Gray, Washington DC, District of Columbia, United States of America

Society Representatives
J. Burke, President of the Association of Surgeons in Training United Kingdom
X-P. Chen, President of the Chinese Chapter of International Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association, Hubei, China
Coppa, President of the New York Surgical Society, New York, United States of America

Executive Committee
G. Catto
London, UK
D.K.C Cooper, Pittsburgh, United States of America
general surgery, heart surgery
A. Darzi, London, United Kingdom
colorectal surgery
H. Ellis, London, United Kingdom
general surgery
B. Jackson
London, UK
C.-H. Leong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong
urology, nephrology
A.K-C. Li, Hong Kong, China
general surgery
I. McColl, London, United Kingdom
general surgery
J. Norcini, Philadelphia, United States of America
no specialty
S. Standring
London, UK
R. Winston, London, United Kingdom
M. Yacoub, London, United Kingdom
Cardiothoracic Surgery, Transplantation, Congenital Cardiac Surgery, Chain of Hope

Editorial Board
R. A. Badwe, Mumbai, India
M. Boscoe, Uxbridge, United Kingdom
R. Bueno, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America
K. Chatamra, Bangkok, Thailand
P. Coulthard, Manchester, United Kingdom
A. d’Cruz, Mumbai, India
M. Desai, Mumbai, India
W. Green, London, United Kingdom
I. Harirchi, Tehran, Iran
D. Henne-Bruns, Ulm, Germany
D. Kahn, Cape Town, South Africa
X. Lin, Shanghai, China
A. Mahapatra, New Delhi, India
I. Mittra, Mumbai, India
V. Naraynsingh, West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago
F. Nicoli, London, United Kingdom
A. Núñez De Pierro, Buenos Aires, Argentina
R. Orda, Tel Aviv, Israel
V. Semiglazov, St Petersburg, Russian Federation
T. Singh, Ludhiana, India
B.L. Smith, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America
T.E. Udwadia, Mumbai, India
M. C. Warlé, Nijmegen, Netherlands
J. Wee, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America
M. Weiser, New York, New York, United States of America
Z.F. Xia, Shanghai, China
Y. Zhang, Shanghai, China
J Zhong, Shanghai, China
GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

*International Journal of Surgery Case Reports* is an online general surgical journal dedicated to publishing case reports and case series only which must be authentic, understandable, educational and clinically interesting to an international audience of surgeons and clinicians in related specialties.

Case series can be prospective or retrospective and examine the effects of an intervention in more than one patient. All case reports and case series will be peer reviewed and if accepted for publication in the Journal, Authors will be notified of this decision and at the same time requested to pay an Author Processing Fee. Following payment of this fee, case reports and case series will be made universally available at no further charge through *ScienceDirect*.

In addition to the article appearing on ScienceDirect, Elsevier will send to PubMed Central (PMC) the final authoritative version of the published article. Elsevier will authorize its public posting on PMC, and PMC mirror sites, immediately and these sites will also link directly to the journal article which will be made universally accessible on Elsevier's websites.

**Submission checklist**

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

**Ensure that the following items are present:**

One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:
- E-mail address
- Full postal address

All necessary files have been uploaded:
*Manuscript:*
- Include keywords
- All figures (include relevant captions)
- All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
- Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided
- Indicate clearly if color should be used for any figures in print

*Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files (where applicable)*

*Supplemental files (where applicable)*

Further considerations
- Manuscript has been 'spell checked' and 'grammar checked'
- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)
- A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
- Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed
- Referee suggestions and contact details provided, based on journal requirements

For further information, visit our [Support Center](https://www.elsevier.com/locate/ijscr).

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Please ensure your case report or case series is compliant with the [SCARE Guidelines](https://www.elsevier.com/locate/ijscr) and submit a completed SCARE checklist.

Please also ensure you state in your introduction that the work has been reported in line with the SCARE criteria and cite the following paper:

**PROCESS Guidelines**

Please ensure your case series is compliant with the **PROCESS Guidelines** and submit a completed PROCESS checklist.

