

Everything you wanted to know about getting published (but were afraid to ask)

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What is this session about

- Given the research you have done
 - what are some things you can do to increase the chances of getting it published
 - and make the experience more productive
- The most important thing is doing high quality and interesting research
 - but I'm taking that as given

Why publish

- What is the point of trying to publish your work?
- primary form of discourse in economics
- peer-review allows you to learn about the strengths and weaknesses in your work, may give you ideas of ways to extend or improve your work
- process vets papers; provides information on what are good papers to read
- publications are the basis of making hiring and promotion decisions, funding for departments, etc.

Where is economic research published?

- Journals (various ranks available on line)
- Top 5
 - Econometrica, American Economic Review (AER), Quarterly Journal of Economics (QJE), Journal of Political Economics (JPE), Review of Economic Studies (REStud)
- Second tier general interest
 - REStat, IER, EJ, JEEA, QE, TE, AEJ
- Top field journals
 - JET, JoE, JFin, JIntEcon, JoLE, JMonEc, JPubE, RAND
- third tier, etc.

Where should you aim to publish your research?

- Aim high
 - you definitely won't get published if you don't submit a paper
- But be realistic
 - what is the contribution of your paper?
 - who is going to want to read your paper?
 - what papers do you reference?
- Look at the Journal you plan to submit to
 - what sort of papers does the journal publish?
 - what are the Editors' interests?
 - who are the Associate Editors?

How does the process work

- Submit paper
- Editor has an initial skim read; decides whether to send to referees or screen/desk reject
 - don't see screen reject as failure; it is efficient and saves you wasting time
 - if you don't ever get screen rejected you're probably not aiming high enough
- If paper sent to reviewers
 - sent to between 1-4 referees, their expertise will depend on the journal, the Editor, how you've positioned the paper
- Referees take between 1-6 months to return review; Editor takes between 1-5 months to reach a decision:
 - reject
 - revise and resubmit
 - accept or accept with revisions

What criteria will the Editor use?

- Importance of research question
 - who will want to read it? how does that compare to the readership of the journal?
- Clear presentation, well organised
 - is the message clear; is it easy to read
 - if readers don't understand what you are doing or what your message is don't blame them, it is almost certainly your fault for not explaining it clearly, your work should be transparent
 - writing economics is not like writing a murder mystery or a joke; don't save the punch line until the end, don't build suspense; just present it all clearly
- Novelty of your contribution
 - is the method new? is it an existing method applied in a new context or to new data?

Selling your idea

- Be succinct, write it well
 - If the Editors and referees enjoy reading the paper they are much more likely to be favourably inclined
- The Introduction
 - is the most important part, it is all some (most) people will read
 - state your contribution clearly in the first page
 - it should not be "how did you spend your time"
 - you do not need a long list of all papers in the literature, stick to those that are directly relevant
 - write, rewrite, rewrite, rewrite, rewrite, rewrite... the Introduction (don't be afraid to throw away a version that doesn't work and start again)
- Don't clutter up the paper
 - stick to your main message; use appendices if you need to

How to figure out your contribution

- Work on the tweet version (140 characters)
- What do we know after reading your paper that we did not know before?
 - "Our contribution is..."
 - find out what others think is the contribution and how interest it is by talking to people and presenting the paper
 - try it out on your grandma, kids, neighbours, dog
 - meet seminar speakers and other visitors to your department, present your work as often as possible

The basics

- Don't plagiarise
- Reference appropriately and completely
 - your supervisor's and lecturers' work; your own work; original sources
 - almost never a good idea to cite negatively, put a positive spin on it
- Lay the paper out in a standard format
 - make it look like an academic paper
- Proof-read the paper many times
 - get someone else to do it (especially if you are not a native english speaker)

How to deal with an acceptance

- Celebrate!

How to deal with a revise and resubmit

- Celebrate! This is good news
- Read through the reports
 - put them down and walk away for a day or two before you do anything
- Go through **all** comments
 - make a plan for how to respond
 - consider which are most important and spend most time on them
 - pay particular attention to the Editor's letter
- Draft a detailed response
 - respond to each individual point, lay out your response clearly
 - if there is a comment you don't agree with try to be constructive but get your point across
- Never (or very rarely) complain to the Editor

How to deal with a reject

- Read through the reports
 - put them down and walk away for a day or two before you do anything
- Go through the comments as with a revise and resubmit and consider which you need to deal with; reassess your contribution and the appropriate journal
- Remember that when you submit your paper to another journal it is likely that the Editor will find out about its history
 - e.g. the Editor may send to the same referees
 - some journals allow you to submit past reports and how you have revised the paper; this can speed the process up; you should consider whether you should give the history of the paper in the cover letter - there are arguments for and against

Final comments

- Remember, this is why you decided to be an academic
 - to keep learning!
- Treat the process as a learning opportunity
 - use it constructively
 - think how nice the referees have been to spend all that time reading your paper, what do they get out of it? you get a better paper!
- Don't get disheartened
 - everyone gets rejected, a lot!
 - talk to colleagues about it
- You need to have thick skin
 - but remember, the referees are criticising your paper, not you