

AI-Free Author Assist — Writer's manual

Writing a paper is a skill, not a talent — and like any skill, it is easier with a calm plan and a guide beside you. This manual walks you from your research to a finished manuscript, one small step at a time, with a screenshot at each step so you always know what you're looking at. AI-Free Author Assist never writes a word for you — that is the point. It lays out the exact sections journals expect, keeps your references tidy, and reminds you what reviewers look for. The words, and the credit, are all yours.

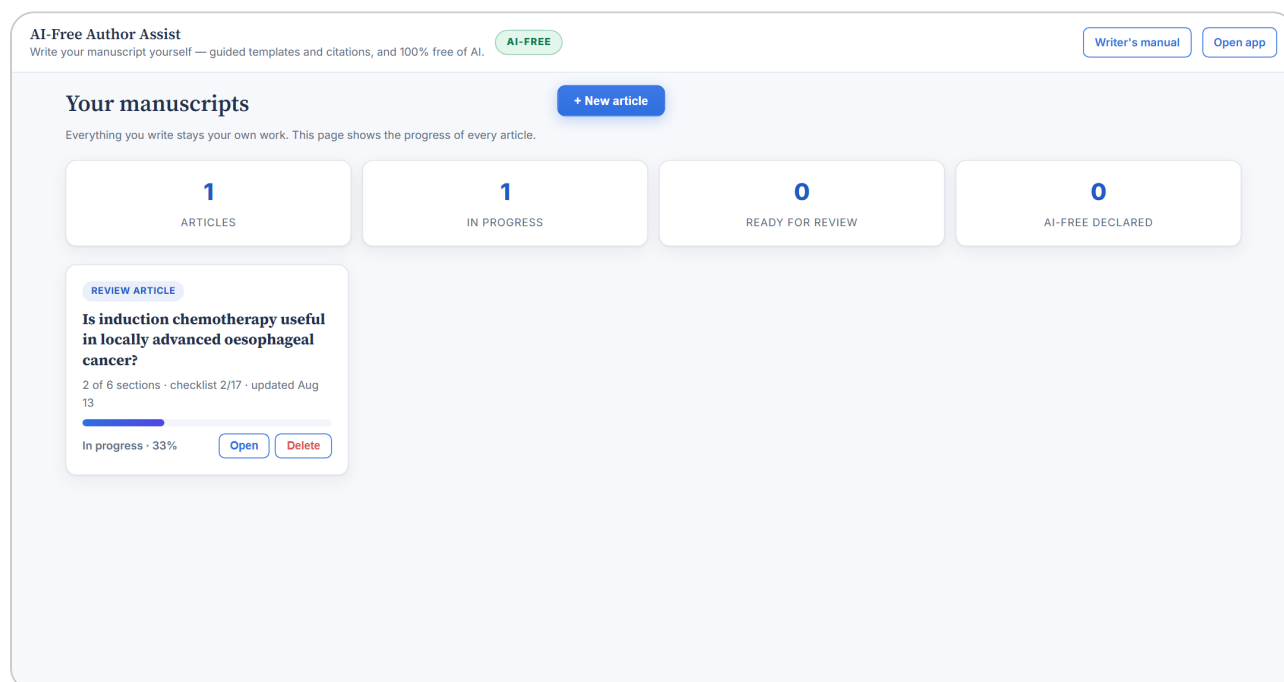
Welcome — you can do this

Every published author started with a blank page and a knot in their stomach. The secret is not confidence — it is a process. Author Assist turns the empty page into a list of small, specific sections, so you are never staring at "write the paper"; you are always just writing the next short piece.

The whole writing journey has five phases: Plan and design the study and the question, analyse the data, draft the manuscript, review and refine it, then submit. Author Assist helps with the middle three, using the research you already collected here in your project bibliography.

- Plan & design — your research question, protocol and ethics approval happen before you open this page.
- Analyse the data — clean your data, run your analysis, make your tables and figures.
- Draft the manuscript — this is where Author Assist lives, section by section.
- Review & refine — check the journal's author guidelines, format references, get feedback and proofread.
- Submit — upload files, cover letter and disclosures through the journal portal.

Open Author Assist from the "AI-Free Author" button in the top bar of the app. You will land on the overview page, which shows every manuscript you are writing and its progress at a glance:



The overview page — one card per article, each with a progress bar, so you always know where every manuscript stands.

