

CAST Publication Task Force Handbook

Welcome to CAST! We're happy to have you as a Task Force member. Whether this is your first time working with CAST or you're a seasoned volunteer, we wanted to share some information about our organization, the typical writing process, and the expectations set to ensure the publication process goes smoothly.

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What is CAST?

The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) is a nonprofit organization that develops and disseminates credible, science-based information about agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and related disciplines.

Since its founding in 1972, CAST has served as a trusted source of scientific information for policymakers, educators, industry leaders, media professionals, and the public. Over the past 50+ years, our primary output has been short-form scientific publications.

CAST's publications are developed through collaborative volunteer efforts involving experts from academia, industry, government, nonprofit organizations, and professional societies.

CAST publications are intentionally:

- Science-based
- Nonpartisan
- Peer-reviewed
- Accessible to both technical and non-technical audiences

Unlike a traditional scientific journal, CAST facilitates the development, review, publication, and dissemination of expert-authored publications designed to communicate scientific information in a practical and understandable format, even if you aren't an expert in science or agriculture.

Task Force volunteers are essential to CAST's mission. Through their expertise and collaboration, CAST can address timely and important issues affecting agriculture and society.

Where Publication Topics Come From

Many CAST publication ideas originate from CAST's three work groups:

- Animal Agriculture and Environmental Issues
- Food Science and Safety
- Plant Agriculture and Environmental Issues

These work groups are comprised of representatives from CAST organizational members, which span across agriculture and include educational institutions, nonprofits, industry, and societies. These groups identify emerging topics in their sectors and opportunities for scientific communication through CAST. Ideas may eventually develop into publication proposals, and, upon approval, an official CAST Task Force is formed.

Purpose of a Publication Task Force

CAST Publication Task Forces are volunteer groups formed to develop science-based, nonpartisan publications that communicate current scientific knowledge and perspectives on topics important to agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and related disciplines.

Task Forces remain active from formation through publication release and, in some cases, outreach activities following publication.

Task Force participants help ensure that CAST publications are scientifically rigorous, balanced, relevant, and accessible to intended audiences.

Task Force Roles at a Glance

Responsibility Area	Task Force Chair	Author	Reviewer
Subject Matter Expertise	Familiar with and passionate about the topic; does not need to be the primary expert	Provides expertise on assigned topic areas	Provides independent expertise during peer review
Publication Leadership	Leads the publication process and serves as primary liaison with CAST	Supports publication development through content contributions	Supports publication quality through independent review
Recruit Contributors	Recommends and recruits authors and reviewers	No	No
Determine Task Force Size	Yes	No	No
Develop Publication Outline	Oversees development of outline and publication structure	May contribute input	No
Write Publication Content	Optional	Primary responsibility	No
Review Drafts	Yes	Yes	Yes, during formal peer review stage
Coordinate Meetings	Yes	Participate as able	No

Communicate with CAST Staff	Primary point of contact	As needed	Typically through CAST review process
Monitor Progress and Deadlines	Yes	Responsible for assigned deliverables	Responsible for completing review on schedule
Address Participation Issues	Yes	Communicate concerns or delays	N/A
Manage Peer Review Revisions	Yes	May assist with revisions	Provides review comments
Approve Final Manuscript	Yes	Reviews and approves final version	No
Participate in Rollout Activities	Expected when possible	May be invited to participate	No
Typical Time Commitment	4-10+ hours per month during active development	2-6+ hours per month during active development	Approximately 2-8 hours during review period
Length of Involvement	Formation through rollout and follow-up activities	Formation through rollout and follow-up activities	Typically involved only during review phase
Receives Complimentary CAST Membership	Yes	Yes	Yes
Receives Publication Recognition	Yes	Yes	Yes

Quick Summary of Roles

Task Force Chairs focus primarily on leadership, coordination, communication, timeline management, and overall publication success.

Authors focus primarily on developing, reviewing, and refining publication content while contributing scientific expertise.

Reviewers focus primarily on providing an independent assessment of the manuscript's scientific accuracy, balance, clarity, and completeness prior to publication.