Please also ensure you state that the work has been reported in line with the PROCESS criteria and cite the following paper:


**Ethics in publishing**

Please see our information on Ethics in publishing.

**Declaration of interest**

All authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential competing interests include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Authors must disclose any interests in two places: 1. A summary declaration of interest statement in the title page file (if double anonymized) or the manuscript file (if single anonymized). If there are no interests to declare then please state this: 'Declarations of interest: none'. 2. Detailed disclosures as part of a separate Declaration of Interest form, which forms part of the journal's official records. It is important for potential interests to be declared in both places and that the information matches. More information.

**Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing**

The below guidance only refers to the writing process, and not to the use of AI tools to analyse and draw insights from data as part of the research process.

Where authors use generative artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process, authors should only use these technologies to improve readability and language. Applying the technology should be done with human oversight and control, and authors should carefully review and edit the result, as AI can generate authoritative-sounding output that can be incorrect, incomplete or biased. AI and AI-assisted technologies should not be listed as an author or co-author, or be cited as an author. Authorship implies responsibilities and tasks that can only be attributed to and performed by humans, as outlined in Elsevier’s AI policy for authors.

Authors should disclose in their manuscript the use of AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process by following the instructions below. A statement will appear in the published work. Please note that authors are ultimately responsible and accountable for the contents of the work.

**Disclosure instructions**

Authors must disclose the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process by adding a statement at the end of their manuscript in the core manuscript file, before the References list. The statement should be placed in a new section entitled ‘Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process’.

*Statement: During the preparation of this work the author(s) used [NAME TOOL / SERVICE] in order to [REASON]. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.*

This declaration does not apply to the use of basic tools for checking grammar, spelling, references etc. If there is nothing to disclose, there is no need to add a statement.

**Submission declaration and verification**

Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract, a published lecture or academic thesis, see ‘Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication’ for more information), that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, that its publication is approved by all authors and tacitly or explicitly by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright-holder. To verify compliance, your article may be checked by Crossref Similarity Check and other originality or duplicate checking software.
Use of inclusive language
Inclusive language acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities. Content should make no assumptions about the beliefs or commitments of any reader; contain nothing which might imply that one individual is superior to another on the grounds of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition; and use inclusive language throughout. Authors should ensure that writing is free from bias, stereotypes, slang, reference to dominant culture and/or cultural assumptions. We advise to seek gender neutrality by using plural nouns ("clinicians, patients/clients") as default/wherever possible to avoid using "he, she," or "he/she." We recommend avoiding the use of descriptors that refer to personal attributes such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition unless they are relevant and valid. When coding terminology is used, we recommend to avoid offensive or exclusionary terms such as "master", "slave", "blacklist" and "whitelist". We suggest using alternatives that are more appropriate and (self-) explanatory such as "primary", "secondary", "blocklist" and "allowlist". These guidelines are meant as a point of reference to help identify appropriate language but are by no means exhaustive or definitive.

Contributorship
The IJSCR lists contributors in two ways. Firstly, we publish a list of authors' names at the beginning of the paper and, secondly, we list contributors (some of whom may not be included as authors) at the end of the paper, giving details of who did what in planning, conducting, and reporting the work. One or more of these contributors are listed as guarantors of the paper. The guarantor accepts full responsibility for the work and/or the conduct of the study, had access to the data, and controlled the decision to publish.

Reporting sex- and gender-based analyses

Reporting guidance
For research involving or pertaining to humans, animals or eukaryotic cells, investigators should integrate sex and gender-based analyses (SGBA) into their research design according to funder/sponsor requirements and best practices within a field. Authors should address the sex and/or gender dimensions of their research in their article. In cases where they cannot, they should discuss this as a limitation to their research's generalizability. Importantly, authors should explicitly state what definitions of sex and/or gender they are applying to enhance the precision, rigor and reproducibility of their research and to avoid ambiguity or conflation of terms and the constructs to which they refer (see Definitions section below). Authors can refer to the Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) guidelines and the SAGER guidelines checklist. These offer systematic approaches to the use and editorial review of sex and gender information in study design, data analysis, outcome reporting and research interpretation - however, please note there is no single, universally agreed-upon set of guidelines for defining sex and gender.

