Instructions for Authors

Abstract submission guidelines to the International Scientific Conference "Long-Term Ecological Research in Bulgaria: Long-Term Ecosystem Research: Contributions, Challenges and Future Perspectives - 20 years LTER-Bulgaria as part of eLTER"

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1. Important Dates

- **Abstract Submission Opens:** June 4, 2026
- **Abstract Submission Deadline:** August 3, 2026
- **Deadline for Final Decision:** Authors will be informed after their addressed comments are reviewed but no later than August 14, 2026

2. Log In / Registration

- Register or log in to the ARPHA Conference Abstracts (ACA) website via the submission portal: https://aca.pensoft.net/collection/618/

- Ensure emails from @pensoft.net and @arphahub.com are **not** marked as spam to guarantee you receive crucial updates regarding your peer review and acceptance status – either whitelist the domain or check your spam folder in case of doubt.

3. Starting or Continuing an Abstract

- Click the **"Start new Abstract"** button on the ACA website, which will automatically direct you to the ARPHA Writing Tool (AWT).
- Alternatively, log in directly to your manuscript dashboard at any time to continue working on an existing draft (refer to https://arpha.pensoft.net/tips/Browse-Manuscripts for stepwise guidance).

4. Manuscript Setup

- Select the appropriate main session ("collection") of your choice. It is crucial to submit your abstract to the session that best fits your research. Submitting your abstract to an incorrectly matched session will slow down the review process and may result in rejection due to being deemed "out of scope."
- Please select from one of the following main conference sessions:

    1. Thematic sessions

        - **Monitoring and Understanding Ecosystem Dynamics**
        - **Ecosystem Services and Stakeholder Engagement in Long-Term Ecological Research: What We Lose When We Win**
        - **Ecosystem Restoration and Nature-Based Solutions**
        - **Emerging Technologies in Ecosystem Research, Data Management, and Open Science in eLTER**

    2. Special sessions

        - **Enhancing collaboration among European environmental research infrastructures.** Building bridges among long-term research and monitoring RI and networks
        - **Rethinking generational change in Long-Term Ecological Research:** from mentorship to partnership

- Fill in the required metadata, including author details, affiliations, and the corresponding author designation.

5. Adding Authors and Presenting Author

- Add co-authors and specify their roles. Ensure affiliations and corresponding author information are correct.
- Designate one author as the **"presenting author."** Follow the instructions for editing author order and details here: https://arpha.pensoft.net/tips/Edit-author-order-details.
- You will be able to update the authors' details until the submission is accepted. The specified authors' names must match those added to the system metadata.
- **Important:** While your abstract may be accepted prior to your registration as a conference participant, it will not be published in the final proceedings unless at least one of the authors completes their registration and attends the conference.

6. Choosing the Presentation Format

- In the optional **"Presented at"** field, please indicate your preference for either an **"Oral"** or **"Poster"** presentation. This step is crucial for the efficient functioning of the peer review and scheduling process.
- If you fail to specify your preferred presentation format, your abstract may be assigned to a format deemed more suitable by the Editorial Board, or it could be rejected due to not meeting technical requirements.
- **Important:** Please note that while you are asked to indicate your preferred format, the final decision regarding the presentation form and session allocation will be determined solely by the Editorial Board based on the conference program. The submitting author will be informed via email regarding the acceptance of their submission, its finalized form (Oral or Poster), and the specific session it has been included in.

7. Authoring and Formatting

- Write your abstract in English, adhering to a maximum of 6,000 **characters** (including spaces).
- You may add references, figures, tables, or supplementary materials, although they are not mandatory. If you opt for adding any, you must cite each one in the abstract using the tool's features for this.
- Validate your abstract to ensure it meets the required format and character count using the **"Validate"** button on the left-hand side of the page. The system will display any formatting errors or character count violations.

8. Submitting for Review

- Once ready, submit your abstract for editorial review via the dedicated button at the bottom of the left side menu - available only for the **Submitting author**. The system will validate the submission automatically, and the abstract's status will switch from Draft to In pre-submission review.
- Each submission will be reviewed, and the Submitting author will receive feedback from the collection editors. If revisions are needed, the abstract will be returned to draft status for improvement.
- There will be one round of comments until the final version is approved. The editors will expect all comments to be addressed within a week.

