



Official journal website
"For authors"

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Indexing & Abstracting



Author Guidelines

Welcome to Poslovna izvrsnost – Business Excellence! We invite original contributions aligned with the journal's aims and scope on business performance, quality, and organizational excellence. We're committed to the highest ethical and professional standards in all aspects of publication. Please review the following guidelines carefully before submitting manuscript online.

The journal accepts submissions from all authors whose manuscripts fall within the aims and scope of the journal, regardless of institutional affiliation, employer, membership in any organization, nationality, country of residence, or other personal characteristics.

Editorial decisions are based solely on scholarly merit, originality, relevance to the Journal, and compliance with ethical and technical requirements.

Indicative Timeline for Manuscript Handling

The following timeline represents the typical processing flow. Actual durations may vary depending on the topic, quality of the submission, reviewer availability, and other factors. All published articles include submission, revision, acceptance, and publication dates in their metadata for full transparency.

- Initial editorial check: ~ 2 weeks
- Peer review completion: ~ 4 - 6 weeks
- Editor decision: ~ 2 weeks
- Revision submission by author: ~ 4 weeks

Online First Policy

- Enables fully peer-reviewed, edited, and typeset articles to be published online with an assigned DOI before they are assigned to an issue.
- Accelerates research dissemination and gives authors faster access to their work.
- When later assigned to an issue, this primarily provides traditional volume/issue grouping and citation details (e.g., volume, issue, page range, or article number).
- No substantive changes are made after Online First publication, except for minor typographical or metadata corrections.

Open Access and Author Fees

- The journal operates under a Diamond Open Access model
- No submission, processing, or publication fees (NO FEES) are charged at any stage
- All articles are freely accessible upon publication.

Copyright and Licensing

All articles are published under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License ([CC BY-NC 4.0](#)).

Authors retain full copyright of their work and grant the Journal the right of first publication. Authors may deposit the submitted, accepted, and published versions of their manuscripts in institutional or subject repositories, provided that the final publication includes the full bibliographic citation and the article DOI.

Authorship and Contributions

- Only individuals who have made a substantial scholarly contribution to the manuscript may be listed as authors
- All authors must approve the final version prior to submission
- Contributors not meeting authorship criteria (e.g., administrative or technical support) should be acknowledged in a separate Acknowledgments section

Changes to Authorship

Authorship should be established at submission. Changes to the author list (addition, removal, or reordering) are generally not permitted after submission.

During peer review: requests for changes will be considered only in exceptional cases, with a written justification and the approval of all listed authors. The Editorial Board will decide in accordance with [COPE guidelines](#).

After acceptance: changes to authorship are not permitted except in rare and well-justified circumstances, subject to Editorial Board approval.

Correspondence and Confidentiality

- All communication with the editorial team is treated as confidential prior to a formal editorial decision. During the peer-review process, the identities and affiliations of authors remain anonymous to reviewers (double-anonymized review).
- Upon acceptance of a manuscript for publication, the editorial team will manage all subsequent correspondence, including proofreading and metadata preparation. Authors are expected to respond promptly and thoroughly to all editorial queries, reviewer comments, and revision requests.

Professional and Ethical Conduct

Authors are expected to:

- Read before submission
 - [Authorship & Contributions Policy](#)
 - [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
 - [Data Sharing & Availability Policy](#)
 - [Plagiarism & Use of AI Tools Policy](#)
- Submit original and accurate work
- Avoid misconduct such as plagiarism, data manipulation, or duplicate submission
- Authors must **cite** sources accurately and only where genuinely relevant. The journal does not tolerate citation manipulation (e.g., excessive self-citation, irrelevant citation stacking, or coercive citation); citation suggestions received during peer review are not mandatory unless the authors judge them essential to the scholarly quality and completeness of the manuscript
- Disclose all funding sources and the role of sponsors, if any
- Indicate if the submitted article is derived from a thesis, dissertation, or institutional research project to ensure full research transparency
- Allegations of research misconduct are handled in accordance with the journal's [Research Misconduct and Investigation Procedure](#)
- Any post-publication editorial actions (including Correction, Retraction, and Expression of Concern) are governed by the journal's [Correction and Retraction Policy](#).
- If significant errors, ethical concerns, or confirmed misconduct are identified after publication, the journal may issue a Correction, an Expression of Concern, or a Retraction. Such notices are published as separate records with their own DOI and are linked to the original article.

