

Save Money and Meet Your Deadline

Following the best-practice timeline below can save you time and money. Knowing what to do and when to do it will help you get the best possible prices and minimize problems during each phase.

Phase One: Goal setting and planning

This is the best stage for:

- Determining the purpose of the project and what you want to accomplish
- Defining your audience
- Establishing your budget
- Deciding when you need the project completed and delivered to audience
- Submitting project request to MUR
- Gathering feedback and preferences from professional peers and colleagues, potential audiences

This is *not* the best time for deciding on a final form, choosing specific layouts or images, or making final printing decisions.

Phase Two: Creative brief and content gathering

This is the best stage for:

- Meeting with MUR's project manager to establish parameters of the project
- Writing and/or collecting content to submit
- Content editing:
 - Organization and composition
 - Grammar, usage, and references
 - Determining if content will meet stated goals
 - Internal style consistency and key messaging
 - Accuracy of data
- Gathering all required images, charts, etc.
- Expressing any preferred structure of content for designers
- Gathering feedback and preferences from professional peers and colleagues, potential audiences
- Stating design and layout preferences
- Getting permissions
- Reviewing and revising timeline
- Determining quantity to manufacture
- Getting rough manufacturing estimates

This is *not* the best time for making major content revisions after editing, choosing specific layouts or designs, or making final printing decisions.

Phase Three: Designing

This is the best stage for:

- Making final printing decisions
- Designing print or website layout:
 - All typographic, color, and pictorial decisions
 - All decisions about structure (chapters, elements, etc)
- branding and messaging checks
- Producing page proofs (1-3 rounds)
- Updating production schedule
- Final proofing of design and content

This is *not* the best time for submitting for peer and colleague review or other outside review, revising text in page proofs, changing major elements of layout after proofing rounds, or adding or changing end products.

Phase Four: Printing and/or output

This is the best stage for:

- Printing, manufacturing, or publishing the product
- Finalizing distribution lists
- Shipping, posting, delivering, or mailing products

This is *not* the best time for making changes in printer's proof, changing binding or manufacturing options, increasing or decreasing quantity to print, or getting permissions.