Choose your article type

The right skeleton for the job

Click "+ New article" and you'll see the article types grouped into families: academic & empirical research, case reports, commentary & letters, and patient education. Each type sets out the sections journals expect for that kind of paper, so you never have to guess the structure:

- Original Research — report new clinical or experimental data: Abstract → Introduction → Methods → Results → Discussion → Conclusion.
- Systematic Review / Meta-analysis — find and pool the evidence with a PRISMA-style search strategy.
- Review Article — summarise a topic: Abstract → Introduction → Search strategy → Thematic body → Clinical implications → Conclusion.
- Case Report / Series — an unusual or educational case: patient information, findings, timeline, intervention, follow-up, discussion.
- Editorial / Commentary — your expert perspective: hook, argument, clinical impact, conclusion.
- Letter to the Editor — a concise, well-argued comment on a published article.
- Patient education article & Plain-language summary — write for patients and families in everyday words, with the plain-language checks switched on.

Each card explains when to use that type and which reporting guideline applies, so if you are not sure, the choice is made for you. Pick one and press "Start writing":

AI-Free Author Assist

Write your manuscript yourself — guided templates and citations, and 100% free of AI.

AI-FREE

Writer's manual

Open app

What are you writing?

-- All manuscripts

Choose the type of article — the app lays out the exact sections journals expect, with guidance beside each one.

ACADEMIC & EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Original Research

Report new clinical or experimental data

You have your own data — a trial, cohort, survey or laboratory work — and you are reporting it for the first time.

Abstract · Introduction · Methods · Results · Discussion · Conclusion

Guideline: CONSORT (trials) / STROBE (observational)

Start writing

Systematic Review / Meta-analysis

Find, appraise and pool the evidence on a focused question

You are answering a focused question by systematically finding all relevant studies and, when possible, pooling their numbers. Report it like a PRISMA review.

Abstract · Introduction · Search strategy · Methods — eligibility, extraction, risk of bias · Results · Discussion · Conclusion

Guideline: PRISMA

Start writing

CASE REPORTS

Case Report / Series

Highlight an unusual, novel or educational case

You have one case (or a small series) with something worth sharing — an unusual presentation, a rare side effect, a teaching point.

Abstract · Introduction · Patient information · Clinical findings · Timeline · Therapeutic intervention · Follow-up and outcomes · Discussion

Guideline: CARE

Start writing

COMMENTARY & LETTERS

Editorial / Commentary

Give your expert perspective on an article or a trend

You have been invited (or have a platform) to comment on a paper or a field trend — your informed opinion, clearly argued.

Introduction — hook and context · Argument / analysis of the issue · Perspective on clinical impact · Conclusion

Guideline: No formal checklist

Start writing

Letter to the Editor

A concise, well-argued comment on a published article

You want to respond briefly to a recently published article — adding a point, raising a concern, or supporting the authors.

Opening — the article you respond to · Your point · Closing

Guideline: No formal checklist

Start writing

The article-type chooser — pick the kind of paper you are writing and the right sections appear.

The guided editor

A progress bar, a guide, and a place for your words

The editor gives you your article title at the top, then each section of your chosen type in order. A progress bar across the top fills as you write, so you can always see how far you have come — and how little is left.

Above every section is a "Tips" button. Open it and you'll find a short note on why that section matters, what reviewers actually check, and a list of what to include — with a gentle word target. Write as much or as little as you like; your text auto-saves as you go.

The screenshot shows the 'AI-Free Author Assist' web application. At the top, it says 'Write your manuscript yourself — guided templates and citations, and 100% free of AI.' with an 'AI-FREE' badge. Navigation buttons include 'Overview', 'Preview', 'Export .md', and 'Export .doc'. A progress bar indicates '33% written' (2 of 6 sections started). A green box states: 'AI-Free. Nothing you write here is ever sent to an AI model — no autocomplete, no rewriting, no suggestions. The words in this manuscript are yours alone.' The article title is 'Is induction chemotherapy useful in locally advanced oesophageal cancer?'. A dropdown menu for 'Pull references from project' is set to 'This browser's bibliography'. A checkbox for 'Live preview' is unchecked. A reporting guideline is set to 'Narrative review (no formal checklist)'. The 'Abstract' section is active, showing a word count of '~250 words' and a 'Tips' button. Below the writing area, 'ESSENTIALS FOR THIS SECTION 0/1' are listed, with 'Scope and question' selected. On the right, a 'References' sidebar shows a search bar, a button to 'Add manual reference (not on PubMed)', and a list of references under 'IN THIS ARTICLE', including one by Brown AJ, Smith KR, Patel V (2020) and another by Chen L, Wang X, Hassan M (2019).