By submitting a manuscript to the journal, all authors confirm that they have read, understood, and agreed to abide by the journal's editorial policies and ethical guidelines.

Research Ethics Compliance

Research involving human or animal subjects must be conducted in accordance with the journal's Research Ethics Policy. Authors must confirm, where applicable:

- ethics committee approval (committee name and approval/reference number, or a justified exemption)
- informed consent
- privacy protection for sensitive data and participant anonymity.

In addition, authors must ensure they have obtained permission to use any copyrighted materials, proprietary data, or content involving third-party intellectual property, where applicable. Please include relevant ethics approval, consent, and permission details in the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors must disclose potential conflicts of interest in the Title Page, including financial (grants, employment, investments) and institutional or personal connections. Disclosures must appear on the title page of the manuscript. Please refer to our [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

Editors and reviewers with an actual or potential conflict of interest must recuse themselves from the editorial or review process. Where necessary, editorial responsibility is delegated to a non-conflicted handling editor to ensure an impartial evaluation.

Complaints policy

For details regarding our complaint resolution process, please refer to our [Complaints Policy](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Editorial Office:

✉ editor-be@net.efzg.hr

Subject: Author Inquiry – [Your Topic]

To give your manuscript the best chance of publication, follow these Manuscript Preparation Guidelines.

1. Article types

- **Original Research Articles** (5,000–8,000 words): empirical, data-driven studies (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods) that generate new evidence and/or rigorously test and extend existing theoretical frameworks.
- **Review Articles** (4,000–7,000 words): provide a critical synthesis of prior research within a clearly defined scope, highlighting key findings, disagreements, gaps, and directions for future research; authors must state clear research question(s) and objectives. The journal considers:
 - Systematic Review: is required to follow [PRISMA 2020](#) and include (supplementary) a flow diagram, checklist, and the full search strategy.
 - Scoping Review: is required to follow [PRISMA-ScR](#) and include (supplementary) a flow diagram, PRISMA-ScR checklist, and the full search strategy; it maps the breadth of evidence, so transparent reporting of search and selection is essential.
 - Narrative (Integrative/Conceptual) Review: is required to describe the search approach and include a summary table; a conceptual synthesis figure/model is strongly encouraged.
 - Bibliometric Review: is reproducible and reports the database and download date, the full query, the software used, and provides a performance analysis plus at least two mapping analyses with the underlying records (see [Donthu et al., 2021](#)).

For an overview of review types and guidance in business research, see [Snyder \(2019\)](#).

- **Preliminary Communications** (4,000–7,000 words): reports of initial or partial findings from ongoing research, intended for early dissemination.
- **Professional Papers** (3,000–6,000 words): peer-reviewed applied contributions that translate theoretical insights into professional or managerial practice rather than presenting new empirical data.
- **Book Reviews and Commentary** (up to 2,000 words): invited contributions providing critical reviews of recent scholarly books or commentary on current issues relevant to the journal.

*Word counts exclude references, tables, figures, and appendices.

Note on Conference Papers:

- The journal may consider extended and substantially revised versions of papers previously presented at academic conferences.
- Eligible submissions must be based on conference abstracts only - not on full papers published in proceedings.
- Manuscripts must demonstrate significant new content or analysis beyond the original conference version.
- Such papers are treated as new submissions and undergo independent peer review.
- While the journal follows a double-anonymized peer review process, complete anonymity cannot always be maintained for publicly presented work.
- Authors must acknowledge and cite the original conference source, including any reused tables, figures, or data.
- Accepted papers must state the conference title, date, and location.

2. Language of Submission and Communication

- Manuscripts written in English will be accepted for submission.
- All editorial correspondence, peer review, and production communication are conducted in English.
- Manuscripts must be written in clear, grammatically correct academic English. The editorial office does not provide extensive language editing; manuscripts with poor language may be desk-rejected or delayed.