9. Final Submission and Publication

- After all revisions are complete, validate the submission again. Once approved, the **"Submit to the journal"** button will appear
- The Submit button appears only in the Submitting author's ARPHA dashboard. The "Submitting author" is a technical role automatically granted to the author who started the draft. To switch the Submitting author, navigate to the Authors section and select "Make submitting author" beside the respective author's name.
- Complete the final submission checklist, including the license agreement (CC BY or CC0).
- Your abstract will be published in the conference proceedings with a DOI assigned, for which all authors will be notified automatically.

10. Schedule

- **Abstract Submission Deadline:** Abstract submissions will be accepted by **August 3, 2026**. They must include full metadata, your preferences for oral or poster presentation and be submitted for a selected session.
- **Review Feedback:** Feedback from the editorial review and comments (if any) will be provided about one week after the submission. There will be a single round of feedback per submission, including scientific review and any technical comments we may have.
- **Revisions:** After receiving feedback, the submitter will have **one week** to address the comments and make any necessary corrections.

- **Final Acceptance/Rejection Decisions:** Decisions on accepting the submitted abstracts will be made about one week after the comments are addressed, but not later than **August 14, 2026**. Submitters will receive an official email notifying them of the decision, the presentation format (Oral or Poster), and the assigned session.
- **Final Submission:** Once an abstract is approved for submission, the submitter will be able to access it in editing mode for the last time. Please make sure all metadata is complete and correct (funder, funding agency, hosting institution, grant number, and Acknowledgements) before selecting **Submit to the journal** at the bottom of the left-side menu. This will transfer the approved abstract from the writing tool to ACA. After the successful final submission, no further edits are possible.
- **Publication:** All accepted abstracts will be published in the final proceedings after the conference, provided that at least one author registered for and attended the conference.

11. Further Assistance

- Should you encounter any technical issues or have questions about the abstract submission process, please contact the ACA Help Desk directly via the **Help Desk** button on the top navigation bar of the ARPHA Writing Tool.
- For more details about the ARPHA submission system and its processes, visit *ACA Pensoft How It Works*. For stepwise guidance on how to use the writing tool's features, visit https://arpha.pensoft.net/tips/.

12. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- **Is abstract submission equal to applying for an oral/poster presentation?** Yes, submitting an abstract constitutes an application for an oral presentation or a poster presentation. You must specify your preferred format in the "Presented at" section during setup, though the Editorial Board holds the final decision on format and session allocation.
- **Are there abstract submission or processing fees?** No, separate abstract submission and processing fees are not charged on the portal; they are included within the general conference fees (which are listed on the registration page).
- **Can I edit my abstract after it has been submitted?** Revisions may be made during abstract authoring, as well as requested by the editors team during the editorial review while the paper is in draft status. However, once you complete the final submission steps and transfer the approved abstract to ACA, no further edits can be made.

- **How will I be notified of acceptance and presentation format?** You will receive a notification email detailing whether your abstract is accepted, your final assigned presentation format (Oral or Poster), and the specific session your work will be featured in.
- **Does submitting an abstract register me for the conference?** No. Abstract submission and conference registration are entirely separate processes. Acceptance of an abstract does not automatically register you for the event. Furthermore, for the abstract to remain in the final published proceedings, at least one author must register for and physically/virtually attend the conference.
- **Whom should I contact in case of questions or if technical assistance is required?** If the matters refer to technicalities related to the abstract drafting and submission, please contact Pensoft by using the Send feedback-button in ARPHA or at journals@pensoft.net. If the matters concern the scientific aspect of your abstract, contact the editorial team at 20lter.bulgaria@gmail.com . For questions related to the organised event, your registration for participating in it or anything else, please contact the organisers at: registration@lterbg26.eu (local organisation) or office@elter-ri.eu (for questions related to the side meetings of the eLTER Site and Programme Forum SPF and the eLTER National Coordinators' meeting).