A successful CAST publication depends on all participants fulfilling their respective roles. Chairs provide leadership and direction, Authors provide content and expertise, Reviewers provide independent quality assurance, and CAST staff provide coordination and publication support. Together, these contributions ensure CAST publications remain credible, balanced, and impactful.

Volunteer Service

Participation in CAST Publication Task Forces is voluntary and uncompensated.

CAST greatly values volunteer expertise and provides professional recognition, a complimentary one-year individual CAST membership following publication release, and opportunities for professional engagement through CAST programs.

CAST Publication Philosophy

Science-Based and Nonpartisan Communication

CAST publications are grounded in scientific evidence and professional expertise.

Task Force participants are expected to:

- Focus on evidence-based conclusions
- Present balanced perspectives
- Avoid advocacy for specific political, organizational, or commercial interests
- Communicate complex scientific information clearly and accurately
- Respect differing professional viewpoints
- Maintain scientific integrity throughout publication development

Consensus and Scientific Balance

CAST publications are collaborative works that benefit from diverse expertise and perspectives.

Task Force members are not expected to agree on every detail throughout the development process. Instead, participants are expected to work collaboratively toward a publication that accurately reflects the current state of scientific knowledge and provides readers with balanced, evidence-based information.

When legitimate scientific differences exist, publications should acknowledge those differences and present them fairly.

The objective is not to advocate for a particular stakeholder group, organization, or viewpoint, but to provide objective scientific information that supports informed decision-making.

Resolving Disagreements

Task Force members are encouraged to discuss differing viewpoints openly and respectfully throughout publication development.

When differences cannot be fully resolved, the Task Force Chair is responsible for making final content decisions in consultation with authors and CAST staff as appropriate. If the Chair feels incapable of making the final decision, a vote may be put before the corresponding CAST Work Group that approved the original proposal.

The goal is always to produce a balanced publication that accurately reflects the current state of scientific knowledge.

Publication Development Process

Most CAST publications follow the process below:

1. Topic Identification and Proposal Development
2. Work Group Approval
3. Board of Directors Approval
4. Task Force Formation
5. Drafting Begins
6. Writing and Ongoing Internal Review
7. External Peer Review

8. Revision and Finalization
9. Copy Editing and Design
10. Final Internal Review
11. Publication Rollout
12. Continued Outreach and Engagement

Final Internal Review

Following copy editing and design, CAST may provide a final proof to the Chair for review prior to publication. Reviews at this stage should focus on identifying factual errors, formatting concerns, or production issues rather than introducing substantial new content.

CAST staff supports Task Forces throughout every stage of the process.

Confidentiality During Publication Development

Draft materials, reviewer comments, and unpublished publication content should be treated as confidential by Task Force participants.

Volunteers should not:

- Publicly distribute draft manuscripts
- Share draft content outside the Task Force without authorization
- Distribute reviewer comments beyond the publication team

Once a publication has been officially released by CAST, publication materials become publicly available through CAST's website and distribution channels.

Publication Types

Commentary

- 1 to 7 pages
- Smaller Task Force, 1-3 authors
- Often addresses emerging issues or follow-up discussions

Policy Brief

- 2 to 15 pages
- Smaller Task Force, 1-5 authors
- Illustration-heavy format
- Designed specifically for policymakers and their staff

- Often addresses topics that need prompt attention

Issue Paper

- 8 to 24 pages
- *The most common CAST publication type*
- Mid-sized Task Force, 3-12 authors
- Focused examination of a specific topic

Special Publication

- 25 to 150 pages
- Often workshop-based or collaborative projects
- Larger Task Force, 5-15 authors
- Broader scope and audience

Task Force Report

- 40 to 200 pages
- Comprehensive scientific analysis
- Larger Task Force, 5-20 authors
- Extensive references, visuals, and supporting materials

Typical Publication Timeline

While publication timelines vary depending on scope and complexity, the goal is for CAST Issue Papers to be completed within approximately six months of Task Force formation.