3. Manuscript Structure and Formatting

All manuscripts must be submitted in MS Word (.docx) format. PDF submissions are not accepted. Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the APA Style, 7th Edition. The journal follows APA 7, for referencing and citation, with minor adaptations in manuscript formatting as specified below.

General formatting

- Paper size: A4, margins: 2.5 cm (1 inch) on all sides.
- Font: Cambria, 11 pt.
- Line spacing: 1.2, with no extra spacing before or after paragraphs.
- Alignment: left-aligned (ragged right). Do not use full justification or manual hyphenation.
- Do not indent the first paragraph in a section. Indent the first line of each subsequent paragraph by 0.75 cm.
- Page numbers: right-aligned, beginning with the title page as page 1.
- Equations: submit as editable text (not images).
- Abbreviations: spell out in full at first mention.
- Use straight quotation marks and apostrophes only.

Order of sections

Authors must follow the standard order of sections:

1. Title page (Please download [Template.docx](#) and complete it locally. Online editing is not enabled.)
 - Article title (Cambria 14 pt, bold, centered, sentence case)
 - Author details: full name; institutional affiliation (institution, department, city, country); ORCID iD; institutional e-mail address
 - Corresponding author marked with an asterisk (*)
 - Funding acknowledgments (see [Author Responsibilities](#))
 - If there is no funding, state: “This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.”
 - [Data availability statement](#)
 - Author contributions (see [CRediT statement](#))
 - [Conflict of interest](#) statement
 - If applicable, include an Ethics Statement for research involving human participants or survey data, confirming informed consent and compliance with institutional standards.
2. Abstract and Keywords
 - Abstract length: 150–250 words, in English only.
 - Structure: Purpose; Design/Methodology; Findings; Practical Implications; Originality/Value.
 - Font: Cambria 10 pt, italic, justified.
 - Keywords: 4 - 5, listed below the abstract.
 - JEL Classification: Authors must include relevant JEL codes, listed below the keywords.
3. Main text (anonymous for review)
Manuscripts must be structured into the following required sections:
 1. Introduction
 2. Literature Review or Theoretical Background
 3. Methodology
 4. Results
 5. Discussion
 6. Conclusion
4. References
Must follow APA 7th Edition (see [Section 4](#)).

5. Figures and Tables

- Tables must be fully editable (not pasted as images)
- Figures must also be uploaded as separate high-resolution files in TIFF, JPG, or EPS format (minimum 300 dpi)
- All figures and charts must use grayscale or high-contrast black-and-white shading
- No titles inside the figure itself (titles and captions are outside)
- Table title should appear above the table, left-justified, and include a bold label (e.g., **Table 1**)
- Figure title should appear above the figure, left-justified, and include a bold label (e.g., **Figure 1**)
- The title must be in italics, written in sentence case, 6 pt after the title and end with a period.
- Every Table or Figure must include:
 - source (or “Author’s calculation/illustration”)
 - explanation of abbreviations (if any)
 - methodological/data notes (as applicable).
 - Typography: the label “Note.” must be font 9 pt, italics
 - e.g. “*Note.* Source: Author’s analysis.”
 - place a single note line directly below the table/figure.
 - spacing: 6 pt before the note line (gap between display and note) and 8 pt after.
 - order of elements: in one line, separated by semicolons.
- All captions and notes should be left-justified.
- Ensure every table and figure is explicitly referred to in the text.
- Use a decimal point and a space as the thousands separator (e.g. 31.1, 45 000.87)
- If using third-party material, obtain and declare permission for reuse, and provide a credit line (e.g., “Adapted from ...”).

6. Appendices (if applicable)

- Supplementary material such as questionnaires, extended datasets, technical notes, robustness checks, and detailed model specifications may be placed in appendices.
- Cite appendices in text and list in the order of first mention (Appendix A, Appendix B, ...).
- Normally, figures and tables belong in the main text, not in appendices.

Numbered Heading System

- Headings must be numbered (1., 1.1., 1.1.1., ...), Title Case, left-aligned, and consistent.
- Level 1: Cambria 12 pt, bold; two blank lines before / one after.
- Level 2: Cambria 12 pt; one blank line before and after.
- Level 3 (and lower): Cambria 11 pt, italics; one blank line before and after.
- Do not skip levels. If you introduce 2.1, include 2.2; if 2.1.1, include 2.1.2.