The guided editor — progress bar on top, a Tips card beside each section, and your words in a calm writing space.

Write the sections in any order. Most people write Methods and Results first, then the Introduction, and the Abstract last — it is easier to summarise a paper you have already written. The word count under each section keeps you honest without being strict.

Guideline essentials

The reporting checklist, built into each section

Every section carries a small list of "essentials" — the specific things the reporting guideline for that article type asks for. Original research follows CONSORT (for trials) or STROBE (for observational studies), systematic reviews follow PRISMA, and case reports follow CARE. A banner at the top of the editor names the guideline:

The screenshot shows the editor interface. On the left, the 'Introduction' section is active, with a word count of 21 words. Below the text area, there is a banner for 'ESSENTIALS FOR THIS SECTION 0/1' with a checkbox for 'Scope and question'. Below this, another banner for 'ESSENTIALS FOR THIS SECTION 1/1' with a checkbox for 'The organising question'. The 'Literature search strategy' section is also visible, with a word count of 200 words and a status of 'empty'. On the right, the 'References' panel is open, showing a list of references with 'Insert' and 'Remove' buttons for each. The panel also includes a search bar and a '+ Add manual reference (not on PubMed)' button.

Guideline essentials — the CONSORT/STROBE/PRISMA/CARE items for the section, ticked as you cover them.

Tick an essential as you cover it — e.g. "Blinding method", "Sample-size calculation", "Ethics approval and trial registration". The pre-submission checklist tick itself once every essential across the article is covered, so you know you've answered the questions a reviewer would ask. It is advisory, never a gate.

Searching for references

Find a paper without leaving the editor

At the top of the References panel you can search PubMed directly — type keywords (or a PMID) and press Enter, then click a result to add it. It uses a straightforward PubMed search with no AI involved. Everything you add numbers, cites and exports exactly like a reference added any other way.

Figures, tables & files

Add the pictures and numbers your article needs

The Media tab is where your figures, tables and supplementary files live. Add a figure (PNG, JPEG, GIF or WebP) and it is automatically resized to keep your manuscript small — then write a caption and insert it at the cursor with "Insert [Figure 1]". Clinical images should be de-identified and taken with consent.

The screenshot displays the Manuscript Central interface. On the left, the 'Introduction' section is active, showing a word count of 21 words and a text area containing the sentence: 'Oesophageal cancer is often diagnosed at a locally advanced stage, when treatment decisions balance cure against the burden of multimodality therapy.' Below this, the 'Literature search strategy' section is empty. On the right, the 'Media' tab is selected, showing options to add figures, tables, and supplementary files. A sample figure titled 'Progression-free survival by induction schedule' is displayed, showing a line graph with two lines: a solid blue line for 'Induction + CRT' and a dashed blue line for 'CRT alone'. The graph shows that the 'Induction + CRT' group has a higher progression-free survival rate over time. Below the graph, the caption 'Progression-free survival by induction schedule' is visible, along with buttons to 'Insert [Figure 1]' and 'Remove'. The 'TABLES' section shows a table titled 'Table 1 — Summary of randomised comparisons (4 rows)' with buttons to 'Insert [Table 1]', 'Edit', and 'Remove'. The 'SUPPLEMENTARY FILES' section shows options to add files in PDF, DOCX, CSV, XLSX, or TXT format, with a maximum size of 700 KB each.

The Media tab — figures with captions, tables, and supplementary files, each placed with Insert.

Tables are built in a simple editor: one row per line, cells separated by |, with a live preview. Supplementary files (PDF, DOCX, CSV and more, up to about 700 KB each) are stored with your article and appear as "Supplementary file S1, S2..." in the export. All of them are inserted at the cursor where you want them, and all of them travel into your Word or Markdown export.

Writing each section well

What reviewers are actually looking for

Reviewers are not trying to catch you out — they are checking that the work is done honestly and reported clearly. Keep their checklist in mind and your sections will practically write themselves:

- Introduction — narrow like a funnel: the broad topic, what is already known, the gap, then your question.
- Methods — someone else must be able to reproduce your study from this section alone. Mention ethics approval, trial registration and consent here.
- Results — state the findings plainly and in order. Every number must match a table or figure. Do not interpret yet — that is the Discussion's job.
- Discussion — answer the question you asked, compare with prior work, admit limitations honestly, and resist overclaiming.
- Abstract — write it last; it is a miniature of the whole paper.

