

COMPLETE EXAMPLE · FICTIONAL STUDY

A journal cover letter you can audit

This is a composed teaching letter, not a send-ready template. Study numbers and manuscript details are invented. Resolve every bracketed field against the real submission.

[Insert submission date]

Academic Editor, PLOS ONE

Re: Research Article: Routine-care reminder pathways and outpatient attendance across three clinics

Dear Academic Editor,

Please consider our Research Article, "Routine-care reminder pathways and outpatient attendance across three clinics," for PLOS ONE. We compare two reminder pathways already used in routine care rather than testing a new intervention.

In this observational analysis of 12,000 appointments at three clinics in one health system, adjusted odds of attendance differed between pathways (odds ratio 1.18, 95% confidence interval 1.05 to 1.32). The result is an association; reminder assignment was not randomized, and residual confounding remains possible.

Relative to the reminder studies discussed in our Introduction, this manuscript adds a documented comparison of workflows already in use across three clinics. We submit it as a Research Article because the methods, adjustment choices, and limitations allow readers to appraise that comparison without treating it as evidence of an intervention effect.

We have had no prior discussion with PLOS about this manuscript. Suggested Academic Editors: [insert suitable names after checking the current PLOS ONE roster]. Opposed reviewers: [list verified conflicts and reasons, or state none after coauthor confirmation].

Please direct correspondence to [verified name, affiliation, and professional email]. Thank you for considering the manuscript.

Sincerely,
[Corresponding author]

Not for submission unchanged. The bracketed fields remain open, and no fictional result or declaration may be copied into a real letter. Page 2 explains the decisions; pages 3 and 4 are the author record.

Journal cover letter model and planning record

Read a complete fictional letter, then build a journal-specific version whose claims and required fields you can verify.

Use and limits. A fictional PLOS ONE teaching letter, not a send-ready file or a universal template. All study numbers and manuscript details are invented. Replace and verify every bracketed field, journal rule, factual claim, and author declaration before use.

WORKED EXAMPLE · FICTIONAL

Fictional observational study and invented teaching numbers. PLOS ONE is used to show how one journal's current instructions shape the letter; no submission, editorial review, or endorsement is implied.

1. Target and submission rules

PLOS ONE research article. Its submission guidelines request a separate cover-letter file of no more than one page. Source checked 2026-09-22; editorial selection is not implied.

3. Contribution and strongest evidence

Illustrative result: among 12,000 appointments, adjusted odds of attendance differed between reminder pathways (OR 1.18, 95% CI 1.05 to 1.32). This is an association, not proof of an intervention effect.

5. Related work and declarations

The fictional author reports no prior PLOS discussion. Current Academic Editor suggestions, opposed-reviewer conflicts, and any related submissions must be verified before the model can be adapted.

2. Problem the paper addresses

Missed appointments complicate outpatient planning. Our observational study compares two routine-care reminder pathways across three clinics in one health system.

4. Specific readership fit

Frame the paper as a reproducible health-services comparison: explain the contribution, its relation to prior work, and the research-article type requested by the journal instructions.

6. Close and author check

The model ends with a professional close. The actual author must insert verified contact details and compare the final letter with the manuscript and portal fields.

SOURCE GUIDANCE · CHECKED 2026-09-22

[PLOS One: Submission Guidelines, cover letter](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/s/submission-guidelines#loc-cover-letter). Separate one-page cover letter, contribution, relationship to prior work, article type, prior contact, and editor or reviewer suggestions.

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/s/submission-guidelines#loc-cover-letter>

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[Online worksheet and current version](https://manusights.com/resources/cover-letter-guide#worksheet) · [Corrections](#)

<https://manusights.com/resources/cover-letter-guide#worksheet>

Build the letter from evidence

Journal / article type: _____

Instructions URL / checked date: _____

Use the model on page 1 for structure only. Replace its fictional results and resolve every bracketed field.

1. Target and submission rules

Record journal, article type, current instructions URL, and whether a letter is required or optional.

2. Problem the paper addresses

State the research question and why it matters to this readership in one or two sentences.

3. Contribution and strongest evidence

Identify what the paper adds and the result that supports it. Keep the claim within the study design.

[Open the interactive worksheet](#) for longer private notes. Recheck the actual destination's rules before submission.

Resolve the submission details

Journal / article type: _____

Instructions URL / checked date: _____

Use the model on page 1 for structure only. Replace its fictional results and resolve every bracketed field.

4. Specific readership fit

Connect the contribution to a documented journal scope or article category. Avoid prestige claims and flattery.

5. Related work and declarations

Identify related manuscripts, preprints, conflicts, and approvals the journal asks you to disclose. Do not assert unchecked declarations.

6. Close and author check

Provide the requested corresponding-author details. Name the person checking every factual statement before submission.

BEFORE YOU USE THE RESULT

- The journal-specific reason could not be pasted unchanged into any journal letter.
- The letter contains no results, approvals, or novelty claims that have not been verified.
- Requirements were checked for this journal, not generalized from the example source.
- Every bracketed editor, reviewer, and contact field in the model was resolved or removed after a real author check.

[Open the interactive worksheet](#) for longer private notes. Recheck the actual destination's rules before submission.