Notes

- Do not include any personal or institutional identifiers in the anonymous manuscript .doc file (to preserve double-anonymized review).
- The manuscript file must not contain any author identifiers in the text, footnotes, file name, or document properties (see [Section 8](#)).

4. Referencing and In-Text Citations

The journal follows the APA Style, 7th Edition for referencing and citation with journal adaptations. Authors must ensure accuracy, completeness, and consistency in all references. Both in-text citations and the reference list must fully comply with the requirements below.

General rules

- Every in-text citation must have a matching entry in References, and vice versa.
- Do not use *ibid.*, *op. cit.*, *supra*, *infra*.
- Every reference must have a corresponding bookmark within the document. Each in-text citation, e.g., (Smith, 2020) or Smith et al., (2020); must be hyperlinked to the corresponding bookmarked reference entry in the reference list.
- The Editorial Board recommends using recent literature where appropriate (typically within the last 10 years), except for seminal or foundational works.

Paraphrasing

- Parenthetical: (Surname, Year). Example: (Novak, 2025).
- Narrative: Surname (Year). Example: According to Novak (2025)...
- Page numbers are optional for paraphrases.

Direct quotations

- Short quotes (≤ 40 words): use quotation marks.
 - Parenthetical: “...” (Smith, 2020, p. 15).
 - Narrative: Smith (2020) stated that “...” (p. 15).
- Long quotes (> 40 words): block quote, 0.5 in left indent, same font/spacing, no quotation marks.

Multiple authors

- Two authors: cite both each time (Smith & Jones, 2023)
- "Smith and Jones (2023) argued ..."
- Three or more: first author + et al. (Keller et al., 2025)

References list

- Section title: References (use consistently; do not use “Bibliography” or “Literature”)
- Entries must be:
 - Left-aligned, hanging indent 0.6 cm
 - Alphabetical by first author’s surname; entries may additionally be numbered for editorial clarity
- DOI or URL is required when available, with <https://doi.org/> format; hyperlinks must be active
- Italicize journal titles, book titles, and volume numbers

Examples

Journal article:

Smith, J. A., & Jones, B. C. (2020). Innovation in business excellence. *Journal of Excellence*, 45(2), 123–145. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jms.2020.123456>

Book:

Brown, P. R. (2019). *Organizational quality and performance management*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429498765>

Book chapter:

Miller, A. (2021). Quality systems in transitional economies. In D. Johnson (Ed.), *Business excellence in emerging markets* (pp. 55–78). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-12345-6_4

Website:

World Bank. (2024). *Enterprise survey data*. <https://www.worldbank.org/data/enterprises>

5. Ethical Standards and Complaints

Authors must ensure that all submissions are original, unpublished, and not under consideration elsewhere. Submissions derived from conference proceedings may be considered only if:

- the original conference paper is clearly disclosed at submission,
- the conference version is publicly available online,
- no copyright or exclusive rights were transferred to the organizer,
- the submitted manuscript has been substantially revised and extended.

All authors must:

- fully disclose any conflicts of interest (financial, institutional, or personal),
- clearly state all sources of funding,
- comply with international ethical standards for research involving human or animal subjects, including:
 - prior approval from an Institutional Review Board or ethics committee,
 - informed consent where applicable,
 - protection of participant privacy and sensitive data.

Allegations of research misconduct are handled in accordance with the journal's [Research Misconduct and Investigation Procedure](#).

Violations such as plagiarism, data manipulation, duplicate publication, or undeclared conflicts of interest may result in rejection, correction, or retraction, depending on the outcome of the investigation.

Authors who wish to raise concerns regarding the editorial process, ethical issues, or publication-related matters may contact the Editorial Office via the [Complaints Policy](#). All complaints are handled confidentially, fairly, and in accordance with the journal's integrity framework.

6. Plagiarism and AI-generated Content Screening

All research manuscripts submitted are subject to screening for originality, plagiarism (self-plagiarism included), and AI-generated text using **iThenticate** and other content integrity tools. By submitting a manuscript, authors consent to these checks.

