

Lightning Communications

Lightning Communications is the section within the ASPIRE Journal where authors can publish brief reports related to their research. This form is also called micropublications or mini-research articles.

1. Purpose:

A Lightning Communication is a brief and focused publication describing a single result or experiment. Unlike traditional full-length papers, Lightning Communication do not require extensive background discussion or multiple experiments. Instead, the aim should be to place the spotlight on a single finding. The purpose of a Lightning Communication is to publish brief reports in 1000 words or no more than 2-3 pages. This includes no more than 2 images and the reference list.

Expected content for Lightning Communications can include data from pilot experiments, interesting (or unexpected) findings or null results (negative results, no effect or inconclusive findings). These types of stand-alone findings are often difficult to publish in traditional full-length articles.

Publishing these findings in short form supports greater transparency and reproducibility within academic research. Interesting (or unexpected) findings or null results can contribute meaningfully to the bigger scientific picture by offering valuable insight that can inform future studies and prevent unnecessary duplication of inclusive approaches. The short form allows for faster dissemination, allowing research communities to refine methodologies and conduct research more efficiently and sustainably.

2. Format

Due to the brief and succinct nature of Lightning Communications, authors should use only the following headings: Introduction, Results and Discussion and Methodology. The format is meant to flow like a short article, not a segmented report.

- a) **Abstract:** An abstract of no more than 100 words should be included.
- b) **Figure:** Authors are required to submit no more than two figures (image, photo, graph or data table) with a full caption. All data must be represented in only two figures. Figures should be submitted in colour and at a resolution of at least 150dpi (300dpi preferred), and not more than 20MB.
- c) **Main body:** The main body consists of three sections (with suggested word counts):
 - i. **Introduction:** This section can be between 100-200 words in length.
 - ii. **Results and Discussion:** This section can be between 400-600 words in length.
 - iii. **Methods and Materials:** Authors are encouraged to include a section on the methods and materials used in the experimental design. This should include all reagents, samples and equipment. This section can be between 200-300 words in length.

Example of Lightning Communication

Abstract

An abstract of no more than 100 words should be included.



Figure 1. This is a figure. It presents all the data from this Lightning Communication in a clear and concise manner. If a graph is included, all axes are clearly labelled. Data points are explained in the caption, and a legend is included. If the figure is an image presenting results or a methodology, labels that are readable are included. Captions should describe what the figure shows, explain symbols or colours, and include sample sizes or error bars.

1. Introduction

Brief introduction to the experiment and the rationale. Can cite key publications to place the study in its broader context. This section can be between 100-200 words in length.

2. Results and Discussion

The results discussion section is the main section of Lightning Communications. It includes a discussion of the experimental approach (strengths, weaknesses and limitations) and results presented in the figures above. It highlights key findings and places the findings within the broader context of the specific field. Up to three subheadings can be included in the Discussion sections. Due to the brief and succinct nature of Lightning Communications, Authors should not present any other results. Authors are encouraged to include in-text references to relevant sources. This section should not be more than 400-600 words in length. Authors are encouraged to focus on the essentials: *What was done, what was found, and why it matters.*

3. Methods and Materials

Authors are encouraged to include a section on the methods and materials used in the experimental design. This should include all reagents, samples and equipment. This section can be between 200-300 words in length. In this section, authors must provide sufficient information on the methods and materials used to allow other research groups to duplicate the experiment with similar results. This includes specific equipment, settings, methodology, sample types and sizes, and reagents. No additional figures should be included. Reagents, samples and equipment can be presented in a table format.

4. References

All sources cited in the figure or the main body should be cited in a full reference list, following the Harvard citation style.

Document Control

Version	Date	Author	Reviewer	Approver	Change description	Status
1.0	19/07/2025	Cherene de Bruyn				
2.0	07/08/2025	Cherene de Bruyn				Uploaded to ASPIRE Website