

External guidelines for Video Abstracts

Video Abstracts – what are they and why should you use them?

- A video abstract is a short video that appears at the top of your article that highlights the key findings of your work.
- It's a very effective means of making your article stand out, and encouraging readership of your work.
- It makes for a great promotional tool that can be shared on a variety of social media channels, by both yourself and your SAGE Editor.
- Animations and narrated slide decks give you the freedom to explain your research in a visual manner, adding impact to your findings.
- Video Abstracts will be peer-reviewed so make sure that all material in your Video Abstract directly supports the conclusions of your article, and stays within the scope of your research.

Types of Video Abstract

- Animations (e.g., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU7C4jjNKxw>)
- Narrated slide deck (e.g., <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1758835919836374>)
- 'Talking heads' (e.g., <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/17588359211041961>)

When should I start preparing/submit a Video Abstract?

- In order for a video abstract to be published as part of your article, we require either the final video or the written audio transcript to be submitted during the peer-review process **prior to article acceptance**. This is so that either the video file or the written audio transcript can be peer-reviewed by the same reviewers who are reviewing your manuscript.
- If you think that you would like to prepare a video abstract to accompany your paper, **please therefore let your SAGE Editor know in advance of article acceptance**.
 - We understand that you may not wish to invest any time preparing a video abstract until you have confirmation that your paper will be accepted for publication, so **a good time to let your SAGE Editor know that you wish to create a video is upon receipt of your initial decision letter**. You may then submit a written audio transcript for the video along with your revised submission so that it can be peer-reviewed with your revised manuscript.
 - Providing your SAGE Editor has been made aware that you plan to prepare a video abstract, they can hold off from accepting your paper and sending it to the

production team until the video is received. Your SAGE Editor will hold your paper by making a final 'Minor revisions' decision in order to allow you to submit the finished Video Abstract. The video and your accepted manuscript files will then be sent to the production team together to make sure that the video abstract is published as part of your article.

- If the final video file is ready at the time of manuscript submission (either first or revised), please provide a highlighted link to the video at the start of your manuscript file so that the video can be easily accessed and reviewed by the peer reviewer.

Where will the published Video Abstract appear?

- Your Video Abstract will be embedded into the HTML full text-version of your paper immediately underneath the text abstract (e.g., <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1758835919836374>)
- It will also be hosted as Supplementary Material, which you should cite in the main text (e.g., <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/17588359211041961>), to enable easy access and shareability.
- The video will also be playable from the PDF as a pop-out video file (e.g., <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2041669520960494>)

Creating the Video Abstract

General tech guidelines:

- All common video file types are supported.
- At least 640 by 480 resolution and at least 20 fps is recommended.
- Videos should be below the 10MB mark and less than 3 mins in length; exceptions may be made at the discretion of the editors.
- The file format for videos should be MP3, M4a, MP4 or M4v.
- Video compression should be of high quality.
- We expect videos to be able to play on Windows, Linux and Mac so proprietary formats such as FLV are discouraged.
- Your video abstract should be produced in the English language.
- Closed captioning is automatically added to all video abstracts upon publication, so you do not need to add your own subtitles.

