TRANSFORMATIONS
A DARIAH Journal

Author Guidelines

1. Purpose and Scope

Transformations is committed to publishing high-quality, innovative research in the arts and humanities that reflects the diversity of digital methods, data, and tools shaping the field. We welcome traditional research articles as well as non-traditional formats such as data papers and workflow papers, recognising that scholarly contributions today take many different forms.

Our goal is to provide a platform that supports methodological innovation, transparency, and critical reflection, while ensuring accessibility and sustainability. To this end, the following guidelines bring together requirements for authors across all submission types. The guidelines should be read alongside the journal's Data Policy which is designed to support authors in providing a clear and consolidated account of the data and digital research objects associated with their publications.

2. General Principles

In a nutshell:

- Uphold good scientific practices in research, writing, and referencing.
- Write for an informed but not necessarily specialist readership: contributions should be intelligible across disciplines.
- Follow Open Science principles, ensuring transparency, accessibility, and reusability of outputs.

Opening a publication space for non-traditional research outputs is a demanding exercise, especially when it comes to assessing their scientific quality. Due to the

lack of precedents and/or guidelines, authors of such publications might wonder if their submission stretches scientific writing conventions too far.

Generally, good scientific practices remain valid for all types of publications in *Transformations*. The core of a solid publication is a well-identified and well-contextualised research question. The submitted text must refer to the relevant publications on the topic and present a notable contribution to the state of the art. It should be written in a way that is intelligible not only to the handful of specialists familiar with the topic, but also to any arts and humanities scholar interested in digital methods at large. The datasets discussed in the submission must be accessible and the results reproducible.

3. Submission Types

Transformations welcomes a variety of scholarly contributions. Each submission type has specific requirements regarding scope, length, and evaluation.

- Research articles: 30,000–50,000 characters. Present a well-defined research question, contextualise it in relation to the state of the art, and demonstrate scholarly significance in terms of theoretical reflection, methodological innovation and/or development of tooling.
- Data papers: 18,000–24,000 characters. Provide structured documentation and contextualisation of a dataset. The focus is on transparency, metadata, standards, and reuse potential rather than on answering a concrete research question.
- Workflow papers: 18,000–24,000 characters. Describe and contextualise a research workflow — the sequence of steps used to implement a methodology or assist in the process of analysis. They should explain motivations, illustrate use cases, and highlight reusability and sustainability.

All word counts include bibliography, spaces, footnotes, tables, figures, and captions. For the specific evaluation criteria applied to each submission type, see Evaluation process section.

4. Research Question

In a nutshell:

- Research articles must clearly state and contextualise their research question.

- The research question may focus on theoretical issues, implementation challenges, tooling, or a combination of these.

Research articles revolve around what is traditionally called a research question: a concrete problem or a challenge that the publication aims to resolve after presenting the relevant context, the corpus gathered to investigate it, and the methods applied.

While research questions can be more or less encompassing, answering them often comes down to breaking them into smaller units of intellectual work – some theoretical, some practical, and among those, some that can be delegated to computational tools. We are particularly interested in publications that address all three aspects (theory, implementation, tooling), but it may also suffice for a submission to focus on one specific aspect of the whole process. What matters is that the submission formulates a clear research question and demonstrates how it is being answered.

For example, a research article on the semantic enrichment of cultural heritage datasets might ask: *How can semantic enrichment, through linked open data standards and named-entity recognition, enhance the interpretative outcomes of historical research?* Such a contribution could combine theoretical motivations, the implementation of standards, the development of tools, and interpretative analysis. By contrast, another article might ask: *How effective is a newly designed named-entity recognition tool in disambiguating people and places in historical texts?* Both types of contributions are valid, provided their goals and structure are explicit, situated within a broader research context and demonstrating clear scholarly relevance.

Some submission types that are published in *Transformations*, such as data papers and workflow papers, have a different scope and do not necessarily revolve around research questions. For details, see Section 3 on Submission Types.

5. State of the Art

In a nutshell:

- The state of the art should critically analyse existing work and situate the contribution within broader disciplinary or interdisciplinary debates.
- Avoid mere listings of references or excessive self-citation.

- References to blogs, documentation, or websites are acceptable if critically evaluated.

