

## Pitching Guidelines for Op-Eds from Dr. Diane Dechief

In most cases, Op-Ed's are "pitched" to a publication to be published as soon as possible. Publications choose from the best of these, in order to generate discussion and hopefully to further our thinking about a given topic.

Pitch by email with an appropriate subject line—usually editors like to have a draft of the op-ed pasted at the end of the email. Avoid attachments.

1. Explain **why** you are sending this Op-Ed **now**.
  - a. Timeliness is usually critical, but in the case of our assignment may not be the reason.
  - b. If you don't have a time-based reason to publish the Op-Ed now, answer the "**So what?**" question. Why would readers care about this?
2. In one sentence, describe your piece by **topic**, and then the "**story**". What is interesting here?
3. Explain **why you're the best one to write this piece**.
4. Include your contact information.
5. Paste your completed Op-Ed below your pitch.
6. Specify "Op-ed Submission" in subject line.

THE BASICS—FROM THE OP-ED PROJECT

How do you get someone to listen to you in the first place? How do you establish credibility, capture interest, and convey the immediate relevance of your point of view – quickly and decisively?

A pitch should include:

- Your idea in a few lines
- Your credentials – only those that are relevant
- The finished piece pasted below your pitch
- Your contact information

Aspects of a successful pitch:

- Timely
- Well written
- Brief and clear
- Conveys expertise
- Unexpected point of view

## Sample Pitch:

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                               | Hi,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Intro                         | My name is [name] and I work for [company].                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Timeliness/news hook          | As you may be aware, this morning saw the release of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on climate change solutions, the latest and final of three comprehensive reports issued by the IPCC every five years. One of the main lessons from the report is that there needs to be a rapid and wholesale shift to low-carbon energy generation systems. With that in mind, please find below an op-ed from [Author] the [position and group]. Given the space theme of the piece, we felt the Houston Chronicle would be an ideal venue. |
| Backstory                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Outlet relevance              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Author credentials            | Given the prominence of [Author] and that the IPCC report was released today, a timely response would be greatly appreciated. We are of course happy to accommodate any edits you deem necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Edit accommodation and thanks | Thank you for your time and attention,<br>[Name]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Author Name                   | [Author Name]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Author Contact Info           | [123 Fake Street]<br>[emailaddress@gmail.com]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Pasted Text                   | [Op-ed]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

*Subject Line: Article*

*Hello,*

*I have attached an article submission for you to publish on your site. Please respond before 5 p.m. tomorrow. My article is attached.*

*Meagan*

Now, what's wrong with this email?

- **The subject line isn't enticing.** As mentioned earlier, publication editors can receive hundreds of pitches every day. With a subject line like this, an editor won't be interested enough to even open the email, let alone accept the submission.
- **The introduction is impersonal.** In your research of the publication, you should be able to find the name of the section editor to whom you're pitching your content. If you can find it, use it. (Not all editors make their names available for just anyone to find.) Failing to include the editor's name is impolite, and it signals that you could have blindly sent this email to any editor or publication.

- **The body of the email is vague.** If you don't offer any summary of the article, the editor has no way of quickly assessing whether this content will be a good fit for the publication and be valuable to its readers.
- **The deadline is unreasonable.** Requesting a review that soon after submission is disrespectful because it implies that you think this article is more important than anything else the editor is doing.

### **The Globe and Mail**

**Op-eds:** Contents must be sent in body of email message-- plain text only, no attachments. You must sign a freelance agreement. Max is 650 words. Include your name, mailing address, and day number. Email [comment@globeandmail.ca](mailto:comment@globeandmail.ca) . You will be contacted within two weeks if your piece is accepted.

**Response letters:** 150 words or less. Send to [letters@globeandmail.ca](mailto:letters@globeandmail.ca). Fax: 416-585-5085. Include name, mailing address, and day number.

### **The New York Times**

**Op-eds:** The NYT accepts opinion pieces on any topic. They are taken into consideration for the Op-Ed page, the Sunday Review, Opinionator and other online series, and the International NYT, edited out of Paris, London, and Hong Kong. Articles typically run from 400-1200 words; submissions of any length will be considered. Your piece must be exclusive to the Times. Submit: [opinion@nytimes.com](mailto:opinion@nytimes.com). If you do not hear in three business days, assume the article will not be used.

**Circulation:** 2,149,012, including 680,905 in print (daily), 2,517,307 (Sunday) | Online: 1,341,945 (paid daily subscription), 1,300,106 (paid Sunday subscription) and nearly 53.8 million unique monthly visitors (2014).

### **Boston Globe**

**Op-eds:** Piece should be up to 700 words. Send by email to [oped@globe.com](mailto:oped@globe.com) . Fax: 617-929-2098. Mail to Op-Ed Editor, The Boston Globe, PO Box 55819, Boston, MA, 02205-5819.