For systematic reviews and meta-analyses, add the PRISMA flow: how many records you found, screened and included, and the risk-of-bias assessment of the studies you kept.

References & citations

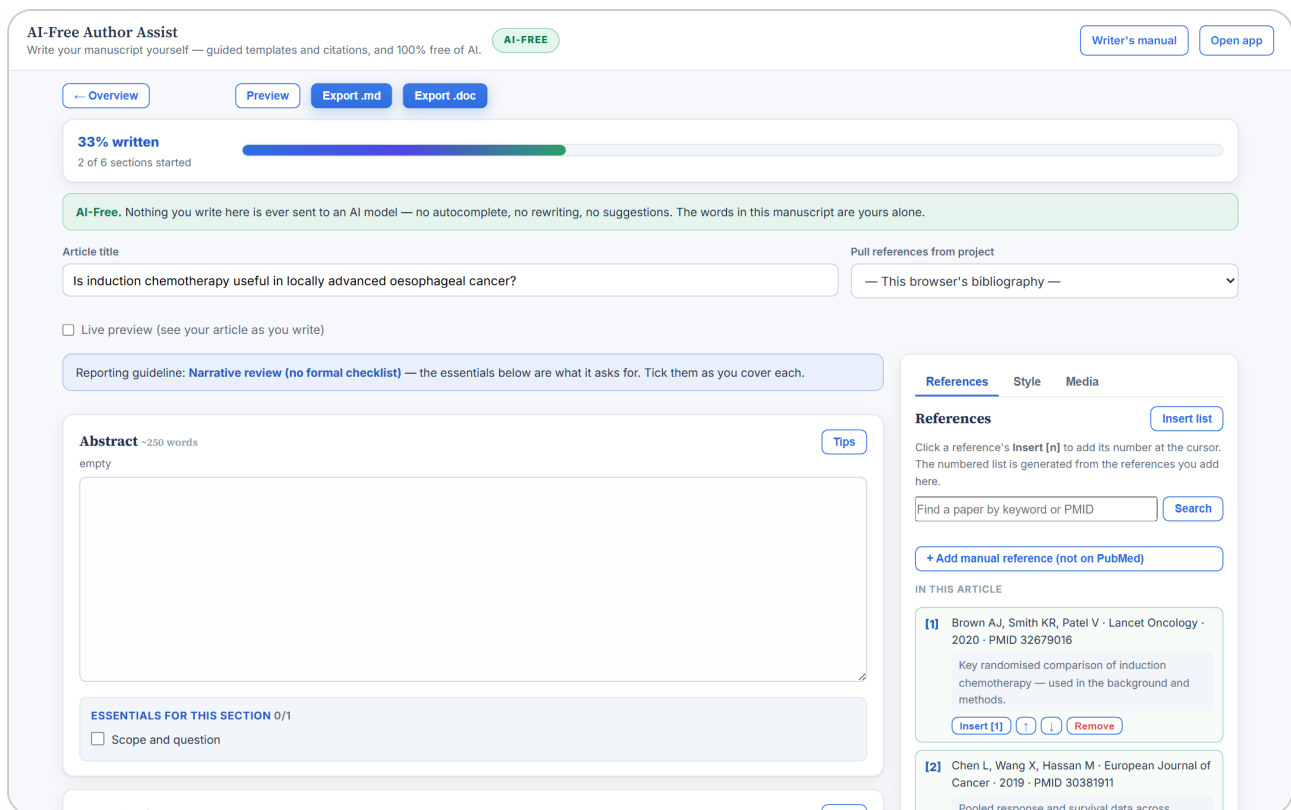
Your bibliography, your numbers

The references panel on the right pulls in the papers you already saved to your bibliography. Link the project you've been researching, or add any paper by its PMID, and the paper appears in the "Available" list with the citation note you wrote for it.

