

Paper Writing

Paper writing is essential for M.S. and Ph.D students as well as postdocs. While it is less so for undergrads, M.Eng., and M.P.S. students, turning your project into a paper could have benefits down the road.

Process Guidelines

1. Start with an [outline](#) and [paper contract](#). This will help lay out the goals of the research and make sure all projected authors know their expected contributions and how key terms are being used (as vocabularies can vary across disciplines or even sub-disciplines).
2. In our group, the first author (usually the junior researcher leading the research) has the final say on scope, wording, and figure design. These decisions should be made in consultation with the entire team, however.
3. Don't expect immediate turnaround when submitting drafts for feedback, either to Vivek or to the other authors! Depending on how busy Vivek is, he might take up to a week to provide feedback, though doing so in a timely fashion will always be a top priority. Other authors may take a longer time depending on their constraints. This is especially important to bear in mind when revising a paper.
4. Our group's best practice is to do internal peer review before submitting a paper. After focusing on a piece of research, it is easy to believe that certain concepts can be taken as given or are implicit, which may limit the accessibility of the writing and complicate peer review. To reduce this risk, we will ask two or three group members who were not involved in the project to read the manuscript and provide feedback. If appropriate group members are not available, we will seek out external collaborators for this role. *Anyone who provides feedback should be listed in the Acknowledgements section.*
5. Similarly, our group's best practice is to do an internal code review before submitting a paper. We want our work to be reproducible and to ensure that there are no bugs driving the results, so code should be accessible, well-documented, and presented with a clear workflow. We will ask one member of the group to reproduce the workflow to make sure that the results and figures are reproducible. *Anyone who helps with code reviewing should be listed in the Acknowledgements section.*