Elements Guest Editor Instructions

Thank you for accepting to act as Guest Editor for an issue of Elements *magazine. We truly appreciate your willingness to undertake this project, which will serve as a valuable educational resource for future generations. This document outlines your responsibilities and the points of contact with the Principal and Executive Editors. We look forward to working with you!*

Confirming Authors

As Guest Editor, you are free to cover the field as you think appropriate. Your issue will consist of an introductory article and five thematic articles, each of which will review and synthesize some aspect of your subject and potentially point to new research directions. The Guest Editor(s) must write the introductory article and may also contribute to another article as lead or co-author. For articles 2–6, we entrust you to find a solid set of expert authors whose writing will be accessible to non-specialists and who will meet *Elements*' strict deadlines.

In selecting authors, consider balancing contributors from industry, universities, and government labs if possible and pertinent to the topic. We also encourage you to consider authors from countries other than your own, at different experience levels (i.e., early career through emeritus), and with a thoughtful mix of gender and diversity—but not at the expense of the article or science quality. Each article should have a lead author who is a well-known expert in the field and up to a maximum of four co-authors.

Please revise your submitted thematic proposal with the confirmed author teams to the Executive Editor and Principal Editor within 1 month of your proposal's acceptance. We will then set up an "issue launch" meeting via Zoom to discuss all aspects and subsequent steps in the publication process and answer any questions you may have.

After the issue launch Zoom meeting, you should schedule a similar Zoom meeting with your authors (either lead only or all) to emphasize the intended scope and target of their articles, the deadlines and the importance of adhering to them, the level of writing, word count and other limits, and to discuss how to avoid excessive overlap between the different articles. Please be sure to send your authors a copy of the **Author Guidelines**.

Deadlines and Actions

A **Timeline of Deadlines and Actions** for which the Guest Editors are responsible has been sent to you upon acceptance of your thematic issue. Please use this timeline as a guide through the publication process, and never hesitate to reach out to your Principal Editor or the Executive Editor if you have questions or concerns or encounter problems or delays. The timeline will also give you a clear idea about when to send your authors a "reminder email" of upcoming deadlines to avoid delays in the first place. Do not share the timeline document with your authors. If they see the "flexibility buffers" built into the timeline, they may not respect the deadlines you set as strictly as we would

want them to do. The buffers are there in case of unexpected delays and not to used if there is not a serious reason for delay.

While there is a small degree of flexibility in the early deadlines, the dates by which the externally reviewed and revised manuscripts should be sent to the Principal Editor and Executive Editor are **firmly fixed**. It is critical that you communicate your expected deadlines to your authors; however, based on our experience and because most articles usually will require several iterations of revision, **we again strongly encourage you to keep the timeline itself for your eyes only**.

General Guidelines

Cover Page

Our graphics team will design your issue cover using an image that you provide. Please think carefully about a dramatic cover image, using either one of your own images or one submitted by an author. Our graphics team can also assist with designing a cover image to meet your vision. Please contact the Executive and Principal Editors with your suggestions as soon as they crystallize.

For the cover page, we need:
- **High-resolution artwork and a short caption**. Please be sure to include the image source.
- **Six short titles** to help the readers know what will be covered by the six articles in the issue. Please treat these like headlines in a newspaper (i.e., short and grab the readers' interest). These can be shortened/modified versions of the article titles.

You will receive a few example cover mock-ups and can further explore your preferred style from these.

Introductory Article

Your introductory article should provide an overview of the theme of your issue, perhaps with some historical background and some speculation about future developments. It should put the main articles into context, but it should not simply be a summary of their contents. Its main objective is to draw potential readers into the magazine, including Earth scientists who perhaps do not consider themselves to be primarily mineralogists, geochemists, or petrologists. Your introductory article should follow the Author Guidelines.

Style Guidelines

The target audience of *Elements* is much broader than that of a typical research paper. Writing at a level that is accessible and pleasurable for this large audience, while remaining up-to-date, scholarly, and rigorous, is a challenging task. Our target audience includes members of the participating societies, academic and industrial scientists in other disciplines (e.g., materials scientists, physicists, chemists, environmental geoscientists, geophysicists), students in the geosciences, popular science writers, funding agencies, and policy makers.

Elements articles are intended to be reviews and syntheses, not releases of new research findings. Previously unpublished figures, images, and photographs

that summarize and illustrate knowledge and processes are routine, and in some cases, these may be annotated or supported with minor new quantitative results, but Guest Editors should make clear to authors that any new results are to be minor, illustrative, and commonplace, rather than so novel or decisive as to require data tables or analytical methods.

Elements is published in full color, and you should encourage the use of exciting illustrations that draw the casual reader into the articles. In technical writing, we often inhabit a familiar world of jargon, buzz-words, acronyms, and notations. Try to stand back a little and consider whether such terms and conventions will be familiar to your target readers. If not, avoid them if possible. If unavoidable, explain them in plain text. The text should adopt a tutorial style where required.

