

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH ACADEMY

Guidelines for proposing a themed volume

Why edit a themed volume?

Publishing in *Proceedings of the British Academy* offers the combined advantages of publication in a distinct book and publication in an established series. Each volume has its own ISBN number and is available to buy separately, yet each paper is citable as being part of a series with a tradition of excellence dating back more than 100 years. *Proceedings* volumes are published in a traditional high-quality print format (marketed and distributed worldwide by Oxford University Press), but they will also be included within British Academy Scholarship Online. (A list of recent *Proceedings* volumes can be found at www.britishacademy.ac.uk/proceedings-british-academy)

Editing a themed volume is a serious commitment, but it offers a lot of freedom and responsibility to the Editor(s) of the volume. What we can offer you is a dedicated themed volume on the topic of your choice, with your name on the cover in one of the most prestigious series in the humanities and social sciences.

As Editor, you have the freedom to choose the authors and suggest their titles and topics, and to shape the whole volume as you see fit.

Planning a themed volume

The British Academy wants each themed volume of the *Proceedings of the British Academy* to be a landmark in its field.

At the same time, because our readership is broad and ranges across the entire spectrum of the humanities and social sciences, it must be emphasised that the papers should be inclusive and accessible to readers who are not specialists in the field. Volumes should focus on an area of research that is advancing rapidly, and need to be of general enough interest for our wide readership, but specific enough to be a landmark volume on the topic.

Conferences will often give rise to good volumes, and there is a specific expectation that British Academy Conferences will lead to *Proceedings* volumes.¹ But the series does not simply reproduce conference proceedings. Where a conference does constitute the basis for a volume, selected papers from the meeting may well be suitable; but Editors should not feel that all conference papers have a 'right' to be in a volume, and should be ruthless with unsuitable papers. Conference papers are often also usefully supplemented with invited papers to provide balance, scope, and broader interest to the themed volume. Where a volume does derive from a conference, the publication proposal should normally be submitted *after* the conference has been held, and after the final shaping of the material has been considered. But themed volumes do not by any means have to derive from a conference, and many of the best such volumes will not.

The Editor has the responsibility of defining the subject matter, and role, of every paper in the volume. Editors should not simply leave each paper to the discretion of its author, but rather give each author an idea of what their paper should cover so that it contributes to the volume as a whole. A successful

¹ Further information on how to submit a proposal for a British Academy Conference can be found via www.britishacademy.ac.uk/british-academy-conferences

themed volume will have a unity that owes much to its Editor. It is often necessary for the Editor to discuss all of the papers in a volume, and to define what each paper will cover. It may be important to spell out the boundaries of each paper, to ensure both a complementary approach and the absence of overlap. Above all, Editors should work to cover all the relevant angles of the topic, while minimising any repetition between the papers.

All themed volumes should be based around important research topics and contain strong contributions. However, for a volume to be really successful, it is important for the Editor to set out a 'road map' of the volume, so every author can understand what is to be achieved by their paper, and the volume as a whole.

Authors

One of the historic strengths of the *Proceedings of the British Academy* series has been the multinational range of authors contributing to the volumes, so the Editor should think about appropriate international representation in the list of contributors. A *Proceedings* volume may also provide an opportunity for papers by early-career scholars to be included alongside those of senior academics. Editors should look out for any serious imbalances in the list of contributors (e.g. in the numbers of male and female authors).

Structure

We encourage Editors to be creative about the kinds of papers included and to feature a range of papers in the volume. For example, these could include reviews on different aspects of the topic, new research, papers explaining the importance of the topic to the wider world, or papers looking to the future.

Typically the papers in the themed volume will fall into two categories:

Research papers

The meat of the volume will be the papers that discuss the current research in the field. As mentioned in the section discussing the introduction, the authors of each research paper will have a clear understanding of what the precise topic of their paper is, and what it is not. As ever, it is important to remember to explain the accepted evidence/theories first, in order to lay the ground and set the context for the new evidence/theories. By explaining the current evidence/theories and then discussing the new evidence/theories, you lead naturally to looking forward towards the future of the field, and exciting the reader about the possibilities of research in this area.

Review-type papers

As well as the research paper, it is useful to include one or more **review papers** that explain the wider implications of this topic, including to other areas of scholarship. However, rather than making vague allusions to widespread implications inside and across disciplines, the important thing here is to be specific. Take a few of the most important implications, for the discipline and for areas outside it (if relevant), and explain exactly how the research discussed in this volume has direct influence for researchers in these areas. This is important for making the publication appeal to a wide audience, and to explain the value of this field to other specific areas. It is also possible to include **opinion pieces** in the volume.

Introduction

An ambitious and substantial Introduction by the Editor(s) is absolutely critical to the themed volume. This introductory paper will sell the topic and the volume to the reader, explaining why the topic is so

important and why it deserves a dedicated volume. It will provide a reader coming fresh to the topic with background information of sufficient depth, interest and clarity to encourage them to take up the volume, even if they come from another specialist field.

The Introduction will describe the aims of the volume, and explain the comparative framework that holds the papers together. It will discuss the current state of debate in the field, suggest why the volume is particularly timely, and offer a clear statement as to how the book as a whole, through all its different empirical approaches, contributes to and pushes on the discipline. Having set this context, the Introduction will define and frame what ground each paper in the rest of the volume will be covering. At this point the ‘road map’ that has been set out for the authors will become apparent to the reader.

Editors should aim for the Introduction to be the paper that is cited in the introductory paragraphs of every research article written in your field, where they state that the importance of this topic has been demonstrated by you, and quote your paper.

