

The BELS Letter

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

Maintaining and promoting editorial proficiency in the life sciences



From the President

Many of our members hail from Florida, several in the direct path of Hurricane Ian. Our hearts go out to those impacted, personally and professionally, by this catastrophic storm. It's times like these that we are reminded about the importance of connection and the moral support friends and colleagues can lend, even from afar. We wish a smooth and speedy recovery for all those Ian has affected. You are in our thoughts.

Speaking of connection, for our members who are in a position to travel to the American Medical Writers Association's annual conference in Denver in early

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The BELS Letter

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From the President

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November, I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the Mile High City. As a reminder, we are in the process of reserving designated tables for BELS at one of AMWA's lunches with the exhibitors for an informal meet and greet. Details regarding the date and time will be shared very soon. Please plan to stop by. I hope to see you there!

Please also plan to join our hour-long fall extravaganza at 2 p.m. Central on Oct. 19. We're looking forward to seeing your fall-themed photos, events, and pets, along with your search tips for locating editing-related material online. This is always a fun session, and we hope you also come away with some great suggestions you can apply to your work.

Lastly, this is the start of the season for membership renewals as well. Please check your email inbox for your BELS membership renewal notice for 2023 and respond promptly to lock in your continued member benefits, discounts, and networking opportunities. Thank you as always for your continued involvement!

*Melanie Fridl Ross, MSJ, ELS
BELS President*



Coming in 2023: ISO Plain Language Standard

A new international standard for plain language will be unveiled in 2023. The standard will be the culmination of years of work by the International Plain Language Federation—a joint project of [Plain Language Association International](#) (PLAIN), [Center for Plain Language](#), and [Clarity](#)—in cooperation with the [International Organization for Standardization](#) (ISO), a nongovernmental organization comprising 167 standards organizations from various countries.

The [ISO plain language standard](#) will provide guidance for medical and scientific writing as well as written communication in areas such as government, finance, law, information technology, and education. It also applies to multiple languages; thus far, speakers of at least 17 languages have reviewed the standard to ensure its usability with their language.

The BELS Letter will keep you updated on when the ISO Plain Language Standard is available and how you can access it.

Be There With BELS On!

BELS branded merchandise is now available! Now you can proudly display the BELS logo on your tote bag, mug, travel tumbler, sweatshirt, laptop case, or mouse pad. They make great gifts for colleagues, employees, friends, family, and yourself! Please visit www.bels.org/store to order.



BELS Membership Renewals Are Now Open!

It's time to renew your BELS membership for 2022! Stay connected with editing colleagues from around the world and enjoy benefits such as:

- [Free virtual events and webinars](#), and access to the library of recorded sessions
 - [Past topics](#) include: "Work-Life Balance," "Tips, Tricks & Tools for Working with International Clients," and "Cybersecurity"
- Access to the job board and members-only email discussion list
- 30% [discount](#) on PerfectIt license
- 20% [discount](#) on several resource materials from the University of Chicago Press

All this and more for your annual member dues of **ONLY \$45!**

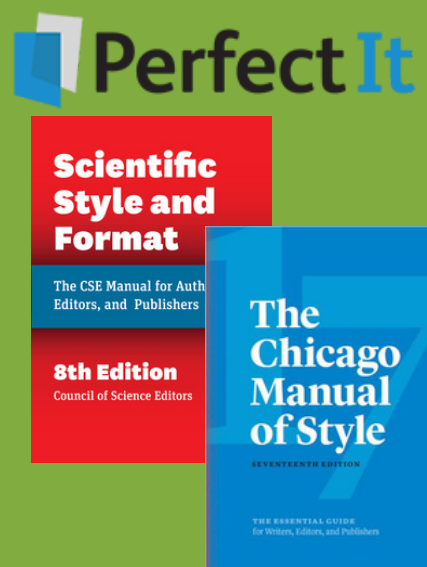
To renew: Log in to your BELS account and view the invoice located in your member profile (or check your email for the invoice.)

The deadline for 2023 renewal is December 31, 2022, so don't wait!