Length Guidelines

- The ideal total length of your thematic section will be 36 *Elements* pages, corresponding to approximately 36,000 words. Each article should fit well onto **six pages** with ~6000 words, including the abstract, references, acknowledgments, captions, and graphics (~250 words per figure/table).
- Each article can have a maximum of 30 references.
- Please regularly use and share with your authors the **Article Length Estimator** to check that each article fits the length guidelines.

Make sure that your authors are fully aware of the length restrictions. From the outset, authors should be instructed to write to fit the allocated space as exactly as possible. Reviewers typically suggest *additions* to articles, which tends to *increase* the article length after revision. The initial version should therefore, ideally, be slightly *shorter* than the maximum length.

The receipt of a manuscript that is significantly too long should prompt the Guest Editor to return the manuscript to the author(s) for shortening before review.

Illustrations

Elements is published in full color and authors should be encouraged to provide exciting illustrations, either color photographs or high-quality, colored, digital drawings. Detailed instructions are provided in the Author Guidelines.

Individual authors and institutions may vary considerably in their ability to produce high-quality graphics. If you feel that illustrations are good in concept but fall short in terms of quality, please get in touch with the Executive Editor as early as possible for potential assistance with graphic design.

Summary Text

We will need you to write **two similar, but not identical, summaries** of your thematic issue, as outlined below.

- Each year, *Elements* creates a "**Thematic Preview**" that highlights all issues to be published in the following year. This document will be shared with our readership and advertisers, and should include the following.

- o   A **summary** of your issue (~125 words)
- o   A small **graphic** that highlights the content of your issue
- o   The **article titles and authorship, including affiliations**

- Each issue presents a short "**About This Issue**" section on the "From the Editors" page that should entice readers to explore the issue's contents. This should be a **summary** of your issue that is catchy and succinct (~200 words, 1–2 paragraphs), but not identical to the thematic preview.

Author Biographies

Each issue of *Elements* contains a "Meet the Authors" page that highlights the authors of the thematic articles. Please obtain the following from all authors.

- A short **biographical sketch** (<100 words) written in the third person;
- A headshot **photograph**

Once you have received all bios/photos, please send them to the Executive Editor.

Peer-Review Process

Elements articles must be reviewed by yourself prior to being sent out for external review. If the article does not meet your expectations, or fails to meet *Elements*' review and synthesis character, send it back to the authors with clear instructions for improvement and a firm deadline. In rare cases, a draft article may be so far from the appropriate quality or scope that the authors need to be replaced. If so, contact the Principal Editor immediately to obtain concurrence. Once the article is satisfactory to you, you should invite at least two external reviewers using the **Sample Reviewer Invitation Letter** below as a starting template. We encourage you to consider contacting reviewers in advance until a given article is ready for review; having reviewers "on standby" will eliminate waiting times, which can be particularly useful in the case that an article is running late.

Please ensure that your expert reviewers have a good feel for English written in a more popular style. Once a reviewer has accepted an invitation, please provide accepted reviewers with the **Reviewer Form**. When received, please promptly read through the reviewer comments and forward your decisions and recommendations to the authors (or first author) as soon as you can. As Guest Editors, you have the greatest knowledge of the scope and content of the entire issue, so you are therefore expected to edit articles to point to one another, minimize repetition, and to improve the clarity and presentation of text and figures.

Your introductory article must also be externally reviewed. You can contact potential reviewers yourself, identifying your role as Guest Editor and the need for your article to be reviewed. If you do not feel comfortable sending your own article out for review, please contact the Principal and/or Executive Editors, who can take over this task for you, if necessary.

As with traditional scientific journals, the review and revision processes take time. It is therefore imperative that you clearly state the deadlines and regularly check in with your authors (and reviewers) to ensure that progress remains steady and punctual. Once an article has been reviewed,

revised, and accepted by you as satisfactory, you will send it to the Principal Editor for an additional review. Comments from the Principal Editor will be returned to the Guest Editors. Please read through these and send them to your authors for a final revision, if necessary.

Role of the Principal Editor

Your assigned Principal Editor will support and supervise the development and timeliness of your issue. Please keep open and consistent communication with your Principal Editor by sending them regular updates of your progress. Please also let them know if you have any questions, ideas, or concerns, or if you run into any unexpected problems.

Unless they happen to have expert knowledge of your topic, the Principal Editor will be mainly concerned with the general level of the articles, the attractiveness of the illustrations, and their accessibility to non-specialists. They will keep a close eye on any potential use of jargon or unexplained concepts within your articles and will also check all the length limitations and other constraints (e.g., number of references, abstract word count).

The Principal Editor must approve all articles before they can be prepared for publication.

Final Production

Once all articles have been approved by the Principal Editor, the Executive Editor will manage the completion of your issue. Each article will be professionally copyedited to ensure perfect grammar/spelling, clear readability, and consistent use of terms and formatting. Copyedited manuscripts with tracked changes in MS Word will be e-mailed directly to your author teams with you in copy with instructions/deadline for final changes. Final accepted manuscripts will be converted into a PDF proof and e-mailed to your author teams with you in copy. This will be the last opportunity to make any changes to the manuscript prior to publication. Please be sure that you and your authors respect the provided deadlines to avoid delays.

