

Defining Moments Canada Submission Guidelines

Defining Moments Canada strives to provide quality content around the subjects of heritage and education to the general public. We have chosen to collaborate with you because we believe the academic work you produce is important and interesting to a general audience, including high school students. Our goal is to share your research and analysis in an accessible manner while preserving its quality, integrity, and value.

Tone and Voice

Our focus is to distribute content with a strong narrative voice and an engaging storyline. Every piece should use the active voice, frame a clear and digestible argument, and serve as an entry point to your selected topic. We aim to preserve your unique voice and perspective as part of a set of diverse viewpoints on our website.

Audience

Content presented on the Defining Moments Canada website should be accessible to a general audience, including high school students. The piece submitted should treat the subject matter appropriately, using language and conventions accessible to a lay reader. Examples of recent works can be found on our website (start [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), or [here](#)).

Prose for a General Audience

Acknowledging your strength as a scholar and ‘academic writer’ is important – in fact it is that credibility that we value. However, writing for a ‘general audience’ is where your contribution for Defining Moments Canada must be situated.

- Shorter is always better. Remember: we are not celebrating ourselves. The key is to get people interested and draw them in.
- Find a compelling anecdote or hook for the opening; an opening which should be short and enticing
- Keep in mind that our audience may only be browsing. Think about informing them with ‘*At a Glance*’ content.
- Use subtitles so they can quickly find what they are interested in. Write for them, not for you.
- Use a short, concise framing paragraph near the top that poses questions or references the core theme of concentration....and keep the body paragraphs necessarily short.
- As you plan your writing, consider key phrases or content that the audience may be searching for, and incorporate them in your titles and body copy – but (of course) not at the expense of compromising your content.
- Remember you are always speaking/writing to a dynamic audience, almost as though you were having a conversation with them.
- Consider using bullet points if you’re listing several items or ideas. They are visually easy to follow.

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Types of Content

We primarily accept Article submissions for our blog section and for project-specific microhistories.

Thematic Structure

Each of our commemorative projects are founded-upon a core set of themes. In your initial discussions with our Projects Managers, you should be clear on precisely which theme(s) your writing is based. There may be occasions where our content writers have been engaged to contribute on a topic that is beyond the scope of the themes, but you should already be aware of that from the outset.

Articles for the blog section will deal with topics related to our projects – often we co-publish these with partner affiliates such as ActiveHistory.ca or [the Canadian Science and Technology Historical Association \(CSTHA\)](http://theCanadianScienceandTechnologyHistoricalAssociation(CSTHA)). These These pieces will seek specifically to present academic or higher level content in a manner that is accessible for general audiences. They may also deal with curriculum and pedagogy-adjacent topics related to our mission statement.

Microhistories will tell an engaging story about individuals or communities directly related to our current projects and education initiatives. These Microhistories would act as authentic illustrations of our themes. We actively encourage microhistories which tell previously untold stories about the impact of our themes on a variety of individuals and communities in Canada.

Length and Format

All pieces will be published on the web, and this should be considered when settling on a length and format. Short, structured paragraphs, articles in a list format, and section sub-titles can be especially effective at maintaining a reader's attention. We encourage the use of graphics (images, illustrations, charts, etc.) and descriptive captions.

Length requirements are flexible in order to accommodate the content and subject matter, but we ask that articles/microhistories aim to be in a range of 1,000 to 2,000 words. If a specific piece demands more space, we may consider publishing it in a multi-part format.

Further examples which illustrate the tone, audience, are available as necessary.

Subject Matter

The subject matter will be directly related to an ongoing or past Defining Moments Canada project, or further explore topics relates to pedagogical issues integral to our mission statement. Exact details will be determined via a discussion between the author and our team.

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Author Info

We request that you submit a headshot, byline, and brief biography (<100 words) to accompany your piece. Following the publication of your piece, we may seek feedback from you on your **experience working with us.**

Review Process

Defining Moments Canada retains the services of a professional editor, and every submission will undergo a review process (with author involvement and approval) to ensure it adheres to all guidelines. We reserve the right to choose not to publish an article that cannot be satisfactorily adjusted to fit within these requirements.

All articles will be professionally translated and presented in both English and French.

Images and Citations

We request that at least one image be submitted for use with your piece, with appropriate citations. The image should be owned by you, available in the public domain, or be provided with appropriate permissions.

We will include any in-text citations or bibliographical information provided.

We recommend providing 2-5 suggestions for further reading which can accompany your piece.

Preparing your Submission

1. We expect that you will provide the Project Managers with a brief précis proposal for your submission including a timeline for delivery at an agreed-upon date, including:
 - Initial Draft (one month before delivery) – to be edited by our team;
 - Revised Draft (2-3 weeks prior to delivery), subject to further revisions;
 - Final Draft (1 week prior to delivery), subject to review from our Academic Board;
 - Final Submission on agreed-to delivery date.
2. As a part of the editing/review process, further changes/edits may be required.

Please remember to ‘stay-in-your lane’ to ensure you are not repeating content from topics/themes assigned to other contributors.

We will host regular Zoom collaboration ‘check-ins’ for our contributors, but we also encourage you to collaborate among yourselves independently – such is a richer experience for all!

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Defining Moments Canada commissions articles from a range of contributors and retains an exclusive first publication right to post these works on our website, with the understanding that any changes to the articles will be approved by the author prior to publication. Contributors retain all copyright in their works. If an article is subsequently re-printed elsewhere, we ask that it include following credit line: "Originally published by Defining Moments Canada and reprinted with permission."

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