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# CONFERENCE COLLABORATION PROGRAMME

## *Extended Paper Requirements*

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The Criterion: An International Journal in English | Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

*These requirements apply to all authors invited to submit manuscripts to a special issue through the RCELL Conference Collaboration Programme. They should be read in conjunction with the RCELL Manuscript Submission Standards and the Special Issue Review Protocol. Manuscripts that do not meet the extended paper standard will be declined at the initial editorial screening stage and will not proceed to peer review.*

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## 1. Purpose of These Requirements

The purpose of the Extended Paper Requirements is to define the standard of scholarly development that a conference paper or presentation must reach before it is eligible for submission to a journal special issue through the RCELL Conference Collaboration Programme.

Conference papers and journal articles are fundamentally different kinds of scholarly work. A conference paper is typically a work in progress: it presents a research question, an early argument, or preliminary findings to a scholarly audience for discussion and feedback. A journal article is a completed scholarly contribution: it advances a sustained, evidence-based, and fully developed argument to an international readership and to the permanent scholarly record.

These requirements exist to ensure that manuscripts submitted through the programme are genuinely at the standard of journal-quality scholarship — not revised conference papers dressed as journal articles. They protect the integrity of the peer-review process, the credibility of the published special issue, and the authors' reputations.

An invitation to submit an extended paper indicates eligibility for consideration, not a preliminary acceptance decision.

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## 2. The Core Distinction: Conference Paper and Journal Article

Authors invited to submit are asked to begin from a clear understanding of what distinguishes the two forms. The following comparison is not exhaustive, but identifies the dimensions along which development is most commonly required.

Dimension	Conference Paper	Journal Article
<b>Purpose</b>	Present work in progress; invite scholarly dialogue	Make a completed, evidenced contribution to the permanent record
<b>Argument</b>	May be exploratory, provisional, or thesis-driven at a sketch level	Must be fully developed, rigorously sustained, and clearly demonstrated
<b>Length</b>	Typically 2,000–4,000 words or a 20-minute spoken presentation	Minimum 3,000 words; typically 5,000–8,000 words for humanities journals
<b>Literature</b>	Selective engagement with key sources	Comprehensive, critically engaged, and current engagement with the field
<b>Evidence</b>	Indicative; illustrative examples	Systematic, representative, and fully integrated into the argument
<b>Methodology</b>	Often implicit or briefly stated	Explicit, justified, and consistently applied
<b>Citation</b>	Varies; may use slides or spoken attribution	Complete MLA 9th Edition citations throughout; full Works Cited list
<b>Peer Review</b>	Usually abstract review or light screening only	Full double-blind peer review to international scholarly standards
<b>Permanence</b>	Ephemeral; proceedings often lightly archived	Permanently indexed; assigned DOI; part of the citable scholarly record

### 3. The Five Development Requirements

An extended paper submitted through the Conference Collaboration Programme must demonstrate meaningful development across five dimensions. Each is described in detail below. The editorial screening team will assess all five when evaluating whether a manuscript meets the extended paper standard.

#### 3.1 Expanded and Sustained Argument

The central argument of the manuscript must be developed to a standard of clarity, rigour, and completeness appropriate for a peer-reviewed journal article. This means more than adding length to a conference paper. It means:

- Stating the argument explicitly and precisely, not leaving it implicit or discoverable only through inference.
- Sustaining the argument consistently across the full length of the manuscript, with each section contributing directly to its development.
- Anticipating and engaging with objections, counter-arguments, or competing interpretations in the field.
- Arriving at conclusions that follow demonstrably from the evidence and analysis presented, rather than asserting findings that the argument has not earned.

*Development of argument is the most fundamental requirement and the most common ground on which manuscripts are declined at screening. A manuscript that presents an interesting research question but does not yet deliver a fully developed answer does not meet this requirement, regardless of its other qualities.*

### 3.2 Substantially Developed Engagement with Scholarship

A journal article is expected to demonstrate that its author is conversant with the relevant scholarly conversation — not merely aware of the most prominent texts, but engaged with the field as it currently stands. The extended paper must demonstrate this engagement through:

- A literature review or equivalent engagement section that is appropriately comprehensive for the scope of the argument.
- Critical engagement with sources, not merely citation of them. Authors should demonstrate what they are doing with a source — agreeing, disagreeing, extending, qualifying, contextualising — rather than listing names and dates.
- Currency of scholarship. For most fields, engagement with scholarship published within the last ten years is expected alongside engagement with foundational texts. Authors should be able to account for significant recent contributions to the debate their manuscript enters.
- Accurate and complete attribution. All ideas, arguments, and phrasings drawn from other scholars must be properly cited using MLA 9th Edition throughout.

