

## Science Writers and Communicators of Canada Blog Post Guidelines for Interested Writers

### Our blog sections

- *Commentary (750-1000 words)*
  - Opinions pieces on science and science communication subjects
  - The writer should have a clear stance on the subject, which is backed by primary research, statistics, studies, other factual information
  - Ideally, it should be on a topic that could be connected to real-life, current events
    - Example 1: Why we need more diversity in science
    - Example 2: Working from home can be a climate solution
    - See a [published example](#)
  
- *“Science explained” (500-600 words)*
  - Short features detailing a how-to or impact of a quirky or timely science topic
  - The writer's opinion should not be present; focus is on delivering the facts and explaining a scientific process in an engaging, relatable way
  - Technical jargon should be limited, or if included, adequately explained
  - Should be backed by primary research, studies, and/or expert interviews as needed
    - Example 1: What happens to our body on 4 hours of sleep?
    - Example 2: How does our metabolism adapt to calorie restriction?
    - See a [published example](#)
  
- *Member profiles (500-750 words)*
  - A profile highlighting one of the SWCC's members, whom will be assigned to the writer
  - Emphasis on their science-related work or accomplishments, connections to SWCC
  - Requires an interview with said member
    - See a [published example](#)
  
- *Poetry & Literature (up to 1000 words)*
  - Short stories and poetry pertaining to science subjects

### General Guidelines

- Blogs should present a clear, focused story angle (one main message)
- Short paragraphs (1-4 sentences)
- Short sentences (15 words max) using clear language
- Proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling are critical

### A Typical Structure

- Lead (~100-150 words)
  - A relatable hook that leads the reader into the story

- Nut graph (~150-200 words)
  - The main point/angle of the story (“thesis statement”)
- Body (~500 words)
  - Further expansion on the main point of the story using relevant, timely research, interviews and anecdotes
- Ending (~75-100 words)
  - Not always necessary, often a few sentences or a quote

### **Citations/Sourcing**

- Sources should be cited through hyperlinks throughout the text, not a list of references.
- Ensure sources are publicly accessible (i.e., not paywalled)
- Link to existing SWCC content wherever possible

### **Visuals**

- Writers can submit a relevant visual to go with their story, whether it is their own or from another source, so long as it is publicly available to use and credited appropriately.
- In the case where they do not have a relevant photo to accompany the blog, writers are encouraged to find a creative commons image online. Our top picks are [Pixabay](#), [Openverse](#) and [Flickr Creative Commons](#).
- In the case the writer does not provide a visual, it will be selected/created by the blog editor and/or the digital media committee.

### **The Submission Process**

1. Pitch a story to [blog@sciencewriters.ca](mailto:blog@sciencewriters.ca) (based on the categories above)
2. Once accepted, make a copy of our [article template](#) and submit a draft by the deadline to [blog@sciencewriters.ca](mailto:blog@sciencewriters.ca).
3. The article will then be edited/reviewed by the blog editor; comments will be left on the Google Doc originally submitted.
4. The writer will address any comments/edits directly on the Google doc.
5. Once the editing process is complete, the editor will send the article to the web editor for publication.
6. Our digital media team will promote the article on our social media channels during the week of its publication.

### **Sponsored Posts**

- Sponsored posts are permitted, provided they are clearly identified as such. Posts should identify the author(s) and any potential conflicts (e.g., writing about research for which the researcher received outside funding).