A typical Issue Paper timeline may include:

Stage	Approximate Timeline
Task Force Formation	Month 1
Kickoff Meeting	Month 2
Content Development	Months 2-5
Peer Review & Revisions	Month 5
Final Production	Month 6
Publication Rollout	Month 6

Longer publications may require additional development time.

Task Force Participation and Member Selection

CAST welcomes participation from qualified experts regardless of professional sector.

Participants may come from:

- Academia
- Industry
- Government agencies
- Professional societies
- Nonprofit organizations
- Research institutions
- Extension programs
- Other relevant fields

Selection is based on expertise, experience, and the ability to contribute to a balanced, science-based discussion of the topic.

Names of individuals to potentially serve on the Task Force may be suggested by the individual who submitted the proposal document, from the corresponding Work Group, from the Chair, or from already-confirmed authors. They may already be integrated in CAST or may be outside of CAST's current network.

Chairs may reach out to people in their network to unofficially ask them to join the Task Force, but an official email invitation must come from CAST staff. After the authorship invitation has been accepted, a brief onboarding email is sent.

All participants are expected to contribute objectively and professionally.

To support balanced representation and avoid potential perceptions of bias, CAST generally discourages having multiple authors from the same company or organization on a single publication. Exceptions may be made when specialized expertise is required.

Task Force Chairs

Role of the Chair

The Task Force Chair serves as the project leader and primary liaison between CAST staff and authors.

While Chairs should be familiar with and passionate about the publication topic, they are not required to be the primary subject matter expert. Likewise, Chairs are not required to contribute manuscript content as authors.

The Chair's primary responsibility is to guide the publication through the CAST process and facilitate productive collaboration among contributors.

Responsibilities

Task Force Chairs are expected to:

- Identify and recruit potential authors and reviewers
- Recommend experts from both within and outside the CAST network
- Determine the size and composition of the Task Force
- Develop or oversee the development of the publication outline
- Assign writing responsibilities
- Coordinate meetings and communication
- Monitor publication timelines and milestones
- Work closely with CAST staff
- Integrate and refine manuscript content
- Coordinate responses to peer review feedback
- Approve final manuscript content
- Participate in publication rollout activities
- Serve as the primary liaison between authors and CAST staff

Determining Task Force Size

Task Force Chairs determine the number of contributors involved in a publication.

Most CAST publications include between **3 and 12 authors**, although exceptions may occur depending on the topic and publication type.

Smaller Task Forces

Benefits:

- Easier coordination
- Faster decision-making
- Greater accountability

Considerations:

- Increased workload per contributor
- Less diversity of expertise

Larger Task Forces

Benefits:

- Broader expertise
- More diverse perspectives
- Greater stakeholder representation

Considerations:

- More complex communication
- Longer decision-making processes

The Chair should seek an appropriate balance between expertise, efficiency, and workload distribution.

Maintaining Project Momentum

One of the Chair's most important responsibilities is maintaining forward progress.

CAST recognizes that volunteers have demanding professional and personal lives. However, prolonged periods without communication or activity can create frustration for contributors and delay publication timelines.

Chairs are encouraged to:

- Establish expectations early
- Communicate regularly with authors and CAST staff
- Keep contributors informed of progress
- Address participation concerns promptly
- Monitor deadlines and milestones
- Work with CAST staff when challenges arise

Characteristics of Successful Chairs

Successful CAST Task Force Chairs typically:

- Communicate consistently with authors and CAST staff

- Maintain project momentum
- Encourage collaboration
- Promote balanced scientific discussion
- Follow up with contributors between meetings
- Address problems early
- Utilize CAST resources effectively
- Balance publication quality with timely completion

Meeting Cadence

CAST recommends recurring meetings throughout active publication development. The CAST staff will schedule regular meetings, but Chairs are strongly encouraged to meet outside of these check-ins with CAST to ensure timely manuscript development.

Many successful Task Forces meet approximately every three to four weeks during active writing periods.

Regular meetings help:

- Maintain accountability
- Encourage progress
- Address obstacles quickly
- Keep contributors aligned

If there are no significant updates, meetings may be shortened or canceled at the Chair's discretion.