Utilising a professional vendor for creation of animated video abstracts

- You may wish to utilise a professional vendor to create an animated video abstract. SAGE is partnered with an external professional vendor if you wish to use them:
<https://languageservices.sagepub.com/en/services/video-abstracts.html>
- An example video abstract created by the vendor with which we are partnered can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU7C4jjNKxw>
- It takes about 4 weeks for the vendor to produce the final animated video abstract. The breakdown of this timeline is as follows:
 - Script writing: 5 working days
 - Author review: 0-2 working days
 - Script finalizing: 1-3 working days (depending on extent of revisions)
 - Video draft creation: 7 working days
 - Video review: 0-3 working days
 - Video final draft: 5 working days
- If you wish to work with our vendor towards creation of a VA, we strongly advise that you wait until you have received your decision letter, revised your manuscript according to the reviewers' comments and then submit the revised paper to the vendor so that they can write the script for the video based on your revised work.
 - The vendor will write the first draft of the script within 5 days, and you will have the opportunity for feedback and revisions (the revised script will be returned in 1-3 working days, depending on the extent of revisions).
- **You should then submit the script that the vendor has written to the journal along with your revised paper so that the script can be peer-reviewed along with the revised manuscript.**
- Upon peer-review of the revised paper and script, if the reviewers request changes to your script, the vendor can make these changes.
- If you wish to have initial input into creation of the video, you may send a draft script and/or Powerpoint slides to the vendor at the start of the project. If you wish to do this, please follow the '**Guidelines and best practices for scriptwriting guidelines**' (see below) to ensure your script is suitable.
- If you decide to create a video abstract using the vendor AFTER your revised paper has already been reviewed, please bear in mind that we will have to peer-review the script or video, which will cause a delay to publication of your paper.

- Once your script is approved by the reviewers, the vendor will start work on the graphics/animations for the video. They will send you the first draft of the video to review within 7 working days. You will have an opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions on the graphics/animation. No changes to the script will be allowed at this time.
 - Once the final video has been created, only very minor edits will be covered by your fee; major edits post-acceptance of the video will incur a further fee.
- Please note that the fee to create a video abstract using our professional vendor will be payable even if your paper is not accepted for publication, so it is advisable only to embark on the creation of a video abstract using this service once you have some confirmation that your paper will be accepted following revisions. Importantly, as mentioned above, please make sure that your SAGE Editor knows that you intend to create a video abstract prior to article acceptance, so that they can hold the paper accordingly until you have created the video.

Creating a narrated slide deck video abstract:

- Use a slideshow presentation software such as PowerPoint.
- Limit the amount of written text on each slide, and use large font for readers accessing your video abstract on mobiles and tablets.
- Don't copy and paste sections of text (e.g., the Abstract, Results or Conclusion) onto a slide.
- You should consider narrating over 1 or more of your article's figures – you could even add transitions and simple animations to bring these to life.

Creating a 'talking head' video abstract:

- Prioritise a steady visual and clear audio - use a tripod, microphone and HD camera if possible.
- Consider your background, lighting and shot set-up – the main light source should come from behind the camera rather than behind the subject .
- If talking directly to the camera, maintain eye contact with the lens throughout.
- Alternatively, you can produce the video as if you were being interviewed and direct your gaze 45 degrees off camera – if you opt for this style of video, try to avoid glancing at the camera lens.
- Bear in mind that the Video Abstract may reach a wider, more diverse audience (social media, news outlets), so consider using a more informal, conversational style than your written Abstract – write it as you would say it.

- Rehearse the reading of your script in advance to help it sound natural, and make sure to speak in a clear and audible voice .
- Consider using video editing software, particularly if you transition between multiple shots and/or include animations or slides within the video.

Guidelines and best practices for scriptwriting

- Write a script of approx. 250 words for a final video that will be under 3 minutes long.
- Keep the script short and relatable to the target audience.
- Give a structure to the script (see sample at the end of this document):
 - Build context and set the scene before getting into specifics.
 - Introduce the topic by focusing on the problem—what was the study about? Why was it conducted?
 - Talk about researchers’ background (e.g., a group of researchers from the University of Rutgers..., or Dr. Smith and coworkers...)
 - Explain the methodology very briefly.
 - Focus on the primary findings and outcomes. How was the problem solved?
 - What’s the take-home message? Viewers need to know how this study is relevant to their lives, and what’s in store in the future.
- Use conversational language; focus on telling a “story”. The goal is to make the content engaging for the audience.
- Write in plain language, avoiding jargon— e.g., “embryos did not survive” instead of “resulted in embryonic lethality”.
- Avoid using too many acronyms. Define the abbreviated form at first use.
- For field-specific terms and acronyms used in the script, provide audio references for the narrator (e.g., preferably share references to an audio dictionary such as <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/> or to YouTube pronunciation guides after validating that the pronunciation matches that of a native English speaker, or provide phonetic instructions).