No research starts from scratch: we all build on a long tradition of arts and humanities research. While the journal's readership can be assumed to share some common knowledge (for instance, the general history of digital humanities), *Transformations* is read across disciplinary boundaries. Authors should therefore situate their submission within a broader scholarly field, taking into account recent relevant research and making the stakes and challenges understandable to both specialists and non-specialists.

Each article should begin by positioning its contribution against relevant existing work. The state of the art is not a simple list of obligatory references, nor a collection of self-citations, but a critical analysis of the literature that clarifies the originality and scholarly relevance of the submission. Earlier works by the authors may be included, but they should not dominate the reference list; when cited, they should be explicitly connected to the new contribution.

Depending on the type of publication, the resources referenced may vary in quantity and form. In some domains, blogposts, documentation, or websites may provide more up-to-date information than research articles. Such sources are welcome, but they should be critically evaluated and, where possible, compared with peer-reviewed work.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that the state of the art provides added value to the reader: specialists should find the discussion nuanced and current, while non-specialists should gain a clear understanding of the scholarly context into which the submission intervenes.

6. Data and Tools

In a nutshell:

- Deposit all datasets and tools that are the focus of your submission in a trusted repository or equivalent sustainable environment.
- Provide complete information for each dataset or tool you refer to, including publication date(s), type, link, and licence.
- Clearly document the use of recognised disciplinary standards (e.g. TEI, MEI, EAD, EDM).

- Adhere to the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) and, where relevant, the CARE principles (Collective benefit, Authority to control, Responsibility, Ethics).

The accessibility and sustainability of both data and tools are essential components of the validity of publications in *Transformations*. Because the journal is concerned with digital approaches, digital tooling and robust data management are considered to be not peripheral but central to the scholarly argument. The way in which these elements are embedded in a submission is essential both in terms of the persuasiveness of the claims being made and in terms of their technical accessibility and reusability to others.

We take the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) at their word when it comes to the data presented in the journal, and we also ask authors to consider the CARE principles (Collective benefit, Authority to control, Responsibility, Ethics) when working with sensitive or community-related data. Authors are expected to provide a comprehensive and convincing account of the infrastructures and standards they have used to make their data and tools sustainable.

We expect authors to provide thorough information on the datasets and tools they rely on. These must be accessible in trusted repositories or equivalent sustainable environments, accompanied by structured and complete metadata, and described in ways that outline realistic scenarios for reuse.

7. Linguistic Accessibility

In a nutshell:

- Submissions are judged primarily on their scholarly contribution, not on native-like fluency. Clarity of expression, however, remains essential.
- All authors (native and non-native) should have their manuscripts reviewed by at least one external reader before submission.
- Accepted submissions will be copy-edited by a professional English-language editor, but responsibility for producing a clear, accessible text lies with the authors.

- Authors are required to acknowledge all forms of substantial language support, whether by colleagues, professional editors, or AI tools.

We recognise that the dominance of English in scholarly publishing imposes additional effort and disadvantages on researchers working in non-English contexts. The quality of language is too often unfairly equated with the quality of research. And while *Transformations* is committed to leveling the playing field by ensuring submissions are judged on their scholarly contribution rather than the perceived standard of English, the clarity of expression, even in a second language, remains a hallmark of academic prose.

The current publication language in *Transformations* is British English. For financial and technical reasons, a multilingual reviewing and editing process is not yet feasible, although we aim to broaden our linguistic scope as conditions allow. Our ambition is not for all our articles to have native-speaker polish. Rather, the goal is that published texts be accessible to all potential readers of the journal, regardless of their disciplinary or linguistic background. To this end, idiosyncrasies carried over from languages other than English should be kept to a minimum, and authors are strongly encouraged to have their submission reviewed by at least one person not involved in the writing process — ideally a native English speaker, but at the very least someone familiar with Academic English. This applies equally to native and non-native authors.

Accepted submissions will be copy-edited by a professional English-language editor. The role of the copy-editor is not to bring a text up to the level of Academic English — that responsibility lies with the authors — but to refine what is already clear prose so that it meets the journal's standards for style, referencing, and consistency. Authors are expected to integrate the copy-editor's suggestions in the final stage before publication. The editorial board may also request linguistic improvements during peer review.

