Figure Guidelines
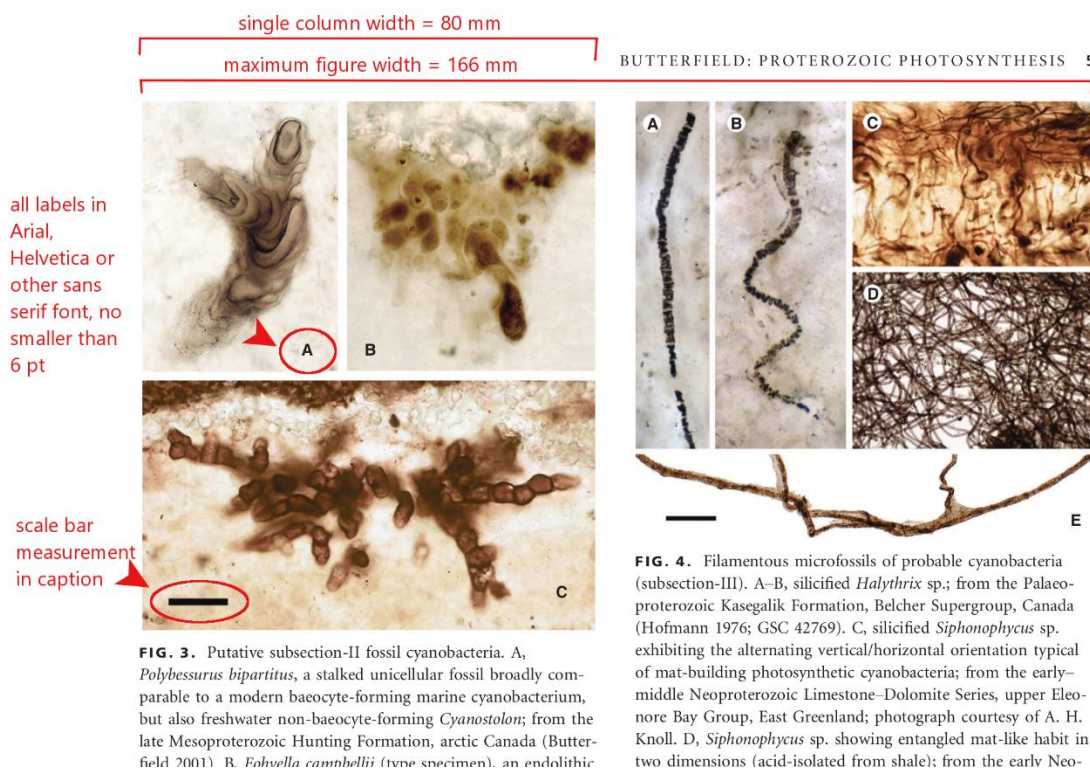
General requirements

Your figures should appear sharp and crisp when viewed at 120% in an image viewer.

- Please view your figures at their final intended size and check that all text is clearly legible
- All labels should be in Arial, Helvetica or similar sans serif font
- Make sure that any labelling is clearly legible against the background, and that lines are of a suitable thickness (minimum 0.3 pt for black lines on a light background; 0.4 pt for white lines on a black background)
- Arrange figure elements as logically as possible and avoid overcrowding
- Scale bar measurements for specimen images should be in the caption, not on the figure
- For the main figure, please use a white background not a black one
- Avoid:
    - Drop shadows
    - Outlined text
    - Italics (except for taxon names)
    - Unnecessary colour
    - Use of red and green as contrasting colours.

Figure size

- 166 mm full page width (= 3924 pixels at 600 dpi)
- 80 mm single column (= 1890 pixels at 600 dpi)
- 110 mm two-thirds page width (= 2598 pixels at 600 dpi)
- Use the ruler in your drawing package to check the actual size (can be viewed in mm or pixels)
- Indicate the final intended size of each figure by adding 166, 110 or 80 to the file name.

single column width = 80 mm

maximum figure width = 166 mm

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all labels in Arial, Helvetica or other sans serif font, no smaller than 6 pt

scale bar measurement in caption

FIG. 3. Putative subsection-II fossil cyanobacteria. A, *Polybessurus bipartitus*, a stalked unicellular fossil broadly comparable to a modern baeocyte-forming marine cyanobacterium, but also freshwater non-baeocyte-forming *Cyanostolon*; from the late Mesoproterozoic Hunting Formation, arctic Canada (Butterfield 2001). B. *Eohyella campbellii* (type specimen), an endolithic