Length

A reasonably sized *Proceedings of the British Academy* volume should contain up to 12 papers, each of up to 10,000 words. This is a point of reference, however, and we will certainly be prepared to accept longer volumes, or volumes with more but shorter chapters. If the chapters are too short, though, they will not make their mark; and long volumes must justify their length.

By following the above guidelines, we hope Editors can produce strong and lasting themed volumes, each of which will become a much-quoted volume in its field.

Submitting a proposal for a themed volume

We will consider proposals for themed volumes in the *Proceedings of the British Academy* series on subjects across the whole of the humanities and social sciences.

There is no fixed limit on the number of *Proceedings of the British Academy* volumes that will be accepted each year. But because of the prestige of publishing one of these landmark volumes, competition is stiff.

Some themed volumes may well arise from scholarly meetings organised by the British Academy, but these will not have priority over other applications.

Please note that all the proposed contributors must have agreed to be listed in the proposal before we can consider a themed volume proposal.

Proposals should be [submitted via Flexi-Grant](#), the Academy’s online application system.

Any questions regarding this process can be sent to pubs@thebritishacademy.ac.uk.

Closing date

The *Proceedings* series operates three submission rounds per year. **Please see the British Academy website for the next deadline:** www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/guidelines-proposing-proceedings-british-academy-themed-volume

Selection process

Discipline-relevant assessors (who are Fellows of the British Academy) will evaluate: how well conceived the volume is, and whether it offers an innovative approach; the calibre and range of the proposed contributors; the quality of the scholarship to be published, and whether it will feature leading-edge research; the likely impact of the volume on scholarship.

The final selection will be made by the Academy's Publications and Conferences Committee (which is made up of Fellows of the British Academy).

Notification of outcome

Applicants will be notified of the outcome after the next meeting of the Academy's Publications and Conferences Committee. Successful applicants will be offered publishing contracts. Where the Publications and Conferences Committee believes that a proposal for a volume may benefit from further work, it may invite unsuccessful applicants to resubmit the proposal; unless specifically invited, resubmissions will not be accepted.

What happens after a proposal is approved

Detailed information on what you next need to do to prepare the themed volume can be downloaded via <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/proceedings-british-academy-notes-editors>

As volume Editor(s) you are responsible for managing the review process and for ensuring the quality of the volume. The exact arrangements are a matter for you. But each paper should be sent for comment to at least one referee who isn't an Editor of the volume or an author contributing to the volume. It is important that the papers for these themed volumes are refereed to the same standards, so your role in this is crucial.

Once you are happy with the shape and content of both the individual papers and the overall volume, the complete and final text of the volume should be submitted for final approval for publication by the Academy's Publications and Conferences Committee. The volume, along with a brief report from you confirming that the papers are of a suitably high standard, should be submitted at least one month ahead of the meeting of the Committee at which it will be discussed. The Committee will send the volume out for a final read, and the Committee itself will pay particular attention to the Introduction. The Academy reserves the right not to publish the volume on quality grounds.

Open access

Each author may upload the 'author accepted manuscript' version of their chapter in the *Proceedings* volume to institutional or centrally organised subject repositories where it may be made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives 4.0 International Licence (CC BY-NC-ND), provided that (a) it is not made publicly available until 12 months after the publication in the *Proceedings of the British Academy* series, (b) the *Proceedings* is attributed as the original place of publication with the correct citation details given.

Code of practice

The British Academy's Code of Practice describes the standards of transparency by which the British Academy abides in administering applications for research awards and other proposals for support, and embodies the principles of equity, integrity and confidentiality for all who are involved in the assessment of proposals. The Code is intended to act as guidance to assessors in discharging the responsibilities placed on them in assessing proposals, and it sets out the proper conduct expected of them. Please visit www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/code-practice to read the Code in full. The Academy is regretfully unable to enter into correspondence regarding the decisions of the awarding Committee, which are governed by the Code of Practice. **Please note** that by applying in this scheme, applicants undertake to accept the terms under which applications are assessed.

Data Protection

The British Academy is committed to protecting and storing securely any personal and sensitive data held. This Privacy Notice sets out the basis on which any personal data we (the British Academy) collect from you in relation to administering the British Academy Monographs scheme will be used or processed by us. Please read the following carefully to understand how we will use your 'personal data' ('personal data' means any information relating to you, through which you can be identified, such as name, contact details and employment information). Further information can be found at www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/privacy

How will your data be used?

As a volume proposer, your personal data (name, contact information, employment information) is stored by the British Academy's Publications Department. Application forms will be retained for ten years in the case of successful applications, and five years in the case of unsuccessful applications. This information can be updated at your request.

As part of your relationship with us, the British Academy's Publications Department will use your personal data to: process your application; pass your application onto the monograph assessors and to the awarding Committee (Fellows of the British Academy who serve on the Publications and Conferences Committee); and to convey the outcome of your application. Other relevant members of British Academy staff may also view your application.

Proposers must secure the permission of all contributors to be listed as potential contributors in their proposal.

The legal basis of processing

We will process your personal data for the purposes identified in this document on the following legal bases.

- Our legitimate interests, which relate to processing of your personal data for the purposes of administering the British Academy Monographs scheme, as outlined in this document.
- Where you have freely consented to our use of your personal data for a specified purpose on an informed and unambiguous basis. Where this is the case, you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us at the address below.

Contact us

If you have any questions, or if you would like to speak to us about the way in which we process your personal data, please email DPO@thebritishacademy.ac.uk.

You also have the right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK supervisory authority for data protection issues, at any time. The ICO's contact details are as follows:
Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF
Telephone: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745

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