



Description

Presenting your research in a [conference or professional meeting](#) symposium is a prestigious accomplishment. In a symposium talk, you present a review of your research and demonstrate how it contributes to the overall symposium topic. Preparing a symposium-based research talk is a major undertaking. However, after presenting symposium talks, many researchers move on to other tasks. All that is left of their effort and contribution is a note on their curriculum vitae that they were a speaker. The scientific content is lost to the memories of the participants and audience. However, by publishing your symposium-based research talk you create a permanent record of your participation. Through publication you also reach a wider target audience than those that were physically present. To foster your publication record, it is good practice to commit your spoken words to writing. With a little more effort, you can publish a paper as well as participate in the symposium.

What is a Symposium-Based Research Article?

A symposium-based research article is a formal document that summarizes the information presented during a symposium at a conference or professional meeting. It typically is a mini-review of a research topic, especially that of a single author or a principal investigator.

Many [journals publish symposium-based research articles](#). There are some publishers who specialize in these types of articles. However, the pathway to publication generally follows two forms: proceedings and independently submitted articles.

Proceedings

The symposium or conference organizers may decide to collectively publish the information presented. This is done in a format called a [proceeding](#). Proceedings report the content of symposium talks in a collection of papers which may take up an entire edition of a journal. It is the responsibility of the organizers to solicit and collect manuscripts from the speakers and to deliver them to the publisher. The decision to publish a proceeding is generally made before the symposium convenes. Authors should be notified at the time of invitation that they would need to produce a manuscript after the meeting. In these cases, it is best to organize the talk with ultimate publication in mind.

Independently Submitted Papers

If the organizers do not plan to publish the symposium in a formal proceeding, you can still publish your talk. In this case, you (the author) will be responsible for locating a suitable journal to submit your manuscript. Many, but not all, journals accept these types of papers. Some journals publish [mini-reviews](#) which are a suitable format for your symposium-based research articles. If you are invited to participate in a symposium in which the organizers do not plan to publish proceeding, you should begin exploring how and where you can publish your talk as you develop it; plan ahead. Basically, your paper will be a mini-review of a research topic. This is an excellent means to further your publication track record and reach a wider audience. Note, it is considered unethical to submit a manuscript for publication before participating in the symposium.

Format of the Symposium-Based Research Article

The specific format will be [determined by the journal](#) to which you are submitting your paper. Unlike a normal review, the symposium-based research article is much shorter in length and limited in scope. The length will be determined by the journal with 3,000-6,000 words being typical. Your paper should include [tables and figures](#) if appropriate. Generally, the paper will follow a review format and have the following or similar sections:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Main Body of Topics (with headings and sub-headings)
- Conclusions
- References

Symposium-based research articles are based on lengthy, in depth symposium talks, not the typical short 10-minute journal papers given at meetings. The latter normally present a single experiment/project which is often not finished or published.

As a researcher, you should always seek out and accept opportunities to [participate in conference symposia](#). These are excellent ways to reach your audience and further your career. The talks you give are also opportunities which can lead to publications. As you develop your presentation, think about how to get a publication out of your efforts. Begin planning and writing your symposium-based research article as you prepare your talk.

Have you attended a symposium where you presented your research? Please let us know your thoughts in the comments section below.

Category

1. Career Corner
2. PhDs & Postdocs

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Author

daveishan