Volume Editor Guide

How does a book series differ from a journal?

A book series most closely resembles the journal special issue. Sometimes the volume will not cover a particular theme but will take a general look at the latest research in the field. The other notable difference between books and journals is **length**. Typically, a journal will have around six articles of around 3,000-6,000 words. A book, on the other hand, will have 10, 12 or even more chapters, each with an average length of 5,000-10,000 words. This is a significant difference, and means that an author can explore a topic in more depth. The final difference is **peer review** – which is explored more fully below.

The volume editor's role - Developing the volume

As a volume editor you will be a specialist in the area; alert to who is doing the most interesting and influential work.

Tip 1 – Find out the following from your series editor

- What size of volume or series has to be assembled in what timescale?
- How are volumes reviewed?
- Is the series associated with a particular conference, if so how? Are contributors selected from conference presentations?
- What is the topic? How well has the series editor developed it? For example, is it just an idea or does he or she have a list of proposed chapter headings?
- How "hands on" does the series editor intend to be? Will you as volume editor have the authority to make the decisions you want without any restrictions?
- Is there an expectation with regards to the type and variety of contribution? For example a balance between different perspectives, between state-of-the-art reviews and empirical research.
- Do contributors normally send in a proposal/abstract, or do they tend to go straight to first draft?

Tip 2 - Items which will need to be submitted along with the manuscript

- Any preface, introduction, acknowledgements, plus any other material to be included at the front of the book.

- A table of contents.

- A list of the contributors, complete with institution affiliation and up-to-date email addresses.

- A back cover synopsis (approx. 200-300 words).

- If you would like a subject index to be included in the volume, please provide a list of index terms or ask the authors to include this list with their paper submission

- If the series would normally include an "About the Authors" section please provide biographies of no more than 150 words from each contributor.

- When totalling pagination Emerald work on the average of 390 words per page and two tables/figures per page. Please take tables and figures into account when working towards a word limit. Each figure represents 145 words.

- A Chapter Transfer Agreement Form for each chapter of the book which must be completed with all author details and signed by the lead contributor. **To confirm, we need a signed form for each chapter and it must be hand signed by the lead author. However, it must contain the contact details for all the authors of that chapter, in order for all contributors to receive their complimentary copy of the book upon publication For queries relating to works that have already been published or in instances where authors are unable to assign copyright, please contact your Publisher for further advice.**

- Check if chapters must include a structured abstract. The majority of Emerald series volumes require either a structured or unstructured abstract, please ensure these are supplied consistently with each chapter. You can refer your authors to these guidelines: http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/authors/guides/write/abstracts.htm

- Permissions must be sought by the authors for any third-party materials to be reproduced. Please note that it is the authors' responsibility to obtain permission for all third party material to be reproduced (e.g. copyrighted figures, tables, long quotations, etc.) and that this should be obtained prior to submission of the volume.

  For further information, please see our Author's guide 'Permissions for your manuscript': http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/authors/writing/permissions.htm

Tip 3 - finding contributors

- Use Scopus to find a list of researchers in the field
- Authors of interesting conference papers
- List servs
- Newsletters
- Social media

Tip 4 – Initial discussions with authors

It is useful also to provide authors with the following information:

- An explanation of the various stages, including timeline.
- An overview of the series, and the angle of the volume.
- A copy of Emerald's Author Guidelines which provides guidelines on preparing your manuscript for submission
- A copy of the Chapter Transfer Agreement (CTA) form
- How to submit the final manuscript e.g. via email or file sharing software
- Explain the importance of submitting high quality figures in the correct format, clearly labelled and captioned. It also needs to be clear where they will appear in the text.
- The order in which chapter material should be presented, see list below in Tip 6
- How to use the APA referencing system
- Structured abstract guidelines
- Guidance on the presentation of illustrative material. (Please see the author guidelines for your book)

Tip 5 - Reviewing

The peer review process is an independent quality control procedure for papers submitted to academic publications. Because it is so difficult for authors to be objective about their own writing, they benefit greatly from having someone else read and comment upon their work. Peer review is vital for enhancing the quality, credibility and acceptability of published research and practice papers. In double-blind peer-review, all information on the paper which identifies the author is removed and the paper is then sent to two or more reviewers for objective comment.