For the sake of fairness and transparency, *Transformations* requires authors to acknowledge language editing, whether by peers, colleagues, professional editors, or AI tools. If a colleague or native speaker provided substantial help in improving the text, they should be named in the acknowledgements. Similarly, if AI-assisted writing tools were used (e.g., for grammar correction, paraphrasing, or style adjustment), this should also be stated (see Section 9 on Generative AI). Recognizing steps taken by the author to improve the text not only gives credit

where it is due but also helps demystify the writing process and fosters a culture of openness.

8. Metadata and Image Rights

8.1 Metadata

All metadata (author names, title, abstract, keywords) are automatically retrieved from the repository in which the preprint was deposited (see submission steps).

You must provide in your preprint:

- First and last name
- Affiliation
- ORCID
- Title in English and at least one additional language
- Abstract in English and at least one additional language (max. 1,000 words each)
- Keywords in English and at least one additional language (max. 6)

Why this matters: Complete and multilingual metadata increases the visibility of your work, ensures that it can be correctly indexed and cited, and makes it accessible to a wider scholarly and cultural community. As persistent identifiers, ORCID IDs uniquely identify authors and prevent confusion with name variants. Providing abstracts and keywords in more than one language enhances inclusivity and cross-border recognition.

If you don't already have an ORCID ID, you can register for one here.

8.2 Image Rights

If your article includes images, you must ensure that each image is accompanied by a caption that contains both essential descriptive information and complete rights information:

- If you are the rights holder, the image will be released under the same licence as the article (CC BY 4.0).
- If you use third-party images, you must secure permission and clearly state the rights holder and licence in each image caption.

Why this matters: Images are integral to scholarly communication but also raise complex legal and ethical questions. Clear rights information protects both authors and the journal from potential copyright infringements, while ensuring

that visual materials can be lawfully shared and reused under open access conditions. Accurate captions also enhance the interpretability and reusability of your research outputs.

9. Generative AI

Authors must disclose any substantive use of generative AI or AI-assisted technologies in the preparation of the manuscript. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of such tools for drafting, rewriting, paraphrasing, summarising, translating, structuring, or otherwise generating substantial parts of the text.

Disclosure should be made in the manuscript before the References list, under the heading *Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies*.

Template statement:

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used [NAME TOOL/SERVICE] in order to [REASON]. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

This declaration is not normally required for basic tools used for spelling, grammar, formatting, reference checking, accessibility support, or minor language correction, provided that their use does not materially affect the scholarly content, evidence, interpretation, or claims of the publication. If there is nothing to disclose, no statement is required.

Where AI-assisted tools are used as part of the research process, including for data generation, annotation, enrichment, transformation, analysis, visualisation, or validation, their use must also be documented in accordance with the journal's Data Policy.

How to cite generative AI:

These examples are provided by Chicago Manual of Style, 18th edition.

Any specific content, whether quoted or paraphrased, should be cited where it occurs, either in the text or in a note. Like personal communications (see 14.111) and social media posts (see 14.106), chatbot conversations are not usually included in a bibliography or reference list (but see below). In the first three examples that follow, ChatGPT is the author of the content (though not in the traditional sense), and OpenAI is the publisher or developer. The URL points to a publicly archived copy of the conversation (see also 13.6, 13.17). Include the date the content was

generated in addition to a version number. If the AI-generated text has been edited or adapted in any way, this fact should be acknowledged in the text or in the note.

Cited in the text:

The following recipe for pizza dough was generated on December 9, 2023, by ChatGPT-3.5.

Cited in a note:

Text generated by ChatGPT-3.5, OpenAI, December 9, 2023, https://chat.openai.com/share/90b8137d-ff1c-4c0c-b123-2868623c4ae2.

A prompt, if not included in the text, may be added to the note. Multiple prompts (as in an extended conversation) may be summarized.

Response to "Explain how to make pizza dough from common household ingredients," ChatGPT-3.5, Open AI, December 9, 2023, edited for style and accuracy.

If for any reason an AI conversation is included in a bibliography or reference list, cite it under the name of the publisher or developer rather than the name of the tool and include a publicly available URL (see also 14.104).

Google. Response to "How many copyeditors does it take to fix a book-length manuscript?" Gemini 1.0, February 10, 2024. https://g.co/gemini/share/cccc26abdc19.