### 3.3 New or Significantly Developed Scholarly Contribution

The extended paper must make a contribution to scholarship that is identifiable, original, and clearly stated. This is the standard against which a reviewer will principally assess the manuscript. The contribution may take a number of forms, including but not limited to:

- An original reading, interpretation, or analysis not previously advanced in the literature.
- Application of a theoretical framework to material to which it has not previously been applied.
- A recontextualisation of existing scholarship that produces new understanding.
- New primary research — empirical data, archival material, or source texts — that advances the field.
- A synthesis of existing scholarship that resolves a contested question, identifies a neglected connection, or opens a productive new line of inquiry.

The contribution must be stated explicitly in the manuscript — typically in the introduction — and must be substantiated by the analysis that follows. A manuscript that implies its contribution without articulating it does not meet this requirement.

### 3.4 Compliance with Journal Length and Format Requirements

The extended paper must comply fully with the RCELL Manuscript Submission Standards. The key requirements are summarised below for reference. Authors should consult the full Manuscript Submission Standards document for complete guidance.

Requirement	Standard	Notes
<b>Minimum Length</b>	3,000 words	Excluding abstract and Works Cited. Extended papers typically range from 5,000 to 8,000 words.
<b>Abstract</b>	100–150 words	Must accurately represent the argument, methodology (where applicable), and contribution of the manuscript.
<b>Keywords</b>	4–6 keywords	Should reflect the manuscript's principal themes, theoretical frameworks, and disciplinary location.
<b>Font</b>	Times New Roman throughout	Title: 14pt bold. Body text: 12pt, justified, single-line spacing.
<b>Citation Style</b>	MLA 9th Edition	In-text citations and Works Cited list. Endnotes only, placed before Works Cited.
<b>Language</b>	English only	Non-English quotations must be followed by an English translation in parentheses.
<b>File Format</b>	.doc or .docx	Single file. All tracked changes and comments must be removed prior to submission.
<b>Author Anonymisation</b>	All author-identifying information removed	Includes author names, institutional affiliations in text, acknowledgements, and self-identifying metadata.

### 3.5 Demonstration of Independence from the Conference Paper

The extended paper must be sufficiently distinct from the original conference paper to constitute a new and independent scholarly work. The journal does not publish conference papers in revised form; it publishes journal articles that originated in conference research. The distinction is qualitative, not merely quantitative. Adding 1,500 words to a conference paper does not automatically produce a journal article if the additions do not develop the argument, deepen the scholarly engagement, or sharpen the contribution. The editorial office applies the following principle in assessing this requirement:

*If the conference paper were placed beside the submitted manuscript and both were read by an independent reviewer, the reviewer should be able to identify the submitted manuscript as a materially more developed, more rigorous, and more fully realised piece of scholarly work — not merely a longer version of the same text.*

In practice, the following types of development are most commonly what distinguishes an extended paper from its conference origin:

- A significantly expanded and critically engaged literature review.
- Additional primary material — new texts, data, case studies, or archival sources — incorporated into the analysis.
- Substantive new analytical sections that develop the argument beyond its conference scope.
- Engagement with counter-arguments or competing interpretations not addressed in the conference paper.
- A fully developed conclusion that articulates the implications, limitations, and further research directions arising from the study.

#### 4. Prior Publication and the Conference Paper

Authors are frequently uncertain about whether the existence of a conference paper — whether distributed to delegates, uploaded to an institutional repository, or included in conference proceedings — affects their eligibility to submit an extended paper to the journal. The following guidance applies.