**Letters:** Timely, original, and short. Respond to pieces in Globe. Letters must be signed and include a daytime number. Letters should be 200 words or less. Send to [letter@globe.com](mailto:letter@globe.com).

**Circulation:** 245,572 (daily in 2013) and 384,173 (Sunday in 2014) | Online: 1.3 million unique monthly visitors (2014)

### **Huffington Post**

**Op-eds:** You may make a blog pitch on this online [form](#). Limit is 500-1000 words.

**Letters:** Tell us at [listening@huffpost.com](mailto:listening@huffpost.com).

**Proposed headline \***

Under 120 characters

**Your pitch \***

Please include a final draft of your proposed post (500-1000 words)

**Your name \***

**Your bio \***

Please provide a short personal or professional bio to give us an idea of who you are

**Your email address \***

**Topic \***

Let us know what general topic area you're pitching to

News (Politics, World, Crime) Impact and Innovation (Business, Impact, Technology, Green) Entertainment (Arts, Books, Celebrity, etc.) Lifestyle (Healthy Living, Style, Travel, Interior Design, Weddings) Voices (Parents, Women, Religion, Black Voices, Gay Voices, Latino Voices, Divorce) CANADA EDITION UK EDITION

**This is a required question**

### **Washington Post**

The Post welcomes submissions of opinion articles on any topic for publication in print and online. Submissions must be exclusive to us and can be of any length, though they are unlikely to be accepted if they are longer than 750 words. We do not consider articles sent to other publications or posted online, including on a personal blog, nor do we consider anonymous or pseudonymous submissions.

We consider only completed articles and do not provide guidance on ideas or proposals. Countless factors affect whether an opinion article is suitable for publication in the

newspaper or online, including space constraints, timeliness and relevance. You need not possess any special expertise to have your article considered for publication, though if you do, please elaborate.

We do our best to read all submissions promptly and will contact you within one week if we are interested in publishing your article. If you do not hear from us in a week, it is safe to assume we will not be able to use your article.

The form below is the best way to submit your article. Please type or paste your article as plain text, not HTML, and please do not use brackets. Information relevant to your expertise, or additional authors, may be included in the comments field. Please note that this form is to submit opinion articles only; letters to the editor can be sent by e-mail to [letters@washpost.com](mailto:letters@washpost.com), and submissions to the Outlook section should be sent to [outlook@washpost.com](mailto:outlook@washpost.com). (Please do not send attachments to either address.)

\*Required

Author's name\*

Name of submitter

(If the person submitting the op-ed is not the author, please indicate that here.)

Contact email address\*

Contact phone number\*

Including area code

Subject\*

Comments

Any additional contact details, cover letter or relevant information should be included here.

Text of your submission\*Maximum length: 800 words

## The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/mar/14/how-to-pitch-article-guardian-opinion>

We welcome your pitches to Guardian Opinion – it's best to send them via email, to [opinion@theguardian.com](mailto:opinion@theguardian.com).

We receive hundreds of pitches a day, so we can't get back to every email unfortunately, but there are some simple things you can do to maximise your chances of being published.

### 1) Don't send fully written pieces

It can be tempting, when you have an idea, to write the whole piece, and send it over, but it's very rare for us to publish a piece in these circumstances. This is

because editors like to work closely and carefully with a writer to determine the best length and focus for a piece. In some cases, we will already have published other pieces on the subject you'd like to write about, so we will only commission you if your piece can explore a specific element of the story that has yet to be considered. When an article has been written on spec, this early stage conversation between an editor and writer isn't possible.

## 2) Send over one idea at a time, two at the most

When there are more ideas than that in an email – we've been known to receive emails with 20 ideas – it can feel as if we're being sent a round robin, as if the ideas haven't been developed with our section specifically in mind. If you send over a single idea, it makes it much easier for us to consider it properly, and get back to you.

## 3) Keep it fairly short, and simple

Pitches for a 700-800 word column (the average length of our pieces) don't need to be more than a few paragraphs long. We're just looking for an outline of what you'd like to write about, including a description of the argument you would be making, plus any details that help bring the subject to life and explain why it's important for us to cover it.

## 4) Explain why this piece needs to be written right now

Most of the pieces that we run on Guardian Opinion are news reactive, so they respond to a specific news story that has recently broken. The news story is the "peg" for the column – the reason why this is a pressing issue that readers need to hear more about. Occasionally, an opinion will be so interesting that we'll run it without a specific news peg. But those occasions are pretty rare.

## 5) Explain why you're the right person to write this piece

Perhaps you're an expert in the particular subject you'd like to write about, or you have a personal story that will bring readers new insight into an aspect of the day's news. You might work in an industry that has just been the subject of a breaking story, and want to opine on it. Make sure to tell us, in your email, why you're the right person to write this particular story. It's also worth mentioning, briefly, any writing experience you've had in the past, but don't be put off pitching us a piece simply because you haven't been published before. We take many pieces from first-time writers, because they've been exactly the right person to write the column in question. In fact, those have often proved some of our liveliest pieces.