Definitions
Sex generally refers to a set of biological attributes that are associated with physical and physiological features (e.g., chromosomal genotype, hormonal levels, internal and external anatomy). A binary sex categorization (male/female) is usually designated at birth ("sex assigned at birth"), most often based solely on the visible external anatomy of a newborn. Gender generally refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, and identities of women, men and gender-diverse people that occur in a historical and cultural context and may vary across societies and over time. Gender influences how people view themselves and each other, how they behave and interact and how power is distributed in society. Sex and gender are often incorrectly portrayed as binary (female/male or woman/man) and unchanging whereas these constructs actually exist along a spectrum and include additional sex categorizations and gender identities such as people who are intersex/have differences of sex development (DSD) or identify as non-binary. Moreover, the terms "sex" and "gender" can be ambiguous—thus it is important for authors to define the manner in which they are used. In addition to this definition guidance and the SAGER guidelines, the resources on this page offer further insight around sex and gender in research studies.

Author contributions
For transparency, we require corresponding authors to provide co-author contributions to the manuscript using the relevant CRediT roles. The CRediT taxonomy includes 14 different roles describing each contributor's specific contribution to the scholarly output. The roles are: Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology;
Project administration; Resources; Software; Supervision; Validation; Visualization; Roles/Writing - original draft; and Writing - review & editing. Note that not all roles may apply to every manuscript, and authors may have contributed through multiple roles. More details and an example.

**Authorship**

All authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted.

Case Reports should have no more than six authors and fulfil the authorship criteria, listed above. If you have an extenuating reason as to why your Case Report requires more than six people, please email ijscasereports@elsevier.com to discuss this further.

**When submitting a paper authors must complete the Authorship form (download from here).** This form confirms that all authors agree to publication if the paper is accepted and allows authors to declare any conflicts of interest, sources of funding and ethical approval (if required). Please download the form and submit it with your paper. Submissions that do not include a completed form will be returned without review.

**Changes to authorship**

Authors are expected to consider carefully the list and order of authors before submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. Any addition, deletion or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only before the manuscript has been accepted and only if approved by the journal Editor. To request such a change, the Editor must receive the following from the corresponding author: (a) the reason for the change in author list and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed.

Only in exceptional circumstances will the Editor consider the addition, deletion or rearrangement of authors after the manuscript has been accepted. While the Editor considers the request, publication of the manuscript will be suspended. If the manuscript has already been published in an online issue, any requests approved by the Editor will result in a corrigendum.

**Article transfer service**

This journal is part of our Article Transfer Service. This means that if the Editor feels your article is more suitable in one of our other participating journals, then you may be asked to consider transferring the article to one of those. If you agree, your article will be transferred automatically on your behalf with no need to reformat. Please note that your article will be reviewed again by the new journal. More information.

**Copyright**

Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete a 'License Agreement' (see more information on this). Permitted third party reuse of open access articles is determined by the author’s choice of user license.

**Author rights**

As an author you (or your employer or institution) have certain rights to reuse your work. More information.

Elsevier supports responsible sharing

Find out how you can share your research published in Elsevier journals.

**Role of the funding source**

You are requested to identify who provided financial support for the conduct of the research and/or preparation of the article and to briefly describe the role of the sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the article for publication. If the funding source(s) had no such involvement, it is recommended to state this.

**Open access**

Please visit our Open Access page for more information.
Language (usage and editing services)
Please write your text in good English (American or British usage is accepted, but not a mixture of these). Authors who feel their English language manuscript may require editing to eliminate possible grammatical or spelling errors and to conform to correct scientific English may wish to use the English Language Editing service available from Elsevier’s Author Services.