BELS Member Discounts

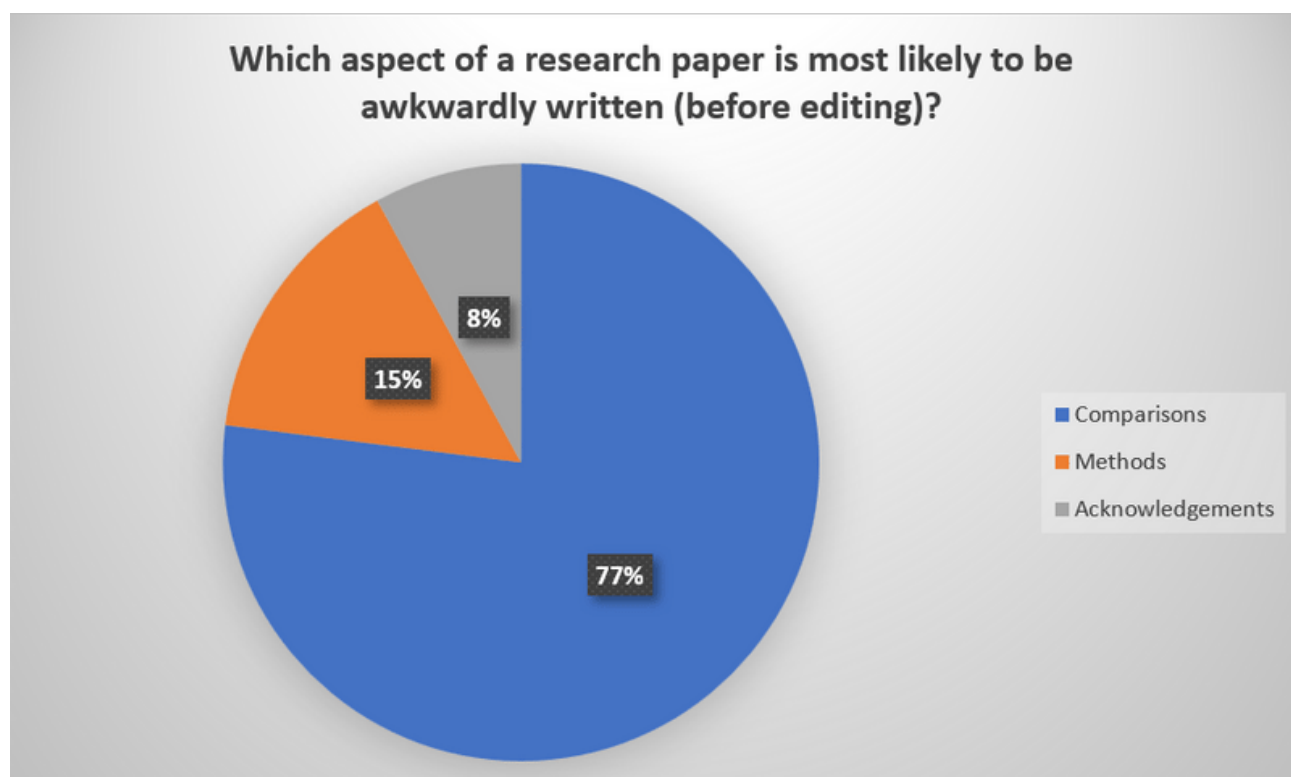
BELS has partnered with resource providers to offer valuable members-only discounts on products and services that help make your job easier. These offers are exclusive to BELS members and should not be shared with any other non-member.

BELS member discounts include a **30% discount** on a single license of PerfectIt software. PerfectIt improves consistency, ensures quality, and saves time. BELS members also receive a **20% discount** on reference books such as *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers* and *The Chicago Manual of Style*. The discount can be applied to both online and print versions of these books. Visit bels.org and click on Member Resources to claim your discounts today!



Monthly Poll Results

In September, our monthly poll asked which aspect of a research paper is likely to be poorly written. BELS members overwhelmingly responded that comparisons tend to be awkward—I, for one, get tired of seeing “as compared to” or “in comparison to.” The Acknowledgements section, on the other hand, has the fewest problems—the only problem I usually see is when they forget to acknowledge their editor. Please visit bels.org to participate in this month’s poll.



BELS Member Event Recordings

Did you miss any of our recent member-exclusive events? Visit the “Member Resources” section on our website to watch recordings on-demand at your convenience! Topics include consulting, editing tools, setting freelance rates, and much more. Be sure to stay tuned for announcements about upcoming events, and contact us with topic suggestions.

BELS Fall Extravaganza



Are the cool temperatures and fall holidays leaving you searching for outdoor events? Pop into the BELS fall extravaganza and share your fall-themed photos, fall family events, and any pets dressed in Halloween gear! As a bonus, attendees can share their best search tips for finding editing-related material online, including hard-to-spell words and grammar rules.

This event is free and open to all BELS members! Not yet a member? [Join today](#) to be able to register for this event, plus enjoy all other BELS member benefits!

[RSVP Here!](#)

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The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) was founded in 1991 to evaluate the proficiency of manuscript editors in the life sciences and to award credentials similar to those obtainable in other professions.

Potential employers and clients of manuscript editors usually have no objective way to assess the proficiency of editors. For their part, editors are frustrated by the difficulty of demonstrating their ability. That is why both employers and editors so often resort to personal references or ad hoc tests, not always with satisfactory results. The need for an objective test of editorial skill has long been recognized.

To meet that need, BELS developed a process for testing and evaluating proficiency in editing in the life sciences. The Board administers two examinations—one for certification and one for diplomate status. The examinations, written by senior life-science editors assisted by testing experts, focus on the principles and practices of scientific editing in English.