Washington University in St. Louis
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Department of Pathology and Immunology
Division of Laboratory and Genomic Medicine

Service Guidelines for LGM Scientific Editing

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Introduction

Developing and sustaining a successful research career requires more than just passion and good ideas. An investigator needs a solid publication record in their research area, collaborators with complementary expertise, access to appropriate resources, a strong understanding of funders' priorities and review criteria, and sufficient time to write, revise, receive feedback on, and finalize proposals.

The goal of the Scientific Editing Service is to provide faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students with input—at the levels of science, writing, and visualization—that will enhance the success of their grant applications and research articles.

The Scientific Editor can help with:

1. **Research Strategy** – Technical review to highlight any issues that are likely to be flagged by reviewers. Critically evaluate proposed research aims and their significance.
2. **Science Communication** – Developmental review to improve communication of research proposals and findings. Edit written documents and illustrations to strengthen key arguments and convey ideas more clearly.

This service is dedicated to LGM faculty, provided by the Division <u>at no additional cost</u>.

Process

What to submit

Grants	Research manuscripts
- Specific Aims - Research Strategy sections (Background, Significance, Innovation, Approach) - Other sections (Abstract, Project Narrative, Biosketches, Multi-PI plan, etc) - Funding agency, grant type, RFA, due date - Previous reviewers' comments (if applicable)	- Title and Abstract - Full text, including figure legends - Figures - Supplementary tables, figures, and text - Journal name and author instructions - Cover letter - Previous reviewers' comments (if applicable)
Illustrations	**Fellowships / awards**
- All items above - Rough sketch - Description of what illustration should show and convey - Reference material (if applicable)	- Applicant's CV - Award name, application requirements, due date

What to expect

Phase	Example(s)	Editing services provided
Early draft	• Draft of Specific Aims page • Trainee-written draft before an advisor's critiques	• Substantial comments to guide the author in rewriting • Anticipated reviewer concerns
Well-developed draft	• Complete draft of a grant written by a faculty member • Trainee-written manuscript after an advisor's critiques	• Extensive editing for language, clarity, and highlighting significance • Comments explaining suggested changes, and possibly posing scientific questions
Final draft	• Draft that has been through multiple rounds of revisions	• Correction of grammar • Other small changes for clarity, flow, and accuracy

Applicable requests

Document type	Yes	If time allows	No
Single project grants and trainee awards			
Grant: PI has primary faculty appointment in LGM	X		
Grant: LGM faculty is Co-I		X	
Fellowship/award: trainee mentored by LGM faculty member	X		
Deadline in <7 days		X	
Multi-project grants involving LGM faculty			
LGM project in a grant submitted by another department or university	X		
Non-LGM project in a grant submitted by LGM		X	
Manuscripts and other documents *			
Work done at WUSM, first or senior author has primary appointment in LGM	X		
Work done when author was not affiliated with WUSM			X
Review articles, conference abstracts, book chapters, etc.		X	
PhD student qualifying exams, thesis proposals, dissertation chapters		comments only	

* Trainees are encouraged to consult with InPrint for manuscript editing.

Factors considered when prioritizing requests

In general, documents will be reviewed on a first-come first-served basis, with edited versions returned in ~1 week. An estimated return date will be communicated within 24 hours of submission.

During times when the service is heavily subscribed, to ensure fair and equitable distribution of support, requests will be prioritized based on the following guidelines:

- Grant proposals > research manuscripts > other documents
- LGM Investigator track faculty > LGM Research and Clinical track
- Faculty rank, inversely prioritized (i.e. Assistant Professor > Associate Professor > Full Professor)
- Amount of assistance provided to faculty member recently. Requests from lab personnel (e.g., trainees) will also count towards the faculty member's usage. Accordingly, assuming equal demand, service access is weighted towards more per capita access for smaller labs.

Note: There will be no opportunity to request or pay for extra services within the responsibilities of this Scientific Editing Service.

Services that are NOT provided

- *De novo* writing of first drafts
- Exhaustive searches for research funding opportunities
- Initial revising of grants or manuscripts in response to reviewer comments
- Collecting, collating, or managing references

Attribution

For published articles, please acknowledge work done by the Scientific Editor in the Acknowledgements or Methods sections.

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