Situation	Eligibility
<b>The conference paper was presented orally and not published in any written form.</b>	Eligible to submit, subject to meeting the extended paper standard.
<b>The conference paper was distributed to delegates as a handout or circulated informally.</b>	Eligible to submit, subject to meeting the extended paper standard.
<b>The conference paper was uploaded to an institutional repository or personal website.</b>	Eligible to submit, subject to meeting the extended paper standard. Authors should note that the repository version and the submitted manuscript will be assessed for similarity. The manuscript must constitute a substantially new work.
<b>The conference paper was published in conference proceedings — whether print or online, with or without a DOI.</b>	Eligibility depends on the extent of development. Authors must disclose the prior publication to the editorial office at the point of submission. The extended paper must be sufficiently distinct to constitute an independent scholarly contribution. The editorial office will assess this on a case-

	by-case basis. In cases of doubt, the Editor-in-Chief's decision is final.
<b>The conference paper was published in a peer-reviewed journal, edited volume, or other formally published venue.</b>	Not eligible for submission. This constitutes a prior publication that would make the manuscript ineligible under the journal's originality requirements.
<b>The author has submitted or intends to submit the same or substantially similar manuscript to another journal simultaneously.</b>	Not eligible. Simultaneous submission is a breach of publication ethics and grounds for immediate rejection.

Authors who are uncertain about their eligibility should contact the editorial office before submitting. Undisclosed prior publications discovered after submission or after acceptance will be treated as a breach of publication ethics and handled in accordance with the journal's Publication Ethics and Peer Review Framework.

## 5. How the Extended Paper Standard Is Assessed at Screening

The editorial screening team applies the following assessment to determine whether a submitted manuscript meets the extended paper standard. This assessment is carried out before the manuscript is assigned to peer review and is distinct from the peer review process itself.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>What the Screener Looks For</b>	<b>Common Grounds for Decline</b>
<b>Argument</b>	Is a clear, specific scholarly argument stated and developed?	Argument is implicit, undeveloped, or limited to the presentation of a research question without an answer.
<b>Scholarship</b>	Is there substantive, critically engaged literature review?	Literature review is perfunctory, uncritical, or limited to foundational texts with no engagement with recent scholarship.
<b>Contribution</b>	Is an original scholarly contribution explicitly identified and substantiated?	No contribution is stated; the contribution is purely descriptive; the manuscript summarises existing scholarship without advancing it.
<b>Length and Format</b>	Does the manuscript meet the minimum length and formatting requirements?	Below 3,000 words; missing abstract or keywords; non-compliant formatting; incomplete Works Cited list.
<b>Independence</b>	Is the manuscript materially distinct from a lightly revised conference paper?	High similarity to a known conference paper version; padded length without substantive development; conference-style structure retained.

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## 6. Practical Guidance for Authors

### 6.1 Where to Begin

Authors who have been invited to submit are encouraged to approach the extended paper not as a revision task but as a rewriting project with the conference paper as source material. The most productive starting point is to ask not 'what do I add?' but 'what does this argument need to become a complete piece of scholarship?'

In most cases, this means returning to the research itself: re-reading the primary material more carefully, engaging with scholarship encountered since the conference, developing an analytical approach that the time constraints of a conference paper did not allow, and writing a conclusion that articulates the full implications of the findings.

### 6.2 Structuring the Extended Paper

There is no single prescribed structure for extended papers submitted to either journal. Authors should adopt the structure that best serves the argument and is most appropriate to the scholarly conventions of their field. The following general architecture is offered as guidance, not as a template:

1. Introduction — States the research question, identifies the scholarly gap or debate being entered, presents the argument clearly, and outlines the structure of the paper. Typically 400–600 words.
2. Context and Scholarship — Engages critically with the relevant literature, establishing the scholarly conversation the manuscript contributes to. Length varies with the breadth of the argument.
3. Methodology — Where applicable, describes and justifies the analytical or research approach adopted. May be integrated into the introduction or context section for theoretical humanities work.
4. Analysis — The main body of the paper. Develops the argument through close engagement with primary material, data, or case studies. This is typically the longest section and is where the contribution is made.
5. Discussion or Further Implications — Reflects on the significance of the findings, addresses limitations, and identifies further questions or research directions opened by the study.
6. Conclusion — Draws together the argument, restates the contribution clearly, and closes the paper. Typically 300–500 words.
7. Endnotes (if any) — Placed before the Works Cited list.
8. Works Cited — Complete MLA 9th Edition references for all cited works.

