

Cambridge Texts and Studies in Platonism, published by Cambridge University Press (Co-edited by Phillip Horky, Irmgard Männlein-Robert, and Federico Petrucci)

– A guide to preparing your proposal:

Introduction

The function of the proposal is to demonstrate to the Cambridge Texts and Studies series editors, Cambridge subject editor, sales and marketing staff, external referees, and Press Syndicate that the book you propose will be a valuable addition to the literature and an economically viable publishing proposition. In general, the more you can tell us about the book the better as this will help the reviewers and the Press to gain an accurate picture of what you intend.

Procedure

Your finalised proposal and any supporting material will be read by the series editors, who will discuss it with the subject editor. If we feel that your proposed book is potentially suitable for the Cambridge list, the proposal will then normally be sent to independent, external reviewers, who observe strict rules of confidentiality. The comments of our own staff and a summary of those from outside anonymous reviewers will be communicated to you, and you will be invited to reply to them - indicating how you might plan to alter your original proposal in light of their feedback. Sometimes a portion of a manuscript will be requested, and sometimes a full manuscript will be requested before moving forward.

After this stage, well-supported proposals will be put forward for consideration by the Press's governing body - the Press Syndicate. This is an official committee, comprising 18 senior University academics from a wide variety of disciplines, which meets every two weeks during term time (and monthly during the vacations). At these meetings the Press editors recommend proposals to the Syndicate for publication. When a recommendation is accepted by the Syndicate, a contract is then offered to the author(s) or editor(s).

Length of Proposals

While proposals should aim to provide a comprehensive view of the project book, they should not be overlong. Hence, it is recommended that proposals (double-spaced, 12-point font) for monographs be roughly 6-10 pages; for edited volumes roughly 8-12 pages (including brief abstracts for all potential articles); and for editions, commentaries, and translations roughly 6-10 pages.

Content of Proposals

The amount and type of information you give should be the amount and type you yourself would need if you were asked to assess a proposal from another authority in your field and to comment on the potential market for such a book. Your proposal should include:

- Title
- Reasons for writing
- Content of Book (including planned indices)
- Readership and level
- Competing and comparable books
- Credentials of author(s)/editor(s)
- Time-frame for completion

Detailed notes about these various aspects are given below.

Title

The choice of title is important and should be given careful thought. It should be as informative and descriptive as is compatible with a short, bold statement. Further clarification of the topic and level may require a subtitle. Your series editors will help advise you on appropriate wording for the title and subtitle.

Reasons for writing

Please tell us why this is a good topic for you to write on at this time, why you feel motivated to write a book now, and why you believe there will be a good market for your proposed book.

Content of Book

We need to know as much as possible about the proposed structure and content of the book. The subject area and the way you will present the topics should be stated clearly. Any scheme you draw up at this stage will inevitably change as writing proceeds and your book grows and develops, but we encourage authors to think very carefully about how best to structure their book at this early stage. As you prepare your outline, you may find it useful to consider these questions:

- What themes, concepts and ideas will you develop?
- Is the book based on a course you teach or on a conference you have helped to organise or have attended? If so, please give details.
- How long, in words or printed pages, do you expect the finished book to be? Will the book be illustrated by line drawings, photographs, tables, graphs, maps or in any other way? Will the book require any colour illustrations or fold-out maps/illustrations? Please note that the length of your book and features such as colour images will determine the cost of producing the book and may affect the final retail price. If you think that the internal text design of another Cambridge title would particularly suit your own book, we would be pleased to consider your suggestions.

Please give a list of chapters and a paragraph or two about the content of each, or at least detailed subsection headings. Also mention what indices you hope/plan to include. If you have already prepared one or more sample chapters, we should be glad to have a copy.

Readership and Level

Please tell us about the readership and market you expect to reach with the book. The book you are going to write will most probably fit into one of the following broad categories:

- Is the book for general readers, for undergraduates, for advanced students, for researchers in your field, or for scholars in disciplines other than your own?
- How would your book compare with others on the market or that you know are in preparation?
- Would your book compete with or complement others on similar subjects?

Monographs

In a scientific monograph, an expert (or at most two or three authors working together on the book) describes and discusses the area of his or her own expertise for the benefit and interest of others with the same level of knowledge. In general, monographs are most useful to the scientific community where there is an established body of knowledge to be summarised and critically evaluated. Explain to us how your own work is central to the main themes to be developed.

Multi-author or edited works

Most multi-author or edited works are written for a readership of other academic researchers, professionals or practitioners, but they may also be written for graduate students, or occasionally even for undergraduate students.

Ideally, edited works should be well-thought-through reviews of a subject in which both the chapter topics and the contributors have been carefully selected by the volume editor(s) to ensure that the resulting book is as comprehensive, coherent and integrated as possible. A scientific meeting, symposium or workshop may generate material which can be published in this form, but it should be noted that Cambridge University Press does not generally publish proceedings volumes that are simply collections of papers presented at a particular meeting. If you do want to edit a book based on a meeting, then it is essential that the chapters are written

expressly for the book and are not transcriptions of presentations, that you have selected only the best contributions from the meeting, and have, if necessary, supplemented these with specially commissioned chapters to ensure that the book is fully rounded and cohesive.

For all edited works, please give us the contributors' names and affiliations, chapter titles and short abstracts of each chapter in the order in which they will appear in the book. Have all the contributors been approached and/or agreed at least in principle that they will contribute? Tell us how and why you have selected the topics and contributors for the chapters and how they fit together. Please also indicate a timetable for contributors to submit first drafts to you, and an estimate of when you think the volume will be in final form and ready to send to the Press for production.

Editions, Translations, Commentaries

Potential authors of 'Texts' should clearly indicate: the overall structure of the volume (e.g., proportion between introduction and commentary); the kind of commentary (e.g., line-by-line, or focused on certain lemmata); the precise philological background of the presented critical edition (e.g., whether it is based on a completely new collation of manuscripts or relies on preceding works, etc.) and the expected technical features of the critical edition (e.g., positive or negative apparatus; details to be included in the critical apparatus, etc.); an explanation of why the format selected for the commentary is the right one for the text/s. If you already have a translation of a selection of the text/s, or a sample of the critical edition (a couple of pages would be enough), we would be delighted to consult them.

Competing and comparable books

How does your book compare with others in the subject area? What is the existing competition for your book? Please give us details of the most relevant titles, indicating their relative strengths and weaknesses. What unique features or focus will your book have? Do you know of any other related books that are in the process of being written?

About the authors/editors

Please give a brief account of each author or editor's present academic interests and position or professional affiliation, with a list of any recent publications and any other information you think might help demonstrate your credentials for writing the proposed book. If the book is an edited volume, please also provide the names and affiliations of each contributor, together with an indication whether or not they have agreed to contribute to the volume, at least in principle.

Time-frame for completion

Please give us an estimated schedule for completing your book project, bearing in mind the time necessary for preparing any artwork. We understand that you will probably have to fit your writing around other professional commitments so please be realistic about how long it is likely to take you to finish your book. Your editor can help suggest a sensible time-frame.