CAST Check-In Meetings

CAST schedules periodic publication check-ins to support Task Force progress. The structure of these meetings is determined by the Chair.

Some Chairs prefer CAST staff, Chair, and all authors participating together in regular check-ins. Other Chairs prefer regular meetings between CAST staff and the Chair only, with the Chair communicating takeaways and action items to the authors. Both approaches are fully acceptable and supported by CAST.

The cadence of meetings with CAST staff is also up to the Chair. Typically, CAST will schedule check-in meetings once a month. However, if the Chair believes it is more beneficial to meet with CAST staff more or less often, accommodations can be made.

The Chair should select the structure that best fits the communication style and needs of the Task Force.

All meetings coordinated by CAST staff take place over Teams, are recorded, and the notes are made available to the Task Force.

Author Support

In addition to formal meetings, Chairs are encouraged to communicate directly with authors regarding:

- Writing progress
- Questions or concerns
- Upcoming deadlines
- Potential obstacles

Individual outreach often helps identify challenges early and maintain engagement.

Partnership with CAST Staff

CAST publications are most successful when Chairs and CAST staff work collaboratively. While Chairs provide scientific and project leadership for the publication, CAST staff provide operational, administrative, and publication support throughout the process. CAST publications are expected to align with CAST precedent, and CAST staff are a great resource to fully understand the precedent.

Time Commitment

Typically, Chairs commit approximately 4 to 10 hours per month during active development with additional time during peer review and final revision stages.

Actual commitments vary by publication type and complexity.

Chair Succession and Extended Inactivity

If a Chair becomes unable to continue serving, they should notify CAST staff and the rest of the Task Force as soon as possible.

Depending on project status:

- A new Chair may be selected from the authorship team
- A Co-Chair model may be established
- Project timelines may be adjusted as necessary

If publication progress becomes stalled due to extended inactivity or lack of communication, CAST staff may work with the authors to identify a path forward.

The goal is always to support successful publication completion while respecting volunteer circumstances.

Task Force Authors

Role of the Author

Authors contribute scientific expertise and develop content that supports a balanced, accurate, and accessible publication. CAST publications are intended for broad audiences that may include policymakers, media professionals, educators, and members of the public. Authors should strive to explain technical concepts in clear, accessible language whenever possible.

Responsibilities

Authors are expected to:

- Complete assigned writing responsibilities
- Meet agreed-upon deadlines whenever possible
- Participate in meetings and discussions
- Review manuscript drafts
- Assist with revisions
- Communicate anticipated delays
- Support collaborative decision-making
- Maintain scientific accuracy and objectivity
- Communicate with the Chair and other authors regularly

Timeliness and Responsiveness

Many CAST publications address emerging topics where timely communication is important.

Authors are encouraged to:

- Respond to project communications from the Chair and CAST staff promptly
- Meet deadlines as often as possible
- Communicate obstacles early
- Request assistance when needed

Timely participation helps maintain publication relevance and impact.

Authorship Criteria

Individuals should generally be listed as authors when they have made substantial contributions to one or more of the following:

- Development of publication scope or direction
- Creation of manuscript content
- Interpretation and synthesis of scientific information
- Review and revision of manuscript drafts
- Development of conclusions or summary content
- Approval of the final manuscript prior to publication

Authorship carries both recognition and responsibility for the final publication.

Maintaining Authorship Status

To remain listed as an author, individuals should:

- Contribute substantive content or editorial input
- Participate in manuscript review and revision
- Remain reasonably engaged throughout publication development
- Approve the final draft before publication

Authors will be given an opportunity to review the final draft before publication. Failure to respond after reasonable attempts to contact the author may be interpreted as approval at the discretion of the chair and CAST staff.

Individuals whose participation no longer meets authorship expectations may be removed from publication credits following consultation between the Task Force Chair and CAST staff.

Final authorship decisions reside with the Task Force Chair, with support from CAST staff when needed.

Withdrawal or Removal

CAST recognizes that circumstances may change during publication development.