FIG. 4. Filamentous microfossils of probable cyanobacteria (subsection-III). A–B, silicified *Halythrix* sp.; from the Palaeoproterozoic Kasegalik Formation, Belcher Supergroup, Canada (Hofmann 1976; GSC 42769). C, silicified *Siphonophycus* sp. exhibiting the alternating vertical/horizontal orientation typical of mat-building photosynthetic cyanobacteria; from the early–middle Neoproterozoic Limestone–Dolomite Series, upper Eleonore Bay Group, East Greenland; photograph courtesy of A. H. Knoll. D, *Siphonophycus* sp. showing entangled mat-like habit in two dimensions (acid-isolated from shale); from the early Neo-

Text size

Please view your figures at their final size on the pdf page and check that all labels are in proportion and clearly legible. Generally, text sizes should be in a range equivalent to 6–10 pt Arial, although 6 pt size should not be used for critical text. Note that part labels (A, B, C…) on all figures are re-done by our typesetter to set them in a standard font at a height of 2 mm. It can look unbalanced if other text is much larger than this.

Please remember that if you specify a font size when you insert text and then resize the figure, the text size will change. To be sure, use a ruler to check the absolute size of your figure on screen and assess visually whether all text is clearly legible. As a guide, the text size used in figure captions in the journal makes a suitable size for most figure labels (see example above).

Orientation

If possible, please avoid using landscape orientation for figures as it is inconvenient for online readers. However, if it is essential to use a landscape figure, please ensure that any vertical text runs top down. When the page is viewed in portrait format (with the top of the figure on the left), there should be no upside down text:
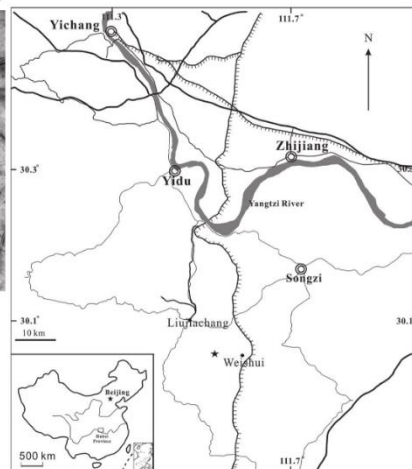
Run vertical text from top of figure
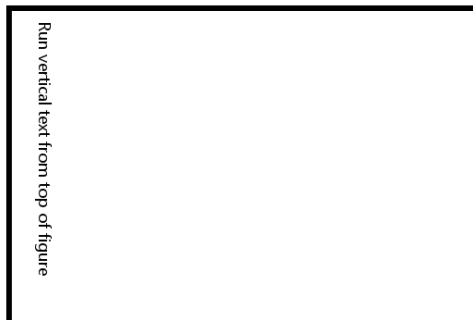
Resolution

- Photograph elements (with no labels added): 300 pixels/dots per inch (ppi or dpi)
- Photographs with labels or greyscale figures: 600 dpi
- Figures with greyscale/colour and black-and-white elements only: 600 dpi
- Figures with only black and white elements (no shading): 600 dpi

photograph: 300 dpi

greyscale: 600 dpi

black & white only: 600 dpi

Scale bars

- When creating scale bars, please define a heavy weight line, rather than drawing a thin, filled box shape. The apparent thickness of a box can vary when converted to pdf and viewed at different magnifications.
- Scale bar measurements should be included in the caption, not on the figure (except for those on maps); e.g. All scale bars represent 1 mm; Scale bars represent: 5 mm (A–I, N–Q); 1 mm (J–M).

Content attribution

- Any figure including a Google Earth image should have relevant data attribution in the caption (see https://www.google.co.uk/permissions/geoguidelines/attr-guide.html for details on where to find this).
- If you use the Fossilworks site to download a data set used in a presentation or publication, you should credit both the site and the database that is the underlying source of the data. Major contributors should also be listed by name in the acknowledgments section of your paper. Fossilworks suggests a reference in the following style (adjusted for our journals): BEHRENSMEYER, A. K., and TURNER, A. 2013. Taxonomic occurrences of Suidae recorded in the Paleobiology Database. *Fossilworks*. http://fossilworks.org
- If you use PhyloPic silhouettes please ensure that you have checked the licence associated with each image for any attribution requests (not all images have the same requirements).
- Please ensure that you have obtained any necessary permissions to reproduce elements from previously published works. Our publisher is an STM Agreement signatory so this should be a formality.