Please read the role of the Emerald reviewer and questions for reviewers.

Reviewers should be given approximately six weeks to review a chapter. When approaching reviewers ensure that you make clear what the commitment is and when the work is likely to be due. Ensure they are aware of what they need to look for: whether they are to confine themselves to style, or should they also consider substance, such as the research design? Are they expected to provide sub editing, if so this is a large and time intensive job?

At the review stage there will be a large number of drafts in circulation, so editing becomes an exercise in project management. The timeline below gives you an indication of the length of the process and how long each stage should take.

Task	Timeline
Choose and contact contributors	1 month
Contributors submit proposals, including abstracts	1 month
Review and select proposals	1 month
Brief and commission contributors	1 month
First draft complete	**4 months**
Send first draft for peer review	6 weeks
Receive and feed back peer review comments	2 weeks
Second draft complete	**4 months**
Edit and send queries to author	2 weeks
Final draft to publisher	**1 month**
Production	3 months
Proofs to authors	**1 week**
Publication	1 month

When you give dates to the authors, you need only provide the most significant dates highlighted in bold above.

In creating the schedule, it's important to consider not only how long each stage will take, but also times when you will have a heavy workload. Will 20 final manuscripts be landing on your desk the week you are going on holiday or have to mark exam scripts? Such times need to be taken into account. It also helps if you can stagger the authors' deadlines, so that you will have manuscripts submitted in batches.

Tip 6 - monitoring the process

You will need to keep a record of information for each chapter. A spreadsheet would be a simple option. This should include title, authors, e-mail addresses and affiliations (which will be useful in compiling a contents list and providing information to the publisher). The first workbook sheet should list the chapter titles, authors, affiliations and their email addresses. The second should include a schedule and the third should list the reviewers with a separate schedule for review.

Tip 7 - delivery

Before submitting the final manuscript to the publisher you will need to check:

1. Are the publisher's preferred stylistic conventions adopted? For example short unnumbered headings.
2. Has the author provided a structured abstract, if needed?
3. Are the figures of sufficient quality, in the correct file format, clearly labelled and captioned, is it clear where they should go in the text?
4. Are special characters (e.g. for equations) presented in the correct way?
5. Has the author used the APA reference system correctly?

6. Has the author supplied a completed a signed Chapter Transfer Agreement form?
7. Has the author submitted the work in the correct way, and with items in the correct order?

- o Title page (Title, Author(s), Affiliations)
- o Structured abstract
- o Main text
- o Acknowledgements
- o Appendix
- o References
- o Figure legends
- o Tables.

Each author will be sent a proof of their chapter, and the volume editor receives a full set (usually within 28 days). All proofs should be returned within one week. This is not an option to rewrite the paper; corrections should not exceed 10 per cent of the original paper.

The production process takes approximately three months in total. If an index is included, this process is extended by a further two weeks. Please note that this schedule is dependent on meeting the delivery dates as agreed with the Publisher.

Final word

Being a volume editor is challenging, but it is also not without its rewards, presenting a chance for the scholar to develop him or herself in a new direction. Editing a single volume is a step towards being a book series editor or a journal editor; it is not dissimilar to being the editor of a journal special issue. It's a chance to sit on the other side of the table from being a writer of articles and contributor to a scholarly publication, and to develop skills of selecting, shaping and reviewing which are all important in the scholarly world.

Reference
van der Vlist, E. (2006), "Web 2.0, professional ... and fun!", weblog of Eric van der Vlist, available at: http://eric.van-der-vlist.com/blog/2006/09/15/3331_web_20_professional_and_fun/ [accessed August 6 2009].