Manuscripts containing substantial plagiarism, overlap with prior work, or undeclared AI-generated content will be rejected or returned for revision.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

To maintain research integrity and transparency:

1. Declaration
 - Authors must explicitly declare any use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, image generators, machine learning models).
 - Declarations must specify the tool name and scope of use (e.g., language editing, data analysis, figure creation, idea generation).
 - This disclosure must appear in the Methods or Acknowledgments section.
2. Author Responsibility
 - Authors retain full responsibility for all content, including AI-assisted parts.
 - AI tools cannot be credited as authors or co-authors.
 - Authors must critically check all AI outputs for accuracy, originality, and compliance with ethical/legal standards.
3. Reproducibility and Transparency
 - If AI is used for research methods (e.g., data analysis, modeling), sufficient details (data, code, parameters) must be provided for reproducibility.
 - All research questions, interpretations, and conclusions must result from human judgment, not AI.
4. Prohibited Practices
 - Hidden or manipulative text (e.g., invisible characters, deceptive metadata) designed to bypass plagiarism or AI detection is prohibited.
 - Such misconduct will lead to immediate rejection and may be reported to the authors' institutions.

7. Peer Review Process

The journal applies a double-anonymized peer review process to all research manuscripts (original research articles, review articles, preliminary communications) and professional papers (see).

For full details, see the [Peer Review Policy](#).

Author and reviewer identities are not disclosed to each other and are known to the handling editor and authorized Editorial Office staff only. All communication is mediated through the Editorial Office and the OJS system.

Review information published: The journal does not publish peer review reports or reviewer identities alongside the published article.

External review

Each research manuscript is evaluated by at least two external experts. Reviewers are selected based on academic expertise and to avoid conflicts of interest (e.g., no reviewers from the same institution as any author, and no recent collaborators). Members of the Editorial Board are generally not invited to serve as reviewers. However, in exceptional cases, Editorial Board members may be invited when highly specific expertise is required and no conflict of interest exists; in such cases, they are subject to the same confidentiality and conflict-of-interest safeguards as all reviewers.

Editorial Decisions

Based on reviewers' reports, the Editor may decide to:

- Accept the manuscript
- Request minor revisions
- Request major revisions
- Reject the submission

In cases of conflicting reviews, a third reviewer may be invited. Revised manuscripts may undergo further review, particularly after major revisions. The average time to first decision is approximately 4–6 weeks.

Appeals

Authors may appeal an editorial decision within 30 days by submitting a brief, reasoned request to the Editorial Office (see our Appeals process for details). Appeals are reviewed in accordance with the journal's complaints and appeals procedure.

Suggested Reviewers (optional)

Authors may propose up to three potential reviewers in the cover letter at the time of submission. These suggestions are non-binding and primarily serve to expand the journal's reviewer database. Suggested reviewers will not be assigned to review the submitting author's manuscript.

Suggested names must include:

- Full name
- Institutional affiliation
- Official institutional email address

The Editorial Team makes the final decision on reviewer selection, including assessment of potential conflicts of interest.

Non-Peer-Reviewed Content

Certain contributions (e.g., editorials, book reviews, announcements, and corrections) are evaluated internally by the Editorial Board (or Editorial Office staff) and do not undergo external peer review.

Post-Publication Discussion

Post-publication scholarly discussion is possible via Letters to the Editor (see [Publication Ethics: Post-Publication Discussion](#)). Accepted items are published with their own DOI and linked to the original article.

8. Removing Personal Information (for anonymized review)

To preserve double anonymity, all identifying information (author's details) must be removed from submitted files. In MS Word (.docx):

1. File → Info → Check for Issues → Inspect Document.
2. Select Document Properties and Personal Information.
3. Remove all personal information.
4. Save before submission.

Repeat for all files (main text, figures, tables, appendices). Failure to anonymize may compromise review.

Additional requirements:

- Author details should appear only on the separate Title Page (uploaded as a separate file).
- References to your own previous work must be written in a way that does not reveal authorship (e.g., use "Author(s), Year" instead of "We have previously shown...").