Open Access

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Fee: free

Gold Open Access — Authors or their institutions can include or post the article for which an author or institution pays the article processing fee immediately upon publication. This means the article in any version is posted and made available on another institution's website, presumably for free to anyone.
Fee: $4000 per article

Complimentary Copies

Guest Editors will receive up to five print copies of their issue sent to an address or addresses of their choice. Authors will also receive 1–2 print copies, if desired. Additional copies can be purchased at a reduced rate. Please contact the Executive Editor for more details.

Please keep in mind that *Elements* operates as a non-profit organization. Please contact the Executive Editor if you would like to contribute to the printing costs of your issue or make a tax-deductible donation. We greatly appreciate your consideration.

Checklist for *Elements* Authors and Guest Editors

Please confirm the following items for EACH thematic article in your issue of *Elements*.

☑	ARTICLE ITEMS/CONTENT
☐	Title – short, engaging, catchy
☐	Author(s) – full name, affiliation address, and email included
☐	Abstract • maximum 120 words • this is a summary of the article—not an intro paragraph
☐	Keywords – 4–6 words
☐	Text style • Written as a magazine review article, not a scientific journal article. • Does the article present a good introduction to this subject for someone unfamiliar with the topic? • Can it be understood by an upper-level undergraduate student? • Is there a logical "flow" to the article? Does it move smoothly from one paragraph/section to the next? • Is it too technical? Boring? Wordy?
☐	Jargon (words used only by a specific group/discipline) • Should be avoided • If used, check that the words are clearly defined using simple language
☐	Figures • High-resolution (fonts are smooth, concise lines/arrows, crisp images, etc.) • Eye catching, colorful, informative • Color usage (Can the color blind discern the relevant features? Avoid usage of color as the sole mechanism for conveying information.) • Title image (banner) provided

☐	Figure captions
	    • Address each panel in the figure
	    • Figure & caption can stand alone without associated text

☐	References
	    • Maximum 30
	    • Confirm that any references in tables/figures are included in reference list

☐	Word count (for six-page article) • Maximum = 6100 words, including all the text, abstract, titles, acknowledgments, references, captions, and 250 words per figure/table
	OTHER ASSOCIATED ITEMS
☐	Biographical sketch and photo provided for each author

☐	Signed forms
	    • License to publish
	    • Pro forma invoice (if contributing to costs of your article or ordering extra copies)

Sample Reviewer Invitation Letter

Dear **NAME**,

I am acting as Guest Editor for a forthcoming issue of *Elements* magazine on the theme **ISSUE NAME**. I would like to ask if you would be prepared to review the attached article, **ARTICLE TITLE**, by **AUTHOR NAME(S)**. The Editors would be most grateful for your opinion of the quality and suitability of this article for *Elements*.

Please bear in mind that *Elements* is for technical non-specialists, so articles should be exciting, somewhat tutorial in nature (rather than presentations of new research results), and place topics in a wider Earth Sciences context. They should be aimed at the interests of our broad geochemistry–mineralogy–petrology readership and include connections to related disciplines and practical applications when appropriate, particularly in the introduction and conclusion sections. Authors should avoid using jargon and acronyms, except very common ones. Terms unfamiliar to the non-specialist should be omitted, or defined and explained clearly. We are eager to include striking color photographs and artwork.

The Editors would be very pleased to have your opinion as a letter, by e-mail by **DEADLINE**. If you are unable to help by this deadline, please let me know AT ONCE by e-mail, so that another reviewer can be found. *Elements* has a tight production schedule.

We would very much appreciate your help.

Sincerely,
GUEST EDITOR NAME

Reviewer Form

As a reviewer, please bear in mind that this contribution is intended to be accessible to the "informed non-specialist;" it should be concise and up-to-date and should have appropriate (eye-catching and informative) illustrations. However, given the limitations on space, the paper cannot be comprehensive. Nevertheless, the key issues of the topic should be covered.

For an example of the style of *Elements* please visit www.elementsmagazine.org if you have not seen an issue.

Article Title:
Author(s):

1. Does the paper represent a reasonable summary of our knowledge of the topic?   Y/N
*If **no**, please suggest subjects that you believe should be included (and any that you believe can be removed)*

2. Is the writing style appropriate to the intended audience (i.e. maintaining interest throughout; not too specialized)?   Y/N
*If **no**, please indicate examples where you think that the style is inappropriate.*

3. Is the scientific content accurate and valid?   Y/N
*If **no**, please indicate where there are scientific errors.*

4. Are there any ambiguities that may confuse a reader?   Y/N
*If **yes**, please indicate.*

5. Are the references appropriate?   Y/N
(Authors are asked to include no more than 30 key references.) Are there any key references which are omitted but which you feel should be included?

6. Is any of the material likely to cause offense?   Y/N

7. Please feel free to continue your review on additional pages.

8. Do you wish your name to be given to the author(s)   Y/N

9. Reviewer's Name:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Review comments