If an author becomes unable to continue:

- The author should notify the Chair and/or CAST staff.
- Responsibilities may be reassigned.
- Authorship status may be reviewed.

If an author becomes unresponsive or is no longer actively contributing, the Chair should make a reasonable effort to communicate with the individual and involve CAST staff when appropriate.

If removal becomes necessary, the Chair must provide official notice to CAST staff.

Prior to publication release:

- Records may be updated.
- Responsibilities may be reassigned.
- Manuscript content may be revised.
- Authorship listings may be adjusted.

Participation in Rollout Activities

Authors may be invited to participate in:

- Webinars
- Podcasts
- Conference presentations
- Other in-person presentations
- Media opportunities
- Additional outreach events

Participation is encouraged but not required. Oftentimes, these programs have a maximum participation limit, and if there is a large Task Force, it is not possible for all authors to contribute to all rollout activities.

Task Force Reviewers

Role of the Reviewer

Reviewers provide independent scientific assessment of manuscripts prior to publication.

Their role is essential to maintaining publication quality, credibility, and integrity.

Responsibilities

Reviewers are expected to:

- Assess the accuracy, balance, and clarity of the science presented
- Suggest ways to improve organization, readability, and accessibility for a broad audience

- Identify missing perspectives essential to the topic discussion
- Identify any missing references, perspectives, or key issues needing attention
- Conduct objective reviews
- Identify opportunities for clarification or improvement
- Provide constructive feedback
- Maintain confidentiality
- Submit comments within established review timelines

Most reviewer assignments are expected to be completed within two weeks.

Time Commitment

Reviewers should anticipate:

- One primary review cycle, typically two weeks.
- Approximately two to eight hours, depending on publication length and complexity.

Returning Feedback

You may return feedback as:

- A marked PDF or Word document with comments/annotations, or
- A numbered memo keyed to page/line numbers

Feedback should be sent to the CAST staff member who has been communicating with you, not to the Task Force Chair. To prevent bias, reviewer names are not shared with the rest of the Task Force until the comments have been incorporated and the final draft of the manuscript is complete.

Reviewer comments are advisory and intended to improve the publication. The Task Force Chair, in consultation with authors and CAST staff when necessary, determines how comments will be incorporated into the final manuscript.

Reviewer Selection

Reviewers are typically identified through recommendations from:

- Task Force members
- CAST Work Group participants
- CAST leadership
- CAST member organizations
- Other subject matter experts

CAST seeks reviewers who can provide objective, constructive, and scientifically credible feedback.

While the Chair and authors play a role in finding reviewers, only the number of confirmed reviewers should be shared with the Task Force. For example, CAST staff may confirm there are 4 reviewers. They may not list the names of the 4 confirmed reviewers, even if names are requested by the Chair.

Names of reviewers should only be shared after the draft has been finalized.

In addition to outside review, the manuscript will also be sent to the corresponding CAST Work Group(s) that approved the original proposal. All Work Group members will be given 2 weeks to review the manuscript and submit comments, if they choose to do so. Work Group members are not required to participate in the review, but any individual that submits comments about the draft will be considered a reviewer and recognized as a part of the Task Force. Any reviews submitted after the 2 week mark will not be considered.

Publication Ethics and Intellectual Property

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Task Force participants should disclose any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest that may reasonably be viewed as influencing their contributions to a publication.

Examples may include:

- Financial relationships
- Employment affiliations
- Consulting arrangements
- Intellectual property interests
- Organizational advocacy positions

Disclosure does not automatically prevent participation. Rather, disclosure promotes transparency and helps maintain the credibility and integrity of CAST publications.

Participants with questions regarding potential conflicts should consult the Task Force Chair or CAST staff.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not permitted in any form.

All content must be:

- Original work,
- Properly cited and attributed, or
- Used with required permissions.

Failure to properly acknowledge sources may result in content removal, authorship review, or other corrective actions.

Citations and References

All CAST publications use Chicago citation style.