### 6.3 Common Errors to Avoid

The following errors are the most common reasons extended paper manuscripts are declined at screening or receive a rejection decision at peer review. Authors are advised to check their manuscripts against this list before submitting.

Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
The argument is stated explicitly in the introduction and returned to consistently throughout the paper.	The argument emerges gradually or is never stated directly, leaving the reader to infer the main claim.
The literature review demonstrates engagement with recent scholarship and identifies a specific gap the manuscript addresses.	The literature review lists names and publication years without critical commentary or engagement.
The conclusion articulates what the manuscript has demonstrated and what it means for the field.	The conclusion restates the introduction or trails off without consolidating the argument.
All sources are cited accurately using MLA 9th Edition with a complete Works Cited list.	In-text citations are inconsistent, incomplete, or in a different citation style. Works Cited is missing entries.
The manuscript is written in clear, precise academic English appropriate for an international readership.	The manuscript retains the register of a spoken presentation: second person, direct audience address, informal transitions.
Non-English quotations are followed immediately by an English translation in parentheses.	Non-English quotations are left untranslated or translations are placed only in footnotes.

## 6.4 A Note on Word Count

The 3,000-word minimum is a floor, not a target. For most fields and most arguments, a manuscript of 3,000 words is unlikely to provide sufficient space for the literature engagement, analysis, and conclusion expected of a journal article. The typical length of published articles in *The Criterion* and *Galaxy* falls between 5,000 and 8,000 words. Authors should write to the length their argument requires, not to a minimum threshold.

At the same time, length is not a proxy for quality. A manuscript of 8,000 words that does not develop a clear argument, engage adequately with scholarship, or identify an original contribution is as likely to be declined as one of 3,200 words that does. Authors should aim for the length that allows them to make their argument completely and rigorously, without padding.

## 7. Author Self-Assessment Checklist

Authors are strongly encouraged to complete this checklist before submitting their extended paper. It does not replace the editorial screening process, but it provides a reliable indication of whether the manuscript is likely to meet the extended paper standard. A manuscript for which any item in Section A cannot be answered affirmatively is unlikely to pass the screening stage.

### Section A — Scholarly Content (all items required)

My manuscript states its central argument explicitly and clearly, and that argument is sustained throughout the paper.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
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My manuscript makes an original scholarly contribution that I can identify and articulate in one or two sentences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My manuscript engages critically and comprehensively with the relevant scholarly literature, including recent contributions to the field.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My analysis goes beyond describing or summarising primary material; it applies a developed analytical approach to produce original insight.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My conclusion consolidates the argument, articulates the contribution, and addresses limitations and implications.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My manuscript is materially distinct from the conference paper from which it originated; it is not a padded or lightly revised version of that paper.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<b>Section B — Format and Compliance (all items required)</b>	
My manuscript is at least 3,000 words in length, excluding abstract and Works Cited.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My abstract is between 100 and 150 words and accurately represents the manuscript's argument and contribution.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I have included 4–6 keywords.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My manuscript is formatted in Times New Roman, 12pt body text, justified, single-line spacing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
All citations follow MLA 9th Edition. My Works Cited list is complete and accurate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Non-English quotations are followed by English translations in parentheses.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I have removed all author-identifying information, including my name, institutional affiliation, acknowledgements, and document metadata.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I have removed all tracked changes and comments from the manuscript file.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My manuscript is saved as a single .doc or .docx file.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
My manuscript is not under consideration at any other journal or publication venue.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I have disclosed all prior publication of the conference paper in the submission notes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

## 8. Queries and Further Guidance

Authors who have questions about whether their manuscript meets the extended paper standard, or who are uncertain about any aspect of the submission requirements, are

encouraged to contact the editorial office before submitting. Early contact is preferable to a screening decline.

Queries should be directed to the editorial office of the relevant journal through the contact details available at [rcell.co.in](http://rcell.co.in). Authors should not direct eligibility queries to the Guest Editor, as the Guest Editor does not hold authority over submission decisions.

The editorial office is able to advise on eligibility and compliance questions but is not able to provide pre-submission developmental feedback on manuscript content. Authors seeking feedback on their work before submitting should consult a colleague with appropriate expertise.

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