

MAC Sponsored Symposium Guidelines (10.13.21 revised)

General Guidelines

MAC-sponsored sessions address issues that are directly relevant to Midwestern archaeology. Symposia can cover any time period (prehistoric, historic, or both) or subject, ranging from culture history (e.g., a specific culture or time horizon) to specific procedures (e.g., faunal or human skeletal studies), research topics (e.g., exchange systems or social organization) or new theoretical approaches (e.g., new materialism or situational archaeology).

Symposium and meeting organizers are free to modify session format details as circumstances dictate, within the general guidelines of the Board. Note that the amount of time dedicated to individual symposia at MAC annual meetings and the length of potential MAC publication venues are strictly limited, and proposed sessions must take both into account.

The Board expects that sponsored symposia will be well thought out in advance with polished papers that address substantive issues and invite audience participation. They should address issues of broad interest to the MAC membership. That will often mean somewhat longer papers with adequate provision made for “question and answer” periods.

While the Board would like to use sponsored sessions as a vehicle for special-topic MAC Occasional Papers (OP) or MCJA Thematic Issues, MAC sponsorship does not imply submission acceptance, either individually or collectively. Each paper is reviewed as a separate contribution in terms of its scientific merit, and the session, as a whole, will be evaluated in terms of its coherency, substantive contribution, and potential impact.

Written papers should be in draft form prior to the meeting. That will permit the participants to use the meeting to refine and focus the drafts to make a coherent issue to submit for possible publication. Doing so will permit the rapid completion of manuscripts in the months immediately following the fall MAC meeting, with quick submission to Editor and Editorial Board for consideration (preferably by the end of December) if the organizers choose to pursue publication.

Symposium organizers should match the number of participants with the number of papers required for a single-issue OP or MCJA (see guidelines for OP and MCJA issues). More participants mean shorter papers, both during the session and as final journal submissions. So it is up to the organizer to exercise good judgment when balancing the need to achieve a sufficiently broad coverage with the depth required for substantive individual contributions.

One model for a symposium is as follows. The sponsored session would take a three (3) hour slot in the annual meeting. There would be a 15 min slot for the organizer to introduce the

session, followed by five papers. Each of these contributions would consist of a 25-minute presentation, followed by five minutes of question and answer. At the end, there would be a 15-minute wrap-up moderated by the organizer or discussant who would take a few minutes to highlight principal themes before opening the discussion up to the audience. We stress that the foregoing session model is to offer guidance only and organizers may arrange it as they please to meet the general guidelines.

Proposal Requirements*

Proposals should include a clear and concise statement of what the session will cover, and why it is important to Midwestern archaeology and, more generally, to anthropology or allied disciplines.

The number of contributors must be identified, as well as the specific structure of the meeting session, which will be roughly three (3) hours long.

Potential contributors should be specified; they need not to have committed in advance. However, proposals can be strengthened by naming contributors who have already agreed to present papers.

There must be two short session summaries, one for the meeting presentations and the other for any planned MCJA or OP submissions. Each should specify the topics that will be covered and any introductory or concluding comments. There will be considerable overlap, but the meeting summary would include paper time limits and question-and-answer periods, whereas the publication proposal would include page lengths.

*Submissions should be sent as a single pdf file to the MAC Secretary by the deadline specified prior to the annual meeting.

MAC Occasional Papers (revised 10.10.21)

In 2019, the MAC Board resolved that the *publication of MAC Board-designated Sponsored Symposia (SS) are not necessarily in the Occasional Papers (OP) series and that the MCJA Editor establish a subcommittee of the MCJA Editorial Board to review proposed OPs and make suggestions as to their suitability and then bring the matter to the MAC board regarding specific funding plans to give the Board more control over the funding and to solicit their approval on a case by case basis to open up the range of topics that OPs could address, including but not limited to a guest-edited issue, a single focus treatment (e.g., on a single site), or the broader approach of a topical focus (e.g., a specific SS).*

Page lengths for Occasional Papers are fixed, so both the overall session and individual papers must adhere to reasonable page limits. The following can serve as a useful guide when developing a proposal. A 144-page Occasional Publication issue starts off as 205 pages, double-

spaced at a 12-point font, inclusive of text, tables, and figures. So, if submissions each consist of 27 pages (text and all supporting elements such as references, tables, and figures), the entire package could consist of five (5) major papers plus a short Introduction or Conclusion.

Organizers of proposed OP volumes will be expected to provide a subvention to support the copyediting and formatting of the manuscript. Details on such subventions should be discussed with the Editor. The MAC Editor will present the packet and financial information to the MAC Board for approval.

OP editors are expected to conduct the first round of editorial decisions on content and style. If past practices are a guide, it will be at this stage (or even earlier) editors will have eliminated papers that are not strong and/or essential contributors to the volume. As noted from the earlier Sponsored Symposium guidelines, 5 papers and discussion are ideal to meet the page limits. In cases where the OP editors have not made those decisions, the MAC Editor will do so.

When the OP editors have clean edited manuscripts with figures and tables from the authors, they should send each manuscript to a minimum of two peer reviewers. Those reviews will be a useful guide to the editors and the authors to hone the papers and sharpen the volume focus. After the peer reviews are received and papers revised, please submit the packet of papers as well as copies of the peer reviewers' comments and names to the MAC Editor. A final peer review of the entire volume will be conducted by a single reviewer and the Editor.

MCJA Thematic Issues (revised 10.10.21)

Researchers who are interested in organizing and publishing a thematic set of papers are strongly encouraged to submit such proposals to the MAC Board's annual Sponsored Symposium session (see MAC Guidelines) competition.

The Editor will consider occasional thematic issues, generally limited to one issue per volume number (i.e., one calendar year). Organizers of a proposed thematic issue should generally follow the Sponsored Symposium submission guidance. However, these proposals should be submitted directly to the MCJA Editor. The Editor, in consultation, with the Editorial Board, will advise the submitters as the suitability of the proposal. Consideration and acceptance of such a proposal does not imply automatic acceptance for publication of the volume or the articles, either individually or collectively. Each paper is reviewed as a separate contribution in terms of its scientific merit, and the volume as a whole will be evaluated in terms of its coherency, substantive contribution, and potential impact.

When considering a proposed thematic issue, organizers should consider the following restrictions: 1) a standard issue of MCJA is between 100-105 type-set pages. 2) this is approximately 58,000-60,000 words (including bibliographies), 3) about 580 words equal a standard text type-set page and about 620 words for a formatted bibliography, 4) these equal

about two double-spaced pages of 12 pt. text for every type-set page, 5) articles should be limited to 1-4 total tables/images per contribution, 6) tables must be sized to fit a single MCJA page, and 7) artwork and figures may be presented in a black and white or color format.

These are tight standards, but issue size is limited by our publishing agreement so MCJA has limited flexibility in this matter. It will require the organizers to establish and hold to hard standards and to possibly eliminate weak papers and/or ask authors to combine multiple papers into a single contribution. The inclusion of weak contributions lessens the potential of the entire volume being accepted.

Question should be submitted to the current MCJA Editor.