File type

- TIFF (tagged image file format) is strongly preferred. High resolution PDF, EPS and Illustrator files are also acceptable.
- Vector images can be supplied in PDF or EPS format, or as Illustrator files. Please ensure that fonts are embedded in any EPS files.
- Do not save figures in JPEG format at any stage as data is lost and cannot be recovered. If you have already saved any part of a figure as a low quality JPEG, you will need to go back to an earlier version. The only exception to this is the very high quality JPEG images, such as those created by digital cameras.

original image

after JPEG compression, note shadowing around lines and text
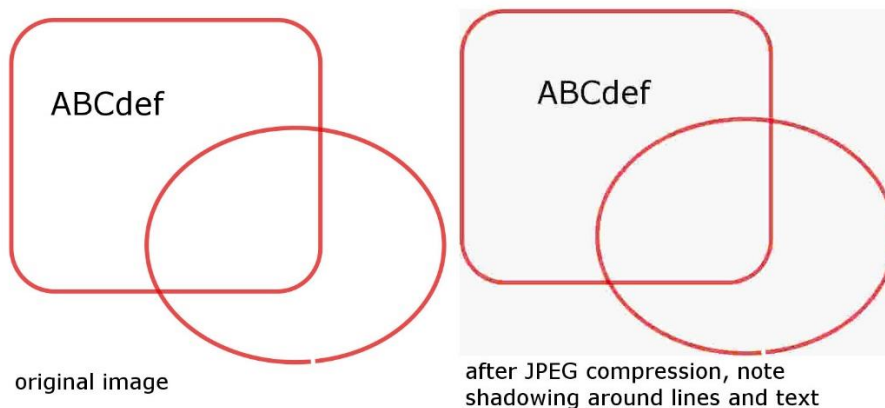
- Do not scale up low resolution files to meet size or dpi requirements. Use an earlier, higher resolution version.

File size

- Compress all layers in TIFF files by flattening them.
- Ensure that greyscale images are saved in Grayscale mode.
- Use LZW compression when you save figures in TIFF format.
- Make sure that the bit depth of your figures is at 8 bits/channel (8-bit mode); 16 or 24-bit figures will be unnecessarily large.
- Reduce file size by cropping out unnecessary white space around the borders of your figures or by removing any titles or file names (all descriptive information should be included in the caption). However, please do not crop too close; a 1–2 mm border is ideal.
- Check the physical size of your image. To be 600 dpi, the figure needs to be 3924 pixels wide for full page width, 2598 pixels for 2/3 page width, or 1890 pixels for single column width.

Colour

- Avoid the use of unnecessary colour, it can cause a distraction
- Avoid the use of red and green as contrasting colours
- Please be mindful of the colour palette that you use, and using a rainbow spectrum. Using intense colours at both ends of a spectrum can be misleading (and also difficult to interpret if (1) for some reason the image is printed in black and white; or (2) the reader has the most common form of colour blindness and cannot distinguish red and green). Please consider the recommendations made here: https://tinyurl.com/y69pc6n7
- Please supply all colour figures in RGB mode.

Excel

Save any graph created in Excel as a high quality pdf:

- View graph at 100%
- Make sure it is sized appropriately (80 mm for single column; 166 mm for double; 110 mm for 2/3 page width)
- Check that the font type and size (sans serif; 10 point minimum)
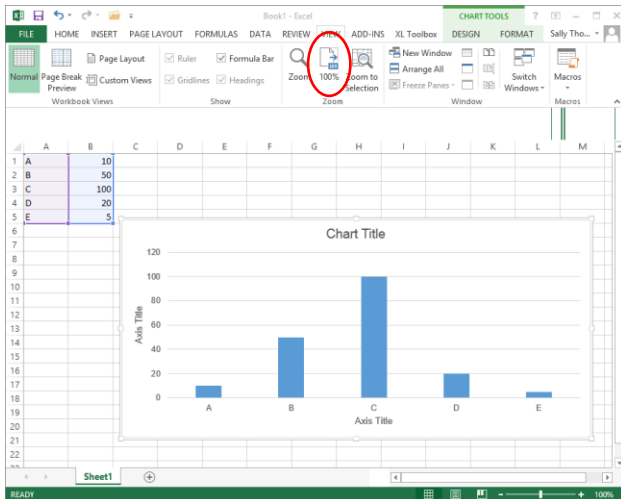
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