## 6) Give a clear description of the piece you're pitching in the email subject line

It is not helpful to simply write “column pitch”, because your email will arrive in our inbox alongside hundreds of other emails with exactly the same subject line. A few precise words on exactly what you’re interested in writing about make it much more likely that an interested editor will be able to find your pitch, later in the day, when they have a chance to get back to you.

**WIRED** [HTTPS://WWW.WIRED.COM/2018/09/HOW-TO-SUBMIT-TO-WIRED-OPINION/](https://www.wired.com/2018/09/how-to-submit-to-wired-opinion/)

WIRED CARES ABOUT the things you care about. And we want to give you the chance to speak to our readers directly. We accept op-ed submissions on all topics relevant to WIRED (business, gear, culture, design, security, transportation, and science). Submissions must be original, no longer than 1,000 words, and they must argue a specific point of view. **Most importantly, op-eds can only be written by humans, not brands. This is not a section for sponsored content; it’s a chance to share your unique worldview.**

We love pieces that are timely, written in response to current events that have captured the world’s attention, or should have. We love pieces that push a conversation forward. We also love pieces that spring out of your brain with no news hook, but that are compelling enough to stand on their own. Pieces like that will be a harder pitch to sell, but if you believe in it, try it. Opinions need not be married to the news cycle.

Before you submit an op-ed to us, ask yourself the following questions:

- Are you the right person to be writing this piece? Do you have some connection to the topic that makes you an expert or a relevant party? If the answer is no, it’s probably not wise to write an opinion piece about it.
- Have you thought your argument through? Can you anticipate the counter arguments and do you feel comfortable addressing your potential detractors up front? If not, perhaps your idea needs more time to bake.
- Are you a company executive writing a piece that essentially asserts the need for your firm’s product? If so, perhaps WIRED is not the right place for your message.

- Can you express your opinion in a single sentence? If not, keep working on it until it crystallizes into something clear. That sentence, after all, will likely be the headline.

## How to Submit and What to Expect

Send pitches to [opinion@wired.com](mailto:opinion@wired.com). You can send either a completed piece or a pitch that clearly states your thesis and why you specifically are writing about it.

Tell us about yourself first and foremost. Opinions only matter because of who is holding them, so do not bury your biographical information.

Include the phrase “Op-Ed Pitch” in the subject line of your email message, along with a sentence describing your opinion.

If there is a **news peg** for your piece, mention it within the first few lines of your pitch.

If you do not hear back in a week, feel free to follow up via email. If you do not hear back after that, it’s safe to assume we are unable to publish. We try to respond to most pitches sent in, but sometimes that is not feasible.

## Editing Process, Contracts, Payment, Etc.

We will edit your piece, sometimes extensively. We will work together to craft something that is the right tone, length, and quality for WIRED Opinion. WIRED has the final say on headlines, though we will try to make sure you are comfortable with the headline.

You will need to sign a contributor’s contract; payment is decided on a case-by-case basis.

Any and all conflicts of interest or other disclosures must be made up front. We will include them in your author bio as a rule.

Happy writing!

**MS. MAGAZINE**

**Op-eds:** To pitch the Ms. blog, email [blog@msmagazine.com](mailto:blog@msmagazine.com). Submit completed works for consideration. Include detailed description of what piece will look like and when you can turn it around. Include links to previously published work. Submit magazine submissions to [crios@msmagazine.com](mailto:crios@msmagazine.com). Mail to Queries/Ms. Magazine, 433 South Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212. Use a feminist lens to write on politics, social commentary, pop culture, law, education, art, and the environment. Query letter should state topic of proposed project and qualifications. Also accept full manuscripts. Include brief biography and two or three previously published clips. You will be contacted if they are interested. Also include SASE-- a self-addressed sealed envelope.

**Letters:** [letterstotheeditor@msmagazine.com](mailto:letterstotheeditor@msmagazine.com)

### McGill Daily

General intro here: <https://www.mcgilldaily.com/contribute/>

Contribute to Science and Technology by emailing the editors at [scitech@mcgilldaily.com](mailto:scitech@mcgilldaily.com)

Contribute to the Commentary section (Opinions and Editorials) by emailing the editors at [commentary@mcgilldaily.com](mailto:commentary@mcgilldaily.com)!

### McGill Tribune

The email address for the Science and Technology section is [scitech@mcgilltribune.com](mailto:scitech@mcgilltribune.com)

If an op-ed work isn't very science-focused, students could also pitch it to the Opinion section at [opinion@mcgilltribune.com](mailto:opinion@mcgilltribune.com).

If you're unsure what section to pitch your work to, cc the sections that could be appropriate along with the Editor-in-Chief ([editor@mcgilltribune.com](mailto:editor@mcgilltribune.com)).

You could also take a look at the "get involved" tab of the [website](#) with the different sections and contact information.