



**nucleus**  
a science magazine


## Information for writers

*A nucleus is many things. In the nervous system, it is a centre where neurons cluster together. In space, it is the head of a comet. In physics, it is the centre of an atom. In the body, it is the cell's essential epicentre of information. Universally, a nucleus is a significant and central basis for the growth of everything around it. The Nucleus magazine maintains this definition by becoming a centre for scientific news, articles, opinions, interviews, and more at King's College London.*

### What is the Nucleus?

The Nucleus is an open-access, online science magazine based at King's College London. It is a collaborative project between students and staff at the [Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience](#). We want to create an inclusive space for people to publish a broad range of pieces ranging from research to opinion. New writers are particularly welcome. At the Nucleus, we strive to publish high quality science journalism that is accessible, informative, and enjoyable for readers.


#### The Nucleus consists of five parts:


 **News** – objective reports on the latest scientific events and discoveries.


Editor: [eamonn.walsh@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:eamonn.walsh@kcl.ac.uk) & [clemens.kiecker@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:clemens.kiecker@kcl.ac.uk)

 **Reviews** – evaluations of new scientific studies, initiatives, projects, books, films, etc.

Editor: [isabella.munford@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:isabella.munford@kcl.ac.uk)

 **Features** – deep dives into scientific topics/people/findings, typically well-detailed. Interviews are encouraged! Editor: [helena.davies@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:helena.davies@kcl.ac.uk)

 **Research** – compressed and engaging lay-summaries of or commentaries on research projects/articles (this includes your own research). Editor: [eamonn.walsh@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:eamonn.walsh@kcl.ac.uk) & [clemens.kiecker@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:clemens.kiecker@kcl.ac.uk)

 **Opinion** – your thoughts and views on any kind of scientific topic. This includes policy, research, communication, etc. associated with science. Editor: [jessica.mundy@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:jessica.mundy@kcl.ac.uk)

## Pitching an article

Based on the descriptions offered for each section, please email any article idea/s to the section editor. **Please cc our main account on all email correspondence ([the.nucleus.magazine@gmail.com](mailto:the.nucleus.magazine@gmail.com)).** If you are not sure who to email, please just email the general Nucleus' email and the appropriate editor will get back to you.

Generally, try to provide as much detail as you think is necessary to give the editor a good idea of what the article could look like. This does not mean that you have to have the entire article written at the time of the pitch, but a more detailed pitch will help your editor give you suggestions and advice, where possible. Below are details regarding the relevant details you might want to include in your pitch for each section.

### News

- What would you like to report on? When did it happen?
- In what way is it 'news-worthy'?
- How quickly can you turn the piece around? (Note: news articles need to be turned around quickly)

### Reviews

- What are you reviewing and why?
- Have you already attended/read/seen/experienced the object of your review? If so, what is your view on it? Are there alternate views?
- Why should people go and attend/read/see what you are reviewing?

### Features

- What is the topic matter? Why is it important?
- General statement about the state of the literature (if appropriate)
- If interview – who would you like to interview and why? What are the key questions you will ask them?

### Research

- Send us a lay summary (a couple of sentences will do!) that states what is unique or important about the research
- Please write a couple of sentences to summarise each section of the research: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion. If it is your own research project, you can send us your abstract

### Opinion

- What is the topic matter? Why is it important? Who is it most relevant to?
- What is your angle/view? Is this a controversial angle/view?
- One or two sources to back up your angle/view (if appropriate)

Once approved, it is your responsibility to write the article and send a draft to your editor. There are no set deadlines, as we will be publishing on a rolling basis, but the sooner you send a draft, the sooner you can get it published!

## Writing an article

**General Writing Tips:** When writing, stick generally to the story you have pitched to your editor. If you find your research or interview/s have brought you to a different story than you originally planned, that is completely fine. In fact, that is the beauty of journalism! Just make sure to let your editor know when sending them a first draft.

Furthermore, keep in mind the section your article (see above) will wind up in: if you have pitched an opinion piece, feel free to use the first person and create a conversational narrative. If you are writing a news or research article, maintain a more serious tone. Features and reviews lie somewhere in the middle. For research pieces, see [here](#) for writing a lay summary. It can be useful to write the title for your piece first. Importantly: avoid the passive voice (e.g., 'an experiment was performed in our lab'). Instead, write in the active voice (e.g., 'we performed an experiment in our lab'),

We encourage writers to provide images to go alongside their piece (see [here](#) or [here](#)). If you are writing a review, please include any photos you may have of the object of your review. If you have any questions about any of this, feel free to ask your editor.

Most importantly: **enjoy it!** The whole process of writing, editing, and sharing your piece should be fun and educational for both writers and editors. Keep in contact with your section editor – they are your touch point and will be happy to answer questions and give you advice on researching and writing your article.

**Word counts:** Word count depends on the type of article you are writing. Generally, it is as follows: News (300-500), Research (~1000), Features (~1200-3000), Opinion (~1000), and Reviews (~1000). For the most part, however, if your words aren't redundant, there is no word limit. Think about what you would like to read in a magazine like this - very few readers are likely to finish reading an article of 5,000 words. If your piece is less than 300 words, have a word with your editor to discuss if it needs to be longer. If it does, they can help you think of ways to expand its scope.

**Sources:** Whenever you include a fact in your article, please provide us with the source by highlighting the fact, inserting a comment, and pasting the hyperlink into the comment. You do not need to provide a reference list in the way that you might with an academic piece of writing. Be open to the fact that if your sources are not reputable then we may ask you to find others. Examples of unacceptable sources include: the Daily Mail, personal blogs, and Reddit. Examples of acceptable sources include: the Guardian, a peer-reviewed journal, the BBC. However, please note that, if possible, it is always better to cite the original source. Whilst the Guardian and the BBC are reputable news sources, they are not scientific publications and so may misinterpret scientific findings. Thus, if these news sources reference a finding, please cite the original paper rather than the news article that refers to it.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty, which is destructive to the reputation of our publication and the University behind it. The Nucleus has a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism, adhering to the same set of standards set out by King's College London. If your editors suspect plagiarism, they will submit your work to Turnitin (a plagiarism detection service). If it is found that your work contains plagiarism, your editor will contact you and you will be given the opportunity for discussion and to review your work and make appropriate amendments. However, if upon a second submission it is determined that your article still contains plagiarism, it will not be published on our website.

**Editing and Publication:** Each article will undergo a minimum of one round of edits. For the first round, as each section has its own editor, send your first draft to the editor who has approved your pitch. They will read through it and provide you with comments on style and content, as well as grammatical corrections. Please allow at least a week for turnaround, though it may be longer depending on their workload when you send it to them. Feel free to ask your editor when a good time would be to send a draft so they can return it to you faster. Once you have addressed all your editor's corrections, send your second draft directly to them. If this is a final draft, they will have a read-through for final edits prior to publication. If you or the editor think another draft would be useful, this is totally fine too! The goal is to publish an excellent article, and it is okay if this takes a little longer. We publish on a rolling basis; there are no hard deadlines.

Remember that being edited is *not* criticism. It is impossible for you to have the same opinion on your work as a second set of eyes will, and so our editors will serve this purpose. Think of your editor more like a coach, and always ask them for clarification if you do not understand why they've suggested certain changes.

## After publication

After your article has been published, we will post about it on our social media. To increase the exposure of your article and to ensure it attracts the attention it deserves, we recommend that you share your article on your own social media (and tag us when you do!) as well as with friends, family, and colleagues.



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## Summary of process

