

# Writing for the Geographical Association

## Information for submitting a proposal

The Geographical Association publishes a large and varied range of resources on many aspects of geography and geographical education. Ideas for new publications are always welcomed from individuals or groups.

This document explains how you can turn your ideas into print, and describes the process to expect and the support the GA will offer. We would like to give as many members as possible the opportunity to write, and particularly to encourage new authors. Please note that the guidance in this pack applies only to publications for sale – information on submitting articles for the journals is available to download from our website.

### From first ideas...

#### *Initial idea*

The first step is to contact the Head of Publishing ([eanderson@geography.org.uk](mailto:eanderson@geography.org.uk)) to discuss your idea. The kinds of questions you are likely to be asked are:

- Who is your idea for?
- What teaching and learning needs does your idea meet?
- Is your idea adding to an existing GA series?
- What gap in the market does your idea fill?
- What other resources and publications are like it?
- What sort of price do you think it would be reasonable to charge for your idea, if published?

Have you...

- got the time, energy and motivation to complete it?
- got co-authors/editors to help complete it?

The Head of Publishing should be able to make positive suggestions, put you in contact with potential collaborators if appropriate, let you know if a similar proposal has already been received, or if a similar title already exists. If the initial response is favourable, the next step is to make a formal publication proposal.

#### *Formal proposal*

Guidance on how to put together a book proposal follows at the end of this document. For guidelines on house style, please download **Writing for Publications** from our website. Your completed proposal should also include some sample material.

#### *Reviewing the proposal*

Your proposal may also be sent out to one or more external referees who are qualified to assess your ideas and proposal. After their reviews are received, you may be asked to modify your proposal.

#### *Approving the proposal*

The Head of Publishing will contact you to say whether or not your proposal has been accepted for publication. If it has, a member of the GA editorial team will be assigned to work with you to go through the details of your publication, agree the author's fee, agree dates for completing the writing and will outline a provisional publication schedule. The author's writing agreement (contract) will then be drawn up.

## How to prepare your proposal

These notes should help you to include in your proposal all the items the GA will need to make a decision on whether or not to publish your work. Please note that the steps below apply to online resources and printed books, and that not every point will apply to every proposal.

1. It is useful to summarise the resource in a few lines at the start, including a working title.
2. Outline the contents. It is often useful to do this chapter-by-chapter/section-by-section.
3. Say how long the resource will be, in published pages/screens or words if preferred.
4. Estimate the number and type of illustrations it will need (photographs, maps, graphs, diagrams, etc).
5. Identify the intended market:
  - Avoid general and wide-ranging descriptions (e.g. 'this book is intended for classroom teachers, middle management, senior management, ITT students and their tutors and mentors, researchers, lecturers, advisers, administrators, policy-makers...'). It may be that your resource would appeal to more than one group, but it would be helpful to distinguish between main and subsidiary audiences.
  - Quantify the market as far as possible. For example, if your resource is aimed at geography PGCE students, how many courses are there and how many students on each?
  - Identify courses for which your book might make recommended or essential reading.
  - Most of our resources aim to support the National Curriculum for England. It will help us assess your proposal, and eventually market your resource, if you can make clear links between your text and the National Curriculum, GCSE or A level specifications, International Baccalaureate, etc.
  - If the content of your book will have application outside our traditional market – geography teaching in England, Wales and Northern Ireland – explain its appeal to different markets.
6. Analyse the competition
  - What comparable resources are there? How will your book compare/contrast?
  - If there isn't a comparable resource, suggest why.
7. Yourself as author/editor
  - Give the title, institution and relevant qualification of yourself (if sole author or editor) plus any co-authors, co-editors, contributors, etc.
  - Give a brief bibliography of your relevant publications, annotated to identify the kind of audience if this is not obvious.
  - Mention any relevant networks you belong to, e.g. conferences you attend, associations you belong to, your involvement therein.
8. When could you submit your manuscript by? Avoid good intentions here, and be realistic.
9. Put at the end your name, an address where you can be contacted, phone and e-mail.
10. Finally, it is useful to summarise the benefits the resource offers to the reader – what are its unique selling points? Many of these will be implicit in much of the above, but it is worth spelling out what's in it for the readers.

**NB:** Please note that the acceptance of a proposal by the Geographical Association does not mean that the final manuscript will be automatically accepted for publication. The manuscript will be reviewed in the context of whether it corresponds to the accepted proposal and fulfils the needs of the audience for whom it is written, and it is likely that you will be asked to make amendments to this end. In exceptional circumstances, the Geographical Association may decide against publication.