

Advice on writing a pitch for *Imprint*

Think of a pitch as being **half demo tape, half movie trailer**. It's written partly with the goal of testing an idea that will be shaped, grow, and produced, and partly meant to entice your immediate audience to hear the whole story.

Basic format for a pitch:

- Who are you, and what kind of piece you want to write? (2-3 sentences)
 - mention any relevant writing experience you have
- What's the story (or thesis) of your piece, and how will you approach it? (~200 words)
- Submit your pitch to imprint@gracetoronto.ca

Pitch a story, not a topic: the story is your angle, perspective, and reason for writing about this particular topic in the first place.

“Allan Gardens” – topic

“The history of Allan Gardens since it was founded” – still a topic

“Throughout its history, Allan Gardens has created community for the people who live in and around it.” – story

Don't assume that you'll have this sorted out going in – in fact, often you won't know what your story is until you start writing it. Sometimes you'll think you're writing one story and it will turn out to be something completely different. Or you'll have a story in mind but when you do your brainstorming, research, or interview your subjects, you realize you were slightly off the mark. This is inevitable. But pitching a story is still important!

If you're not sure what your “story” is, do some brainstorming or initial research. Ask yourself why your topic matters and who cares about it – or why it should matter and who should care about it. Come up with a few possible angles into your ideas, pick the strongest one, and pitch that. Make sure to show us why you're the one to write this piece.

Overview of editorial process

Initial response (March).

- One of the Imprint editors will contact you following our pitch meeting.
- When accepting pitches, our goal is to help you focus on the most compelling piece of the story/essay idea and work at growing that seed.
- There's space for growth at every stage, and focusing a project's direction at this stage is really valuable!

Developmental edits (May): looking at the forest.

- Is the piece clearly written and structured? Is it true, insightful, persuasive? Is the opening paragraph engaging, and the “so what” evident?
 - is the thesis / point of the piece clear?

- o are there big steps in logic or narrative that are difficult to follow?
 - o is it doing biblical thinking? is the effect of the gospel evident?
 - o what can be trimmed or pruned?
- We do our best to respond to your first draft (due April 30) quickly so that you can develop an intermediate draft before submitting a final draft (due May 28). This month goes quickly!

Copyediting (June): looking at the trees.

- At this stage a second editor (copyeditor) will read the piece with a focus on stylistic elements like grammar, word choice, rhythm, etc.
 - o this stage is more out of the writer's hands when it comes to prose non-fiction (obviously creative pieces work differently)
- Our editorial process is collaborative and growth happens at every stage—occasionally a copyeditor will suggest more substantial changes.