Authors are responsible for ensuring:

- Citations are accurate
- References are complete
- Sources support factual statements
- Scientific literature is properly represented

Use of External Graphics, Figures, Tables, and Images

Before including externally developed materials:

- Copyright requirements must be reviewed
- Permission should be obtained when required
- Appropriate attribution must be included

Typically, the Task Force Chair and/or CAST staff will contact the originating entity to request permission.

If permission cannot be obtained, the Task Force should develop original materials or identify suitable alternatives.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

CAST permits limited use of generative AI tools while maintaining strict requirements regarding disclosure, verification, and human accountability. The official CAST AI Use Policy should be consulted whenever questions arise. [\[AI Use in...T_Official | PDF\]](#)

AI Use for Authors

Permitted uses include:

- Organization of content
- Grammar and readability improvements
- Outline development
- Literature exploration and idea generation

Prohibited uses include:

- Listing AI as an author
- Submitting undisclosed AI-generated content
- Using unverified AI-generated facts or references
- Creating publication graphics or artwork using AI tools

All factual content remains the responsibility of the author and must be independently verified. AI use must be disclosed.

AI Use for Reviewers

Reviewers may not use AI tools to:

- Evaluate manuscripts
- Assess scientific validity
- Summarize confidential manuscript content
- Draft substantive review comments

Limited use for grammar and readability improvements may be permitted if confidentiality requirements are maintained and appropriate disclosure is provided. [\[AI Use in...T_Official | PDF\]](#)

Publication Rollout and Long-Term Availability

After the manuscript is finished, the publication is rolled out. Every rollout has a webinar release, something that can be viewed live across the globe and is recorded for people to have access to the materials in the future. Typically, CAST webinars follow this order:

- Introduction of CAST from the CEO; 5 minutes
- Introduction of the topic and speakers from the moderator; 2-5 minutes
- Presentation about the topic (2-3 Presenters); 20-40 minutes
- Live Q&A with the audience, questions read by the moderator and answered by the presenters; 10-20 minutes to round out the hour

The webinar rollouts are typically one hour long. CAST Staff will work with Task Force members to schedule the webinar and ensure everyone is comfortable with their role.

Typically, CAST webinars take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays from Noon – 1:00pm CST. This can be shifted based on the CAST calendar and availability of participants. Participants are asked to join 15 to 30 minutes prior to 'going live' to ensure everything is working and everyone is comfortable with their role during the webinar.

While webinar rollouts are the standard and the publication process typically stops there, CAST also recognizes the value of in-person events.

After the webinar rollout has taken place, there is opportunity for the Task Force to present their work in-person. If there is a 'captive audience' who is invested in the topic, such as a group at a conference, meeting, or event, CAST will work with the Task Force and outside funders to organize a secondary, in-person rollout. This may include getting Task Force members to the location, space rental, printing hard copies of the publication, providing food, etc. These events typically are not recorded, and it is up to the Chair's discretion if they would like to host an in-person event. CAST staff will work with the Task Force to determine the best location, time, and funding opportunities for in-person promotion events. These in-person events can take place up to a few years after the webinar rollout has taken place.

Upon publication release, every CAST publication receives:

- A permanent Digital Object Identifier (DOI) number.
- A dedicated page on the CAST website.
- A publication summary.
- A downloadable PDF version of the manuscript.
- Access to the recorded rollout webinar.
- Promotion through CAST's channels.

This ensures publications remain publicly accessible, professionally archived, and easily citable.

Post-Publication Use of CAST Publications

Following publication rollout, authors may develop new scholarly works based on CAST publications provided that the new work is substantially different from the original publication and complies with CAST's Post-Publication Policy. [[Post Publi...T_Official | PDF](#)]

Key principles include:

- External submissions must occur after the CAST rollout

- New works must represent substantive new scholarship
- CAST-developed visual and design materials may not be reused without approval
- The original CAST publication must be properly cited
- All Task Force members should be informed of plans for external publication activities

Questions regarding post-publication use should be directed to CAST staff and the official Post-Publication Policy.

