

Description

A Rapid Communication (RC) or Short Communication is a scientific paper that is published swiftly and is of a shorter length than an original research article. Scientists use this format when they have findings that need to be shared immediately with the academic community. These findings are important to a current field of study and may lose relevance if published after a long time.

Rapid Communications (RAPs) are generally 4-5 journal pages in length or of 2,500-4,500 words. The average publication time is 50 days, compared with an average publication time of 80 days for regular journal articles. Journal editors evaluate each Rapid Communication submission before forwarding it for expedited peer-review. Guidelines will vary depending on the journal/publisher.

Parameters and Benefits of RAPs

If a scientist makes a discovery that will immediately advance or bring important information to a field of study, the RC format is ideal. Less time in the publishing process means that the information is available to the scientific community quickly. Interestingly, this information does not necessarily have to come from a stand-alone study; it can be an omitted section of a larger study. Sometimes authors take out pieces of a research paper that do not further the objectives of the study. The omitted sections may have intrinsic value and, therefore, are good candidates for a Rapid Communication. However, the information still has to be unique and timely. The abbreviated scope of an RC means that it does not need “comprehensive background information nor an assessment.” Material may include:

- Recently developed ideas which differ considerably from previous studies.
- “Negative” results.
- A trending or new area of research
- Different ways to make research outcomes accessible and useful to the industry.

Of course, the first question an author must answer is, does my chosen journal accept RAPs? Once authors select an appropriate journal, they must follow submission guidelines for this format. The submission guidelines for expedited publications vary based on the journals. Some of the benefits of RAPs to authors are:

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- The prestige associated with being one of the first authors to publish a significant research outcome.
- Higher Impact factor than regular journal articles.
- Expedited review timeline may be helpful whilst being considered for jobs, promotions, or academic tenure.

Fields of Study in which RAPs are Common

Given the extensive number of areas of scientific research covered by publishers, it is clear that most fields of study are associated with a journal that accepts RAPs. Some areas include physics, neuroscience, superconductor science and technology, optoelectronics and advanced materials, mass spectrometry, macromolecular science, and chemistry. The above list is as broad as it is specific. Therefore, it makes sense for scientific researchers to explore the idea of submitting a Rapid Communication to their chosen journal or publisher to ensure that the topic meets the appropriate criteria. The prestige associated with publishing a Rapid Communication benefits a scientist's career and standing within his/her field of study. RAPs also serve to advance scientific knowledge and practice in general.

Category

1. Manuscripts & Grants
2. Reporting Research

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