Informed consent and patient details
Studies on patients or volunteers require ethics committee approval and informed consent, which should be documented in the paper. Appropriate consents, permissions and releases must be obtained where an author wishes to include case details or other personal information or images of patients and any other individuals in an Elsevier publication. Written consents must be retained by the author. You can use this International Journal of Surgery form and retain it for your records. For more information, please review the Elsevier Policy on the Use of Images or Personal Information of Patients or other Individuals, https://www.elsevier.com/patient-consent-policy. Unless you have written permission from the patient (or, where applicable, the next of kin), the personal details of any patient included in any part of the article and in any supplementary materials (including all illustrations and videos) must be removed before submission.

If you don't have signed consent from a deceased patient, guardian or family, the head of your medical team/hospital or legal team must take responsibility that exhaustive attempts have been made to contact the family and that the paper has been sufficiently anonymised not to cause harm to the patient or their family. You will need to upload a signed document to this effect.

Submission
Our online submission system guides you stepwise through the process of entering your article details and uploading your files. The system converts your article files to a single PDF file used in the peer-review process. Editable files (e.g., Word, LaTeX) are required to typeset your article for final publication. All correspondence, including notification of the Editor’s decision and requests for revision, is sent by e-mail.

Submit your article

Uniform Requirements

PREPARATION

Peer review
This journal operates a double anonymized review process. All contributions are typically sent to a minimum of two independent expert reviewers to assess the scientific quality of the paper. The Editor is responsible for the final decision regarding acceptance or rejection of articles. The Editor’s decision is final. Editors are not involved in decisions about papers which they have written themselves or have been written by family members or colleagues or which relate to products or services in which the editor has an interest. Any such submission is subject to all of the journal’s usual procedures, with peer review handled independently of the relevant editor and their research groups. More information on types of peer review.

Double anonymized review
This journal uses double anonymized review, which means the identities of the authors are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. More information is available on our website. To facilitate this, please include the following separately:

Title page (with author details): This should include the title, authors' names, affiliations, acknowledgements and any Declaration of Interest statement, and a complete address for the corresponding author including an e-mail address.

Anonymized manuscript (no author details): The main body of the paper (including the references, figures, tables and any acknowledgements) should not include any identifying information, such as the authors’ names or affiliations.

Article structure
Subdivision
In general, articles should conform to the conventional structure of Abstract, Introduction, Presentation of Case, Discussion, Conclusion, Consent, Conflict of Interest Statement and References plus figures and/or tables.

Introduction, Presentation of Case, Discussion, Conclusion. The section headings should be in upper case followed by a colon and a space.

**Essential title page information**

- **Title.** Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
- **Author names and affiliations.** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. You can add your name between parentheses in your own script behind the English transliteration. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author.
- **Corresponding author.** Clearly indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. This responsibility includes answering any future queries about Methodology and Materials. **Ensure that the e-mail address is given and that contact details are kept up to date by the corresponding author.**
- **Present/permanent address.** If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main, affiliation address. Superscript Arabic numerals are used for such footnotes.

**Highlights**

Highlights are mandatory for this journal as they help increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the examples here: example Highlights.

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85 characters, including spaces, per bullet point).

**Structured abstract**

A structured abstract, by means of appropriate headings, should provide the context or background for the research and should state its purpose, basic procedures (selection of study subjects or laboratory animals, observational and analytical methods), main findings (giving specific effect sizes and their statistical significance, if possible), and principal conclusions. It should emphasize new and important aspects of the study or observations.

The abstracts should be structured as follows:

Introduction, Presentation of Case, Discussion, Conclusion.

The section headings should be in upper case followed by a colon and a space.

**Word Limits**
Papers should not exceed 1500 words, 20 references or 5 figures. An abstract of no more than 250 words should also be included.

**Keywords**
Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 6 keywords, using British spelling and avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, 'and', 'of'). Be sparing with abbreviations: only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

**Abbreviations**
Define abbreviations that are not standard in this field in a footnote to be placed on the first page of the article. Such abbreviations that are unavoidable in the abstract must be defined at their first mention there, as well as in the footnote. Ensure consistency of abbreviations throughout the article.
Acknowledgements
Collate acknowledgements in a separate section at the end of the article before the references and do not, therefore, include them on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. List here those individuals who provided help during the research (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.).