Publication Ownership

Any draft manuscript developed from a proposal that has been submitted through official CAST channels, approved by a CAST Work Group, and approved by the CAST Board of Directors is considered a CAST publication project from the time of Task Force formation through publication release, regardless of the stage of development.

While manuscript content is created through the contributions of volunteer Chairs and authors, draft materials, working documents, and unpublished manuscript content are considered confidential and are managed under the authority of CAST.

Task Force members may not transfer ownership of a draft manuscript, represent a draft manuscript as belonging to another organization, or invite another entity to assume joint ownership of a CAST publication project without prior approval from CAST staff and, when appropriate, the CAST Board of Directors.

Organizations, institutions, or external groups may contribute expertise, authorship, reviewership, data, or other resources through approved Task Force participation; however, ownership, management, publication, and distribution of the publication remain with CAST unless otherwise authorized in writing by CAST.

Once a manuscript is released, it is an official CAST publication. All official CAST publications are published, distributed, archived, and owned by CAST.

Authors retain recognition for their contributions, while publication management, branding, distribution, and archival responsibilities remain with CAST.

Resources Available to Task Forces

CAST provides support throughout publication development.

SharePoint

Task Force SharePoint sites may include:

- Draft manuscripts
- Working documents
- Reference materials
- Shared resources
- CAST Task Force Handbook

For security reasons, Task Force SharePoints only allow members who are not CAST employees to edit existing documents created by CAST staff. If you need more documents, excel sheets, PowerPoints, etc., created, or pdfs and other materials uploaded, please contact CAST Staff.

Notion Publications Tracker

The Publications Tracker includes:

- Publication status
- Key milestones
- Meeting summaries
- Proposal documents
- Task Force information

<https://castagscience.notion.site/publications-tracker>

This tool keeps all Task Force members, Work Group members, Board of Directors members, and CAST staff on the same page for all in-progress CAST publications.

Meeting Scheduling

Teams Meetings with CAST Staff:

- Consider all participants' schedules
- Are recorded for those who cannot attend
- Use Microsoft's Copilot to create meeting notes
- Are made available in Notion and upon request

CAST Staff typically records official Task Force meetings and generate meeting summaries to support continuity, document key decisions, assist participants who are unable to attend, and maintain project records.

Professional Services

CAST provides:

- Project management
- Peer review coordination
- Copy editing
- Graphic design and layout
- Webinar planning
- Webinar hosting
- Marketing and communications
- In-person event planning and execution

CAST Staff Support

CAST staff actively monitor publication progress and partner with Chairs throughout development.

Staff assistance may include:

- Facilitating communication
- Managing timelines
- Supporting leadership transitions
- Coordinating peer review
- Assisting with Task Force recruitment
- Resolving project challenges
- Supporting rollout activities

Volunteer Recognition and Benefits

Task Force Chairs, authors, and reviewers receive:

- Professional recognition for their contributions
- Complimentary CAST individual membership for one year following publication release
- Complimentary printed copies of publications upon request
- Opportunities to collaborate with experts across disciplines, institutions, and sectors

- Opportunities to participate in CAST outreach and engagement activities

CAST staff may request Task Force member's social media handles to recognize their work in social media promotion, especially LinkedIn. They may also request a current headshot and short bio, especially if a Task Force member is participating in promotion efforts.

Questions and Assistance

CAST staff are available throughout the publication process to assist with:

- Publication procedures
- Task Force coordination
- Access to project resources
- Meeting logistics
- Peer review management
- Timeline planning
- Authorship questions
- Publication rollout activities

Tips for Success

CAST's most successful publication teams generally:

- Establish clear expectations early
- Communicate regularly
- Meet deadlines whenever possible
- Ask questions when challenges arise
- Keep discussions focused on science and evidence
- Remain flexible when unexpected circumstances occur
- Utilize CAST resources
- Maintain momentum between meetings

Publication development is a collaborative process, and timely communication is often the single most important factor in project success.

Thank you for contributing your expertise, time, and professional service to CAST. Your efforts help ensure that science-based agricultural information reaches decision makers, stakeholders, and the public in an accessible and impactful way.