The screenshot shows the 'AI-Free Author Assist' web application. At the top, it says 'Write your manuscript yourself — guided templates and citations, and 100% free of AI.' and 'AI-FREE'. There are buttons for 'Writer's manual' and 'Open app'. Below this is a progress bar showing '33% written' and '2 of 6 sections started'. A green box states: 'AI-Free. Nothing you write here is ever sent to an AI model — no autocomplete, no rewriting, no suggestions. The words in this manuscript are yours alone.' The 'Article title' field contains 'Is induction chemotherapy useful in locally advanced oesophageal cancer?'. A dropdown menu for 'Pull references from project' is set to '— This browser's bibliography —'. There is a checkbox for 'Live preview (see your article as you write)'. A reporting guideline is set to 'Narrative review (no formal checklist)'. The 'Abstract' section is empty, with a 'Tips' button. Below the abstract is a section for 'ESSENTIALS FOR THIS SECTION 0/1' with a checkbox for 'Scope and question'. On the right, the 'References' panel is active, showing a search bar, a '+ Add manual reference (not on PubMed)' button, and a list of references under 'IN THIS ARTICLE'. The first reference is '[1] Brown AJ, Smith KR, Patel V · Lancet Oncology · 2020 · PMID 32679016' with a description 'Key randomised comparison of induction chemotherapy — used in the background and methods.' and buttons for 'Insert [1]', up/down arrows, and 'Remove'. The second reference is '[2] Chen L, Wang X, Hassan M · European Journal of Cancer · 2019 · PMID 30381911' with a description 'Pooled response and survival data across'.

The references panel — your bibliography papers on the right, ready to add to the article.

When you click "Add to article" a paper moves into "In this article" and gets its number. While you are writing a section, click "Insert [1]" on a reference and its number appears at your cursor — exactly where you need it. Order the numbers with the up and down arrows.



Insert [n] at the cursor — the citation lands exactly where you want it, and "Insert list" builds the numbered Vancouver references.

When you're done, "Insert list" appends the numbered reference list in the journal-standard Vancouver style. If you have included a paper in the list but never cited it in the text, the export flags it — reviewers notice uncited references, so this saves you from an easy criticism.

Not everything worth citing is on PubMed. Books, reports, guidelines and websites use the "+ Add manual reference (not on PubMed)" button — you type the details, and the list formats them in the same numbered style: journal articles get volume, issue and pages, and websites get an "Available at" link. They number, insert and export exactly like the PubMed references. You can also search PubMed from inside the References panel (keywords or a PMID) and add results in one click.

Style & readability

Clear, plain writing — checked for you

The Style tab in the references panel is a gentle writing companion. It reads your manuscript as you type and shows simple, rule-based metrics — reading grade level, reading ease, reading time, and flags for long sentences, adverbs, passive-voice phrases and complex words:

The screenshot shows a 'Pre-submission checklist' interface. At the top right, it says '3 / 17'. Below the title, a subtitle reads: 'A reassuring way to make sure you've covered everything — it never blocks you. Some items tick themselves from your progress, references and declaration.' The checklist is divided into two main sections: 'WRITING PROCESS' and 'SUBMISSION READINESS'. Under 'WRITING PROCESS', there are six items, each with a checkbox and a text input field for a note. The first two items are checked: 'Target journal chosen' (with 'Targeting the Journal of Clinical Oncology' entered) and 'Topic narrowed, thesis clear'. The other four items are unchecked: 'Keywords chosen (3-6)', 'Research organised — references collected', 'All sections drafted' (which has an 'AUTO' status), and 'Draft edited and refined'. Under 'SUBMISSION READINESS', there is one unchecked item: 'Ethics / IRB approval stated'.

Pre-submission checklist 3 / 17

A reassuring way to make sure you've covered everything — it never blocks you. Some items tick themselves from your progress, references and declaration.

WRITING PROCESS

- ☒ **Target journal chosen** — Pick your journal first — its word limit and reference style come from it.
Targeting the Journal of Clinical Oncology
- ☒ **Topic narrowed, thesis clear** — One sentence that says what your paper establishes.
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Keywords chosen (3-6)** — The words readers and databases will search for.
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Research organised — references collected** — Your project bibliography is linked, or your references are added.
Note (optional)
- ☐ **All sections drafted** AUTO — Ticks itself when every section has content.
- ☐ **Draft edited and refined** — Read it aloud; check the Style tab for long sentences.
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Final review against journal instructions** — Word limit, abstract format, disclosures.
Note (optional)

SUBMISSION READINESS

- ☐ **Ethics / IRB approval stated** — Where applicable — say so in Methods.
Note (optional)

The Style tab — live, rule-based feedback on clarity. It measures your text; it never rewrites it.

These are the same kind of checks a careful editor runs, done the deterministic way — no AI, and nothing you write leaves this browser. Long sentences and dense vocabulary are not mistakes; they are simply places your reader has to work harder. When the panel says the writing is clear, reviewers will find it clear too.

For patient-education articles, the Style tab switches to a plain-language mode: it flags heavy medical words and suggests plainer alternatives ("hypertension" → "high blood pressure"), and shows a clear target that the reading grade stays at 8 or below — the level most adults read at comfortably:

24 words

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, affects the heart and blood vessels. A myocardial infarction happens when the heart muscle does not get enough oxygen.