Formatting of funding sources
List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder’s requirements:

Funding: This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa].

It is not necessary to include detailed descriptions on the program or type of grants and awards. When funding is from a block grant or other resources available to a university, college, or other research institution, submit the name of the institute or organization that provided the funding.

If no funding has been provided for the research, it is recommended to include the following sentence:

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Units
Follow internationally accepted rules and conventions: use the international system of units (SI). If other units are mentioned, please give their equivalent in SI.

Conventions for abbreviations should be those detailed in: Baron DN, ed. Units, Symbols, and Abbreviations: A Guide for Biological and Medical Editors and Authors. 5th edition. London: Royal Society of Medicine Services, 1994.

Artwork
Electronic artwork
General points
• Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your original artwork.
• Embed the used fonts if the application provides that option.
• Aim to use the following fonts in your illustrations: Arial, Courier, Times New Roman, Symbol, or use fonts that look similar.
• Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
• Use a logical naming convention for your artwork files.
• Provide captions to illustrations separately.
• Size the illustrations close to the desired dimensions of the published version.
• Submit each illustration as a separate file.
• Ensure that color images are accessible to all, including those with impaired color vision.

A detailed guide on electronic artwork is available.
You are urged to visit this site; some excerpts from the detailed information are given here.
Formats
If your electronic artwork is created in a Microsoft Office application (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) then please supply 'as is' in the native document format.
Regardless of the application used other than Microsoft Office, when your electronic artwork is finalized, please 'Save as' or convert the images to one of the following formats (note the resolution requirements for line drawings, halftones, and line/halftone combinations given below):
EPS (or PDF): Vector drawings, embed all used fonts.
TIFF (or JPEG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones), keep to a minimum of 300 dpi.
TIFF (or JPEG): Bitmapped (pure black & white pixels) line drawings, keep to a minimum of 1000 dpi.
TIFF (or JPEG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale), keep to a minimum of 500 dpi.
Please do not:
• Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); these typically have a low number of pixels and limited set of colors;
• Supply files that are too low in resolution;
• Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.
Figure captions
Ensure that each illustration has a caption. Supply captions separately, not attached to the figure. A caption should comprise a brief title (not on the figure itself) and a description of the illustration. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum but explain all symbols and abbreviations used.

Tables
Please submit tables as editable text and not as images. Tables can be placed either next to the relevant text in the article, or on separate page(s) at the end. Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text and place any table notes below the table body. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in them do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article. Please avoid using vertical rules and shading in table cells.

References
Citation in text
Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Any references cited in the abstract must be given in full. Unpublished results and personal communications are not recommended in the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text. If these references are included in the reference list they should follow the standard reference style of the journal and should include a substitution of the publication date with either 'Unpublished results' or 'Personal communication'. Citation of a reference as 'in press' implies that the item has been accepted for publication.

Reference links
Increased discoverability of research and high quality peer review are ensured by online links to the sources cited. In order to allow us to create links to abstracting and indexing services, such as Scopus, Crossref and PubMed, please ensure that data provided in the references are correct. Please note that incorrect surnames, journal/book titles, publication year and pagination may prevent link creation. When copying references, please be careful as they may already contain errors. Use of the DOI is highly encouraged.

A DOI is guaranteed never to change, so you can use it as a permanent link to any electronic article. An example of a citation using DOI for an article not yet in an issue is: VanDecar J.C., Russo R.M., James D.E., Ambeh W.B., Franke M. (2003). Aseismic continuation of the Lesser Antilles slab beneath northeastern Venezuela. Journal of Geophysical Research, https://doi.org/10.1029/2001JB000884. Please note the format of such citations should be in the same style as all other references in the paper.

Web references
As a minimum, the full URL should be given and the date when the reference was last accessed. Any further information, if known (DOI, author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given. Web references can be listed separately (e.g., after the reference list) under a different heading if desired, or can be included in the reference list.

