

Handling Lab Protocols

Lab Protocols consist of two interlinked components: a step-by-step protocol hosted on protocols.io, and a peer-reviewed article in *PLOS One* that contextualizes the protocol.

Editorial Process

Manuscript Invitations

- Look for the **article type** in manuscript invitations.
- After you accept a Lab Protocol invitation, there will also be additional information from staff in the **Information for Editor** section of the confirmation email and Details page in Editorial Manager.

Initial Assessment

Lab Protocol submissions differ from **Research Articles**.

- Lab Protocols will have **Expected Results** instead of Results and Discussion sections (read the full [Lab Protocol submission guidelines](#) for authors)
- The Materials and Methods section will be very short. The step-by-step protocol, equivalent to the Methods section, will be a supporting information file (and eventually hosted on protocols.io if published).
- Evaluate the submission against the [publication criteria](#) and [submission guidelines](#) for Lab Protocols and decide whether to:
 - **Reject** without review
 - **Invite reviewers** to peer review the protocol**
 - ****Only one external review is required** for Lab Protocols alongside your assessment as Academic Editor.

Peer Review

- Lab Protocols report methods that have already been shown to work in the literature so you will typically only need **one external reviewer** and at most **one round of revision** unless you feel further subject matter input and revision is necessary
- Refer to the specific [reviewer guidelines and forms](#) for Lab Protocols

Editorial Decisions

- Ensure you have provided enough information in the decision letter for the authors to understand your decision, clearly articulating your reasoning with reference to our [publication criteria](#) and [submission guidelines for Lab Protocols](#)

More [Resources for Editors](#)

Need help? Contact plosone@plos.org