9. Submission Procedure

All manuscripts must be submitted electronically via the Online Journal System (OJS) on the Hrčak portal. **Submissions by email are not accepted.**

Submission steps

1. Register or log in to the OJS system.
2. Upload the following .doc files separately (**required**):
 - **Article**
 - **Title Page** (with full author details, affiliations, ORCID iDs, corresponding author marked with an asterisk),

- **Cover letter**
 - **Anonymous Manuscript** (without author names, affiliations, acknowledgments, or funding details),
 - **CRedit Statement**
 - Supplementary materials - optional (such as datasets, figures, appendices).
3. Enter required metadata (title, abstract, keywords).
 4. Confirm compliance with the journal's guidelines and policies (authorship, ethics, conflict of interest, plagiarism screening).
 5. Submit.

Authors can track the progress of their manuscript and communicate with editors directly through the OJS system at all stages of the review process.

Author Contributions (CRedit Statement)

During submission, please upload a separate statement specifying each author's contributions according to the [CRedit taxonomy](#). Author contribution statements are collected during submission and will be published in the final version of the article. Only the roles that apply to the manuscript should be listed. Format example:

- Author Contributions: Conceptualization – A.B.; Methodology – A.B., C.D.; Software - C.D.; Formal analysis – C.D.; Data curation – E.F.; Writing – original draft – A.B.; Writing – review & editing – C.D., E.F.; Supervision – G.H.

Important

- All listed authors must have made a substantial scholarly contribution (see '[Authorship and Contributions](#)')
- Changes to authorship (addition, removal, or reordering of authors) are not permitted after acceptance, except in exceptional cases (see '[Changes to Authorship](#)')
- Submissions are automatically screened for plagiarism and originality (see '[Plagiarism and AI-generated Content Screening](#)')

10. Data Sharing and Availability

The journal encourages authors to make data, materials, and methods that support the findings of their manuscript available to the scholarly community, in line with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).

A **Data Availability Statement (DAS)** must be included in every submission, clearly indicating where and how the data can be accessed, or explaining restrictions if the data cannot be shared. Examples of acceptable DAS:

- *The dataset supporting this article is available in xxx repository, at <https://doi.org/xxxx>*
- *The data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.*
- *This study did not generate any new data.*
- Authors are encouraged to deposit datasets in recognized institutional or subject repositories and to provide persistent identifiers (DOIs or accession numbers) wherever possible.
- If the data include sensitive or proprietary information, authors must describe the restrictions and justify the limitations.
- Providing access to data, code, or supplementary materials increases transparency, facilitates reproducibility, and may improve citation impact.
- At submission: the DAS should be provided on the **Title Page** (not in the anonymized manuscript) to preserve double anonymity.
- At publication: the DAS will appear in the final version of record, placed after the Funding statement and before the References.

11. Digital Preservation and Self-Archiving Policy

Digital Preservation

- The journal participates in the PKP Preservation Network (PKP PN), which uses LOCKSS to provide decentralized, distributed, and permanent preservation, ensuring perpetual access to the published content.
- All published content is permanently archived on the [Hrčak portal](#) (the central platform for Croatian open-access scholarly journals), ensuring long-term preservation and accessibility.
- In addition, all research articles are preserved in the Internet Archive ([archive.org](#)) within the dedicated collection of *Poslovna izvrsnost – Business Excellence*, ensuring international redundancy and perpetual access.
- All articles include Digital Object Identifier DOIs via [Crossref](#), with Crossmark for reliable citation and update tracking.

Author Identifiers and Research Data

- Authors are strongly encouraged to include their [ORCID iD](#) ensuring accurate attribution and integration with international databases.
- In line with the [FAIR principles](#) (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable), authors are invited to share relevant research data in public repositories, supporting transparency and reproducibility.

Self-Archiving Policy

Authors are permitted to deposit all versions of their manuscripts:

- Submitted version (preprint)
- Accepted version (postprint)
- Published version (Version of Record).

These may be deposited in institutional or subject repositories, provided that the final publication includes a full bibliographic citation and a link to the article's DOI.

The journal's self-archiving policy is registered with the [Jisc Open Policy Finder](#), where Journal is listed as supporting the Green level of self-archiving, in line with international best practices.

Editor-in-Chief
Tonći Lazibat