ESSENTIALS FOR THIS SECTION 0/1

☐ Plain words throughout

Treatment & what to expect ~350 words

empty

Tips

ESSENTIALS FOR THIS SECTION 0/1

ReferencesStyleMedia

Style & readability

Live, rule-based checks — no AI, and nothing you write leaves this browser. They measure your text; they never rewrite it.

8.3

24

2

0.1m

GRADE LEVEL

words

sentences

reading time

Reads like an undergraduate level · Reading ease 57.2 (fairly difficult to read)

PLAIN LANGUAGE (FOR PATIENTS)

Reading grade: **8.3** — aim for grade 8 or below (short sentences, everyday words)

Medical words to simplify:

- Hypertension** → *high blood pressure*
- myocardial infarction** → *heart attack*

• **Complex words** (3+ syllables): 4 Hypertension,, myocardial, infarction, oxygen.

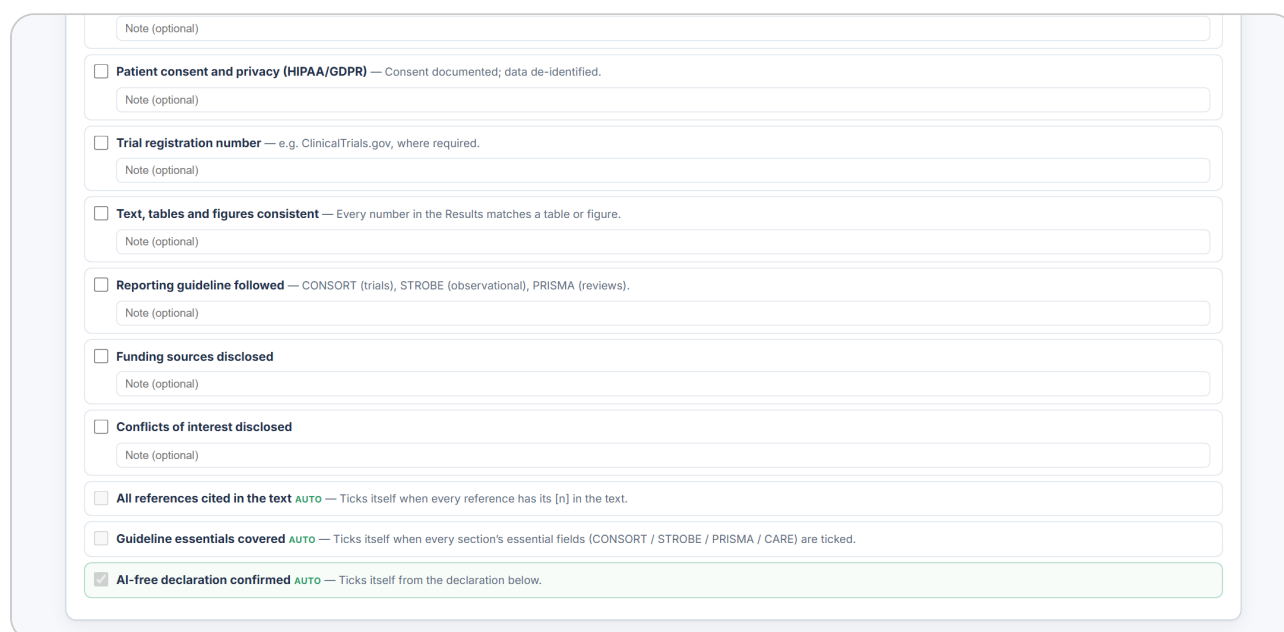
Plain-language mode — jargon flagged with plainer suggestions, and a grade-8 target for patient-facing writing.

The AI-free promise

Your words, your declaration

Journals increasingly ask authors to confirm that their work was not generated with AI. In Author Assist this is true by construction: the app never sends your text to an AI model, never autocompletes a sentence, and never rewrites a word. There is no AI button, because there is no AI.

