Footnote Editorial Guidelines

MISSION & VALUES

Footnote's mission is to bring academic research and expertise to a mainstream audience in an engaging, easily digestible format. We serve as a bridge between the valuable knowledge produced in academia and real-world leaders who can turn this intellectual capital into action. We report on a wide range of topics in the social sciences and hard sciences, with a particular focus on research that is relevant to current issues in politics, economics, and business. Most of our articles outline the findings of one or more academic studies and explore the implications of these findings for business, public policy, health and well-being, technology development, and future research.

The key values guiding our company and our content are:

(1) Research. Rigorous academic research and empirical data are at the heart of our content, because we believe they should be the foundation for decision-making and opinion-formation.

(2) Expertise. We highlight the voices of experts because we believe their knowledge should play a central role in public discussion of the topics in which they specialize.

(3) Engagement. We seek to make learning engaging by demonstrating the connections between technical research and how our readers view the world. Sometimes the implications are clear and other times it is our job to connect the dots.

(4) Impact. We highlight research that has the potential to have a significant impact on public understanding of an issue, even if the research or the topic aren't currently at the top of the news.

(5) Objectivity. We distinguish ourselves from other media outlets through our focus on facts, data, and research, and our rejection of polarization and sensationalism.

(6) Non-partisanship. While we explore the implications of research findings, we don't advocate for particular political positions. We provide readers with the information they need to form their own opinions.

(7) Discourse. Academic knowledge building is a collective, constantly evolving effort. We encourage constructive dialogue and healthy debate among contributors and readers, within and across disciplines.

(8) Diversity. We strive to cultivate a network of contributors with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints.

AUDIENCE

Footnote has four primary audiences:

- **General readers** driven by intellectual curiosity, reading for personal enrichment;
- **Professionals** seeking evidence to inform their daily decision-making as policymakers, business and nonprofit leaders, service providers, investors and entrepreneurs;
- **Journalists** searching for evidence and expert perspectives to enrich their coverage of current events; and
- **Academics** who want to keep up with what is going on in their own and other disciplines.

There is overlap between these audiences and we believe the same content can appeal to all four groups. Some articles may be targeted more toward one group or another, but in general we strive to include connections and implications that will be relevant for each of these groups.

We assume our readers have a moderate to high level of awareness and knowledge about people, organizations, and issues that are prominent in public discourse and mainstream media. We don't assume they have any special expertise or technical knowledge of a specific topic or discipline. We don't assume

they are familiar with theory, jargon, empirical findings, statistics, or scholars that are not widely known outside a field. We work with our contributors to provide readers the appropriate context and explanations when references to field-specific knowledge are important to an article.

CONTENT

Most of the content on Footnote takes the form of text-based articles with supporting links and images (graphs, tables, maps, photos, etc.). Articles typically run between 200 and 1000 words. All Footnote content is grounded in research and empirical evidence. Just as importantly, it should explore implications for the world outside of academia as well as connections to broader issues and current events. Articles should be written by someone with expertise in the field being discussed, ideally (but not exclusively) someone who has previously worked on the particular topics on which they're writing.

Some Footnote articles review a single study, experiment, or analysis (or a set of closely related studies) and its implications. The level of detail for this type of article varies widely, from a quick overview of key findings to a detailed discussion covering methodology and previous and future research. Other Footnote pieces focus on a specific issue and draw in several research sources and/or theoretical frameworks to explore that topic. This type of article is driven more by an issue, often one of current interest in the news, than by a specific piece of research.

In addition to the main article, other elements on the page allow us to include multiple layers of information without distracting from the engaging narrative and flow of the primary text. These include:

(1) Sidenotes connect readers to related stories and ideas to get them thinking about the importance and implications of the article. They highlight interesting news stories; offer statistics that provide context; define key terms; explain related ideas and theories in greater detail; or discuss interesting people or organizations mentioned in the article. They should always include links to external sources. Sidenotes are denoted by superscript letters within the article and are positioned along the right hand side of the page next to the corresponding reference in the article body.

(2) Endnotes highlight key studies and reports recommended for further reading on the article topic. You don't have to include every citation in the Endnotes as you would for an academic paper – you can also cite sources by hyperlinking to them in the body of the article. Reserve the Endnotes for the two to five most important additional readings related to the article. Endnotes are denoted by superscript numbers within the article and are placed at the bottom of the page.

(3) The Research Methods section is an optional element that outlines the technical details of a study highlighted in an article. This section contains specific information on the research objective, experimental and data collection methods, sample characteristics, statistical analysis techniques, statistical findings, research limitations, and other relevant technical details. A link in the profile box in the top left corner of the article body shows the Research Methods section in a pop-up box.

(4) Images communicate information in a way that can be more engaging and easier for readers to grasp than text. Relevant images include graphs, data tables, maps, diagrams, timelines, infographics, photographs, and illustrations. Most articles will have at least one or two associated images.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Our articles are produced through close collaboration between our academic contributors and the Footnote editorial team. Our contributors bring the knowledge and expert perspective that is at the heart of every article, and we provide editorial, research, and writing support to help them make the final product accessible and compelling for a mainstream audience. We work with contributors to make sure

the piece is written in a way non-specialists can understand and to research the connections and implications that will provide an engaging framework for the discussion.

CONTRIBUTOR PROFILES

Every Footnote piece is written by or in collaboration with academic experts, and this network of experts is the foundation of our site's authority and legitimacy. To highlight the impressive qualifications of our contributors, each academic has a profile that provides an overview of their academic career and research interests as well as links to all the articles they have contributed to Footnote. Their name, photo, and a link to their profile are included prominently at the top of each article they're involved in creating. Down the line we will be building in functionality to facilitate commenting and connectivity among contributors and academics in our audience.

The profiles offer a single-page career biography enriched by Footnote articles that provide information on contributors' research projects and expertise in a format anyone can understand. Contributors can share their profile with students, other academics, grant funders, potential employers, journalists, investors, or anyone else who's interested in learning more about their work. Also on the profile is a button readers can click to connect with the contributor for consulting projects, academic collaborations, or other potential partnerships.