
Short Guide on how to write an abstract for the EULAR Congress

EULAR Standing Committee of PARE, October 2015

How to write an abstract

Each year, the PARE abstracts submitted for the EULAR Congress typically cover a wide range of projects of different types. They may be the more usual scientific research projects or they may be about service delivery projects, advocacy events, studies and surveys, and information awareness campaigns carried out by EULAR national member organisations. In all cases, abstracts should follow the general principles listed below.

Abstracts should inform the audience of all the essential points of your project. They serve the function of attracting readers to your work. Their aim is to convince the reader to read your full publication, visit your poster or attend your talk – or just to get in contact with you. To achieve this goal, your abstract must be brief and condensed on the one hand, and must be informative and self-contained on the other hand.

An abstract for the EULAR Congress should not contain more than 3600 characters and 55 lines, including authors' details and headers. It should be structured in different sections. In most cases, these sections are the title, author information, introduction, methods, results and the conclusion. Each section typically consists of one to four sentences. Usually, an abstract does not include any referencing. You should use simplified language for the more general reader.

The following checklist may be helpful for writing your abstract:

Title:

The title should be precise, not vague or funny.

Author information:

Mention all participating members of your team who significantly contributed to the project. Include name and their affiliations.

Introduction: 'Why?'

You should describe the background, motivation and objectives of your project. Why is the topic of your project important? Why did you hold the event, carry out the survey etc? What problems exist and why will new results be important? Do not start with "little is known about xy .." and resist the temptation to demonstrate how much you know or have read about the topic in question. Be brief and to the point.

Methods: 'How?'

How did you do it? The methods section should read like a recipe – so dullness is "allowed". Describe the criteria for inclusion of participants, the different groups of participants and the sequence of different steps in the project. Briefly describe the main methods that were used (questionnaires, tests) and the statistical procedures applied.

Results: 'What?'

This section should describe what happened. Mention how many people were included in your project. Include some of your results, not all. If applicable, give the evidence in tables. If some aspects of your results are not well supported by your data, use words like "might", "could", "may" and "seem", but do not discuss here what the results might mean.

Conclusion: 'So what?'

Summarise in one or two sentences the main outcomes of your project. If possible, refer to the questions / problems raised in the introduction section. What are the practical implications of your project? For example, have patients benefited, or will they do so in future? If so, how? Do your project outcomes support or conflict with other similar projects? Do not repeat the results here.

More support or advice needed?

In order to stimulate abstract submissions from all over Europe we are offering, for the first time, the opportunity to have your abstract reviewed by an expert before you submit it formally! We would particularly like to offer this service to representatives from Eastern and Southern Europe and to smaller organisations, as they are not yet represented equally in the PARE Congress programme. If you are interested, please get in touch with the EULAR Secretariat – birte.gluesing@eular.org – and send your abstract at the latest by 1 December 2015 so that there is enough time for the review to take place before the actual submission deadline of 31 January 2016.

More information:

Please also see the attached slides, information on the technical aspects of submitting an abstract, and the EULAR Congress website:

<http://www.eular.org/congress.cfm>