Data references
This journal encourages you to cite underlying or relevant datasets in your manuscript by citing them in your text and including a data reference in your Reference List. Data references should include the following elements: author name(s), dataset title, data repository, version (where available), year, and global persistent identifier. Add [dataset] immediately before the reference so we can properly identify it as a data reference. The [dataset] identifier will not appear in your published article.

Preprint references
Where a preprint has subsequently become available as a peer-reviewed publication, the formal publication should be used as the reference. If there are preprints that are central to your work or that cover crucial developments in the topic, but are not yet formally published, these may be referenced. Preprints should be clearly marked as such, for example by including the word preprint, or the name of the preprint server, as part of the reference. The preprint DOI should also be provided.

Reference management software
Most Elsevier journals have their reference template available in many of the most popular reference management software products. These include all products that support Citation Style Language styles, such as Mendeley. Using citation plug-ins from these products, authors only need to select the appropriate journal template when preparing their article, after which citations and bibliographies will be automatically formatted in the journal's style. If no template is yet available for this journal, please follow the format of the sample references and citations as shown in this Guide. If you use
reference management software, please ensure that you remove all field codes before submitting
the electronic manuscript. More information on how to remove field codes from different reference
management software.

Reference style

**Text:** Indicate references by superscript numbers in the text. The actual authors can be referred to,
but the reference number(s) must always be given.

**List:** Number the references in the list in the order in which they appear in the text.

**Examples:**
Reference to a journal publication:
Reference to a book:
Reference to a chapter in an edited book:
3. Mettam GR, Adams LB. How to prepare an electronic version of your article. In: Jones BS, Smith
   Note shortened form for last page number: e.g., 51–9, and that for more than 6 authors the first
   6 should be listed followed by 'et al.' For further details you are referred to 'Uniform Requirements
   for Manuscripts submitted to Biomedical Journals' (*J Am Med Assoc* 1997;**277**:927–34) (see also

For reference style 1 numbered:

xwj98nb39r.1.

**Journal abbreviations source**
Journal names should be abbreviated according to the *List of Title Word Abbreviations.*

**Video**
Elsevier accepts video material and animation sequences to support and enhance your scientific
research. Authors who have video or animation files that they wish to submit with their article are
strongly encouraged to include links to these within the body of the article. This can be done in the
same way as a figure or table by referring to the video or animation content and noting in the body
text where it should be placed. All submitted files should be properly labeled so that they directly
relate to the video file's content. In order to ensure that your video or animation material is directly
usable, please provide the file in one of our recommended file formats with a preferred maximum
size of 150 MB per file, 1 GB in total. Video and animation files supplied will be published online in
the electronic version of your article in Elsevier Web products, including ScienceDirect. Please supply
'stills' with your files: you can choose any frame from the video or animation or make a separate
image. These will be used instead of standard icons and will personalize the link to your video data. For
more detailed instructions please visit our video instruction pages. Note: since video and animation
cannot be embedded in the print version of the journal, please provide text for both the electronic
and the print version for the portions of the article that refer to this content.

**Data visualization**
Include interactive data visualizations in your publication and let your readers interact and engage
more closely with your research. Follow the instructions here to find out about available data
visualization options and how to include them with your article.

**Supplementary material**
Supplementary material such as applications, images and sound clips, can be published with your
article to enhance it. Submitted supplementary items are published exactly as they are received (Excel
or PowerPoint files will appear as such online). Please submit your material together with the article
and supply a concise, descriptive caption for each supplementary file. If you wish to make changes to
supplementary material during any stage of the process, please make sure to provide an updated file.
Do not annotate any corrections on a previous version. Please switch off the 'Track Changes' option
in Microsoft Office files as these will appear in the published version.
**Research data**
This journal encourages and enables you to share data that supports your research publication where appropriate, and enables you to interlink the data with your published articles. Research data refers to the results of observations or experimentation that validate research findings, which may also include software, code, models, algorithms, protocols, methods and other useful materials related to the project.