Before you export, you confirm the AI-free declaration — a checkbox, your name and today's date. The declaration is stored with your manuscript and printed into the exported file, so the AI-free claim travels with the document itself:



The screenshot shows a form titled 'AI-free declaration' with several sections, each with a checkbox and a text input field for a note. The sections are:

- ☐ **Patient consent and privacy (HIPAA/GDPR)** — Consent documented; data de-identified.
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Trial registration number** — e.g. ClinicalTrials.gov, where required.
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Text, tables and figures consistent** — Every number in the Results matches a table or figure.
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Reporting guideline followed** — CONSORT (trials), STROBE (observational), PRISMA (reviews).
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Funding sources disclosed**
Note (optional)
- ☐ **Conflicts of interest disclosed**
Note (optional)
- ☐ **All references cited in the text** **AUTO** — Ticks itself when every reference has its [n] in the text.
- ☐ **Guideline essentials covered** **AUTO** — Ticks itself when every section's essential fields (CONSORT / STROBE / PRISMA / CARE) are ticked.
- ☒ **AI-free declaration confirmed** **AUTO** — Ticks itself from the declaration below.

The AI-free declaration — your confirmation, saved with the manuscript and printed into every export.

The declaration is your honest confirmation that the writing is your own. It is also a reassurance: everything you write here stays private to your account until you choose to export it.

The pre-submission checklist

Everything covered, so you can relax

Below the editor is a reassuring checklist in two parts: the writing process (target journal, thesis, keywords, drafts) and submission readiness (ethics, consent, registration, disclosures, references). Several items tick themselves from your actual work — "All sections drafted" follows the progress bar, "All references cited" follows your references, "Guideline essentials covered" follows the essentials you ticked in each section, and "AI-free declaration confirmed" follows the declaration below it:

Pre-submission checklist

3 / 17

A reassuring way to make sure you've covered everything — it never blocks you. Some items tick themselves from your progress, references and declaration.

WRITING PROCESS

☒ **Target journal chosen** — Pick your journal first — its word limit and reference style come from it.

Targeting the Journal of Clinical Oncology

☒ **Topic narrowed, thesis clear** — One sentence that says what your paper establishes.

Note (optional)

☐ **Keywords chosen (3-6)** — The words readers and databases will search for.

Note (optional)

☐ **Research organised — references collected** — Your project bibliography is linked, or your references are added.

Note (optional)

☐ **All sections drafted** AUTO — Ticks itself when every section has content.

☐ **Draft edited and refined** — Read it aloud; check the Style tab for long sentences.

Note (optional)

☐ **Final review against journal instructions** — Word limit, abstract format, disclosures.

Note (optional)

SUBMISSION READINESS

☐ **Ethics / IRB approval stated** — Where applicable — say so in Methods.

Note (optional)

☐ **Patient consent and privacy (HIPAA/GDPR)** — Consent documented; data de-identified.

Note (optional)

☐ **Trial registration number** — e.g. ClinicalTrials.gov, where required.

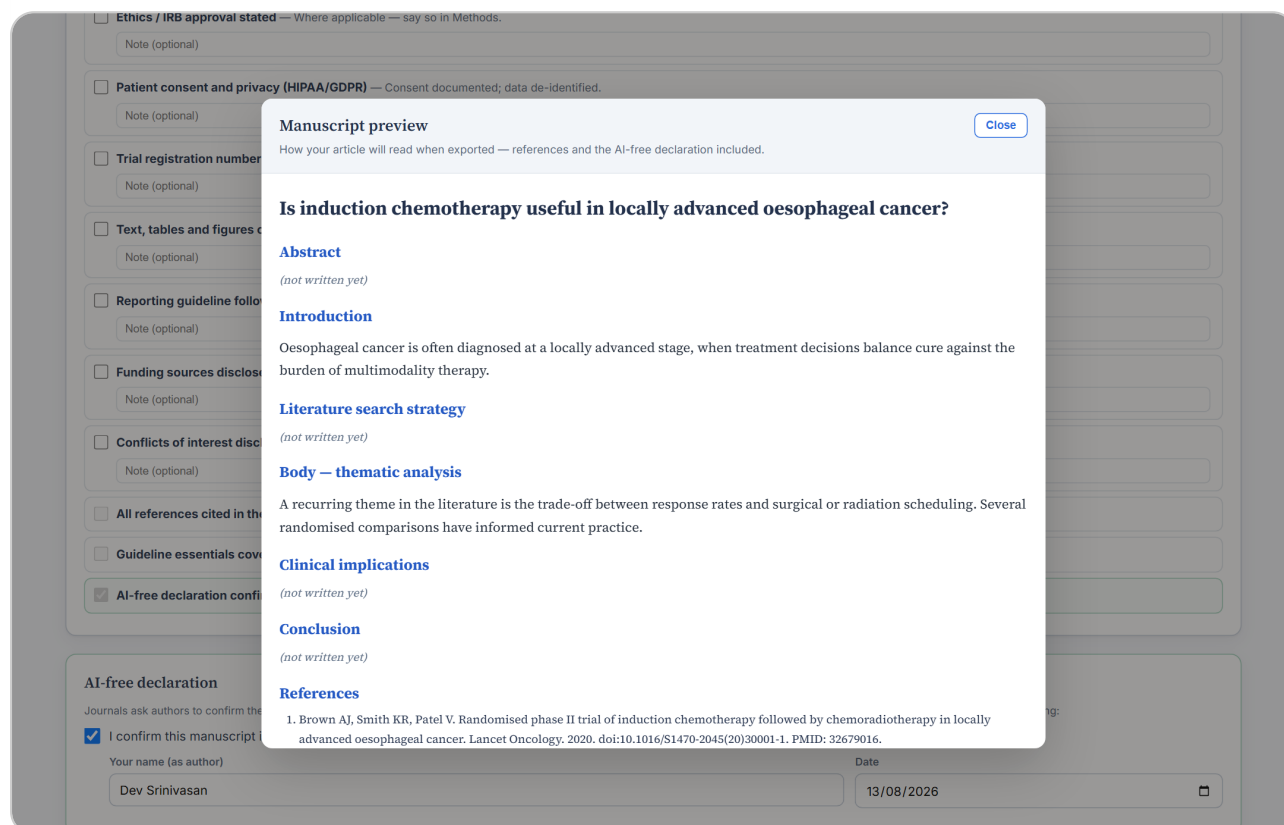
The pre-submission checklist — auto items tick themselves from your progress, references and declaration; the rest are your checkboxes with optional notes.

