



## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

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### Editors

Emanuel Adler  
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RE: Guidelines for Special Issue Proposals

### Associate Editors

Edward D. Mansfield  
David Stasavage

Founded in 1947 by the  
World Peace Foundation

*International Organization* invites the submission of innovative proposals for symposia and special issues on international relations defined broadly. A symposium consists of two to five articles on a common subject, published as a set in the same issue. Papers submitted together for consideration as a symposium are all judged by the same referees.

Special full issues, in contrast, are designed and edited by guest editors and include an introductory or concluding essay written by the editors. The goals of a special issue are to focus attention on promising ideas and important subjects in international relations defined broadly, and to advance the critique and development of economic or political theory in some way.

Successful special issue may take a variety of forms. For example, some issues may promise to develop a new analytical concept or argument having widespread potential applicability and implications. Examples include past *IO* special issues on transnational relations, domestic structures and foreign economic policy, and international regimes. Alternatively, a project might defend in a new way the utility of an older idea that has been out of favor, or attempt to disprove a popular set of ideas. Or a volume might confront an existing theory with a major empirical arena to which it had not been applied, revealing fresh confirmations or respects in which the theory requires modification. A volume might bring together a debate that has previously taken place only in an episodic, indirect manner. An influential issue might take stock of a research subfield and defend a critical point of view concerning which avenues for future study are most promising.

A successful special issue might instead be defined in terms of a familiar major phenomenon – alliance formation or protectionism, for

example. An issue could also signal the journal's receptivity to a subject area in which it has not been active. Any such proposal is less likely to be adopted, however, if it does not promise to contribute to available theory and scholarly literature on the subject in some specified way. Studies drawing implications for current policies of governments and international organizations are welcomed if they also make such lasting analytical contributions.

Each volume includes at least an introductory or concluding essay that articulates the concept, point of view, or controversy debated by the issue as a whole. The other articles must be parts of some coherent whole, but no single formula dictates the relationship among the articles. For example, it is not necessary for the papers to represent all categories in the analytical framework. Neither must all participating authors agree with the organizers; indeed, dissent and debate can stimulate future thinking and research.

Criteria for judging any proposal include the following:

1. Is the subject important enough to our readers to justify investing the journal's scarce editorial and financial resources and an entire issue?
2. How distinctive a contribution to the literature will the volume probably make? Is its novelty deeper than faddism?
3. How likely is it to stimulate or shape future work and thought in this field?
4. Does it promise to further the critique and development of political or economic theory in some way?
5. How likely is this group to realize the project's stated goals, with the advice of a review committee? Will the scholarship probably be sound and compelling?

Proposals are submitted to the Editor, and should include the following elements:

- A preliminary draft of the introductory or concluding essay by the guest editor or editors, from 4000 to 8000 words in length.
- In the essay the editors should present the main argument, ideas, or debate to be developed by the volume. The most convincing essay will emphasize the most promising original contributions of the project as a whole, and its potential to influence theory and other scholarship. The planned volume should be differentiated briefly from the closest rival works already available or in preparation.
- The essay should also identify each contributor and preliminary paper title, and explain in a paragraph or

two how each article is expected to contribute to the issue's purposes.

- A curriculum vitae for each editor, and optionally for other contributors.

Proposals are reviewed by a standing committee of the editorial board at any time of the year. After approval of the proposal, our normal practice is to have all the papers reviewed by two reviewers, at least one of whom will be a board member or senior advisor charged with the task of assessing of all the papers proposed. If a sufficient number of papers is ultimately accepted to constitute a special issue, the editorial board will make a final determination on approval of the issue.

The review process is intended to uphold *IO*'s usual standards. Therefore, it will follow the usual double-blind procedures. It is the responsibility of the special issue editor(s) to assure that all papers submitted for review, including the introductory and concluding chapters, are fully anonymous. Cross-references and summaries should not allow identification of the authors of individual papers. One way to assure anonymity would be to assign each paper a code name or number, for example, and to require that individual authors replace all references to other papers with these codes. The editors are responsible for checking that all authors have followed these procedures before submitting the papers for review, perhaps using the search-and-replace functions of a word-processing program.

Please contact the editorial office for more information.