

**IPSN**International Plant
Sentinel Network

BLOG SERIES ARTICLE Guidelines for authors

ABOUT THE IPSN BLOG SERIES

The IPSN Blog Series provides a platform to **share and showcase** how botanic gardens and plant collections worldwide are contributing to plant biosecurity, advancing plant health understanding, and implementing innovative approaches to protect our botanical heritage. We invite you to share your experiences, research, and insights with our global community.

Why Contribute?

By contributing to the IPSN Blog Series, you will:

- **Share your expertise** with a global network of plant health professionals and enthusiasts
- **Highlight your institution's work** in plant biosecurity and conservation
- **Connect with colleagues** working on similar challenges worldwide
- **Inspire action** and raise awareness about critical plant health issues
- **Contribute to knowledge exchange** that strengthens our collective capacity to protect plants

What We Are Looking For?

We welcome contributions that focus on:

- ✓ **Practical experiences** from monitoring and surveillance programs
- ✓ **Research insights** and findings from your collections
- ✓ **Case studies** demonstrating effective biosecurity measures
- ✓ **Innovative approaches** to pest and disease management
- ✓ **Community engagement** and public awareness initiatives
- ✓ **Collaborative projects** between institutions
- ✓ **Lessons learned** from challenges and successes
- ✓ **Training and capacity building** activities

WRITING GUIDELINES

Target Audience

Write for a **non-expert, general audience** including:

- Botanic garden professionals and staff
- Plant health practitioners
- Conservation professionals
- Students and early-career researchers
- Interested members of the public

Use **clear, engaging, and inspiring language** that makes complex topics accessible while maintaining scientific accuracy.

Article Length

Approximately 1,000 words is ideal, but we offer flexibility to best tell your story. Articles may range from 800-1,500 words depending on the topic and depth of coverage.

Structure and Format

We advise to organize your article using the following general structure:

1. Engaging Title

Create a clear, descriptive title that captures the essence of your story

2. Strong Introduction (100-150 words)

- Hook the reader with an interesting opening
- Clearly state what the article will cover
- Explain why this topic matters

3. Main Content (600-800 words)

- Use short paragraphs (3-5 sentences maximum)
- Include descriptive subheadings to break up text
- Use bullet points or numbered lists where appropriate

4. Conclusion or Call to Action (100-150 words)

- Summarize key takeaways
- Suggest next steps or future directions
- Invite collaboration or engagement
- Provide relevant links or resources

Tone and Style

Be mindful of the below when putting together your article:

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use a friendly and conversational tone while remaining professional● Be informative without being overly technical● Use motivating and inspiring language to encourage action and awareness● Remain positive and solution-focused while acknowledging challenges● Be inclusive - use "we" and "our" to build community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Dense jargon or unexplained technical terms● Overly long paragraphs or sentences● Passive voice where active voice is clearer

VISUAL CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

Images

Include at least **3-4 high-quality photographs** that support your story, such as:

- Garden or collection landscapes
- Close-ups of plants, pests, or diseases
- Staff conducting surveys or monitoring
- Training or workshop activities
- Community engagement events
- Equipment or methods in action
- Before/after comparisons

Image Specifications, Captions and Credits

- High resolution
- Landscape or square orientation preferred
- JPEG or PNG format

Ensure you include the following when submitting your images:

- Provide photographer name or credit for each image
- Confirm you have permission to use the images
- Include brief captions (1-2 sentences) for each image

CONTRIBUTOR/AUTHOR INFORMATION

Author Bio

Include a brief biography (50-100 words) at the end of your article containing:

- Your full name
- Current role and title
- Institutional affiliation
- Brief description of your work or expertise
- Any relevant contact details/social media links (optional)

Example:

Dr. Jane Smith is the Plant Health Officer at Royal Botanic Gardens, where she leads early detection programs for invasive pests. With over 10 years of experience in plant biosecurity, Jane is passionate about building capacity for surveillance in botanic collections. Connect with her on Twitter @DrJaneSmith or email j.smith@rbg.org

⚠️ Note: Don't forget to also provide a high quality resolution logo of your institution/initiative

SUBMISSION AND PUBLICATION PROCESS

How to Submit

All articles are to be submitted via email to the IPSN coordination team (lara.salido@bgci.org or itxaso.quintana@bgci.org)

Ensure you have included the following in your email submission:

- ☐ Article text (Word document or Google Doc preferred)
- ☐ At least 3-4 high-quality images with captions and credits
- ☐ Author bio with logo of institution/initiative
- ☐ Any relevant links or references

Review and Publication Process

1. **Acknowledgment:** You'll receive confirmation of receipt within 5 business days
2. **Editorial review:** Our team may provide light editing or feedback to enhance clarity and flow
3. **Author approval:** You'll have the opportunity to review any significant edits before publication
4. **Publication:** Articles are typically published within 1-month of submission
5. **Promotion:** Published articles will be shared across IPSN communication channels and social media

Rights and Attribution

- Authors retain copyright of their work
- IPSN receives permission to publish and share the content
- Articles will be clearly attributed to the author(s)
- Content may be shared on the IPSN website/ social media and other communication channels as well as affiliated BGCI platforms

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about the guidelines, need support with your submission, or want to discuss a potential topic, please contact the IPSN Coordination team (lara.salido@bgci.org or itxaso.quintana@bgci.org)

We look forward to receiving your contribution! Your experiences and insights are valuable to our global community working to protect plant health and advance biosecurity.

These guidelines are designed to help contributors create engaging, informative content that connects our community and promotes the vital role of botanic gardens and plant collections in promoting and securing plant health and biosecurity.

Last updated: November 2025