It is advisory, never a gate — you are never blocked from exporting by an unchecked box. Think of it as a calm friend asking the questions a reviewer would ask, so there are no surprises later.

Export & submit

Take your manuscript out into the world

When the progress bar is full and the AI-free declaration is confirmed, press Export. You can download your manuscript as Markdown (for writing tools like Obsidian or Typora) or as a Word (.doc) file ready for formatting in the journal's template:



Exporting — Markdown or Word, with the references and the AI-free declaration in the footer.

- Check the journal's author guidelines before submitting — word limits, structured abstract format, and reference style.
- Format references to the journal's exact style — details like volume, issue and page numbers may need adding from PubMed.
- Write a cover letter: why your work matters, that it is original and not under consideration elsewhere, and any disclosures.
- Upload your files, cover letter and disclosures through the journal portal.

Helpful guidance as you go: the ICMJE recommendations for manuscript preparation (icmje.org), Taylor & Francis's writing your paper guide, Cureus's medical writing tips, and your target journal's own "instructions to authors".

Pre-flight checklist

Before you click submit

This is the reassuring version of the reviewer's checklist — work through it once and you are ready:

- Ethics — IRB or ethics approval is stated, patient consent is documented, and privacy protections (HIPAA / GDPR) are respected.
- Registration — clinical trials carry their ClinicalTrials.gov number; systematic reviews state whether the protocol was registered.
- Consistency — the text, tables and figures agree; every number in the Results appears in a table or figure.
- References — every citation in the text has a reference, every reference is cited, and details are checked against PubMed.
- Reporting — you followed the right guideline (CONSORT for trials, STROBE for observational studies, PRISMA for reviews).
- Disclosure — funding sources and conflicts of interest are stated.
- AI-free declaration — confirmed, with your name and date.

If anything is missing, go back to that section and add it — this list is exactly what reviewers check, so crossing it off means no surprises at review.

A first-time author's journey

FIRST-TIME AUTHOR — TURNING A REVIEW TOPIC INTO A REVIEW ARTICLE

You've been researching immunotherapy after progression on sorafenib in advanced liver cancer, and your bibliography already holds the key trials with notes on why each matters.

Open AI-Free Author Assist, choose "Review Article", and link the project you've been researching — the references panel fills with your papers.

Write the Introduction with the funnel in mind; write the thematic body one theme at a time, inserting [1], [2], [3] as you go; close with clinical implications and a conclusion.

Watch the progress bar climb. Add any paper you forgot by its PMID. When the bar is full, confirm the AI-free declaration and export your draft as a Word file — a complete first draft, ready for co-author feedback and journal formatting.

AI-free by design. AI-Free Author Assist never sends your writing to an AI model and never generates text for you. The AI-free declaration you confirm before exporting is your own confirmation that the manuscript is your own writing. This is a writing aid, not a substitute for your own work.