Below are a number of ways in which you can associate data with your article or make a statement about the availability of your data when submitting your manuscript. If you are sharing data in one of these ways, you are encouraged to cite the data in your manuscript and reference list. Please refer to the "References" section for more information about data citation. For more information on depositing, sharing and using research data and other relevant research materials, visit the research data page.

**Data linking**
If you have made your research data available in a data repository, you can link your article directly to the dataset. Elsevier collaborates with a number of repositories to link articles on ScienceDirect with relevant repositories, giving readers access to underlying data that gives them a better understanding of the research described.

There are different ways to link your datasets to your article. When available, you can directly link your dataset to your article by providing the relevant information in the submission system. For more information, visit the database linking page.

For supported data repositories a repository banner will automatically appear next to your published article on ScienceDirect.

In addition, you can link to relevant data or entities through identifiers within the text of your manuscript, using the following format: Database: xxxx (e.g., TAIR: AT1G01020; CCDC: 734053; PDB: 1XFN).

**Mendeley Data**
This journal supports Mendeley Data, enabling you to deposit any research data (including raw and processed data, video, code, software, algorithms, protocols, and methods) associated with your manuscript in a free-to-use, open access repository. Before submitting your article, you can deposit the relevant datasets to Mendeley Data. Please include the DOI of the deposited dataset(s) in your main manuscript file. The datasets will be listed and directly accessible to readers next to your published article online.

For more information, visit the Mendeley Data for journals page.

**Data statement**
To foster transparency, we encourage you to state the availability of your data in your submission. This may be a requirement of your funding body or institution. If your data is unavailable to access or unsuitable to post, you will have the opportunity to indicate why during the submission process, for example by stating that the research data is confidential. The statement will appear with your published article on ScienceDirect. For more information, visit the Data Statement page.

**AFTER ACCEPTANCE**

**Online proof correction**
To ensure a fast publication process of the article, we kindly ask authors to provide us with their proof corrections within two days. Corresponding authors will receive an e-mail with a link to our online proofing system, allowing annotation and correction of proofs online. The environment is similar to MS Word: in addition to editing text, you can also comment on figures/tables and answer questions from the Copy Editor. Web-based proofing provides a faster and less error-prone process by allowing you to directly type your corrections, eliminating the potential introduction of errors. If preferred, you can still choose to annotate and upload your edits on the PDF version. All instructions for proofing will be given in the e-mail we send to authors, including alternative methods to the online version and PDF.

We will do everything possible to get your article published quickly and accurately. Please use this proof only for checking the typesetting, editing, completeness and correctness of the text, tables and figures. Significant changes to the article as accepted for publication will only be considered at this
stage with permission from the Editor. It is important to ensure that all corrections are sent back to us in one communication. Please check carefully before replying, as inclusion of any subsequent corrections cannot be guaranteed. Proofreading is solely your responsibility.

**Offprints**
The corresponding author, at no cost, will be provided with a PDF file of the article via e-mail (the PDF file is a watermarked version of the published article and includes a cover sheet with the journal cover image and a disclaimer outlining the terms and conditions of use).

**Accepted Articles**
Visit [https://www.elsevier.com/authors](https://www.elsevier.com/authors) for the facility to track accepted articles and set email alerts to inform you of when an article's status has changed. The website also provides detailed artwork guidelines, copyright information, frequently asked questions and more. Contact details for questions arising after acceptance of an article, especially those related to proofs, are provided after registration of an article for publication.

**Offprints**
The corresponding author will be notified and receive a link to the published version of the open access article on ScienceDirect. This link is in the form of an article DOI link which can be shared via email and social networks. For an extra charge, paper offprints can be ordered via the offprint order form which is sent once the article is accepted for publication.

**AUTHOR INQUIRIES**
Visit the Elsevier Support Center to find the answers you need. Here you will find everything from Frequently Asked Questions to ways to get in touch.
You can also check the status of your submitted article or find out when your accepted article will be published.

© Copyright 2018 Elsevier | [https://www.elsevier.com](https://www.elsevier.com)