

A Report of the committee on the short monographs series

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The Committee

The committee was established by the Executive Committee in its Stockholm meeting, August 03. Its goal was described by Eric Maskin in his letter of Oct 2nd, 2003:

“The executive committee of the Econometric Society decided in August to ask an ad hoc committee to look into the idea of having a line of short Monographs within the ES monograph series. I would like to invite you to serve on the committee, with Ariel Rubinstein as chair.

The Executive Committee hopes that, in particular, you will consider the following questions:

1. Should there be a line of short monographs?
2. If so, should it be distinct from other monographs in the series?
3. Should there be a de-emphasis on longer monographs?
4. What should the criteria for publication of a short monograph be?
5. Should ES members have free electronic access to the ES monograph series? Even after publication?
6. How should the new initiative be promote?

Naturally, you'll want to discuss these matters with the publisher, CUP. But, of course, any agreement would have to be approved by the executive Committee.”

Procedure

During the last three months we conducted e-mail discussion of the topics and we talked with Scott Parris from CUP.

Background (From the Editors report, August 2002)

What looks to us to be a very promising idea for new directions for the series is to include shorter ventures of 100-150 pages surveying cutting-edge or perennially important topics. These could be written by senior scholars or younger truly eminent scholars who have established a solid name for themselves in the profession. This would help the series to make some inroads into the market currently aimed at by the North-Holland/Elsevier/Reed Handbook series. Such shorter monographs have the advantages that (a) each one can be aimed at particular interests, (b) authors could easily do revisions after a few years as fields developed, and (c) the prospect of

writing 100 pages is much less daunting for a productive researcher than writing a broad ranging tome. While there are advantages to the authors, these might also be very attractive to the reader. With the broadening of economic research, and the explosion in the number of topics and subfields in the discipline, trying to keep up with what is happening in different areas is increasingly difficult. While reading a 300 page monograph to catch up might not be so appealing, digesting a 100 page tightly focused monograph could be much more attractive. The potential popularity of such shorter monographs is suggested by the popularity of collections of shorter surveys such as the proceedings of the World congress or the handbook series. In the direction of pursuing such shorter monographs, recent discussions suggest that authors might be very receptive to such an idea.

In the meantime there have already been two submissions (one rejected, one in process) to the shorter series.

Questions and Recommendations

We think that there is a place to the longer monographs side by side with the short monographs. Thus, we decided to focus on four questions:

A- Should the short monographs series be distinct from other monographs in the series?

The considerations for the different possibilities are quite straightforward. Some of us thought initially that a new format and a new series are in place and some argued for continuity. We settled on---

We recommend that the series be a part of the old one but the books will have different size (smaller) and special jacket and cover.

B- What should the criteria for publication of a short monograph be?

We recommend that the following paragraph to be a part of the call for books for the new series:

“The following The Econometric Society Monograph Series is now considering short and tightly focused monographs (in the order of 100 pages) in addition to traditional full-length monographs. The new shorter series will include manuscripts ranging from surveys or lecture notes collecting important results in emerging fields to original contributions on a tightly focused subject.”

Note that we do not think that the new series should be an outlet for papers which are too long to be published in *Econometrica*.

C- Should ES members have free electronic access to the ES monograph series even after publication?

We do not recommend to demand from CUP free access to the new series. But, we suggest to negotiate a larger discount on the series (probably, special discount for members who are students).

D- How should the new initiative be promoted?

The new website of the ES puts already much visibility to the monograph series and put it as next to Econometrica mission.

The rest should be a joint effort of the ES and CUP.

We recommend that

---Econometrica will publish a permanent “Call for books” and for the new series (once it appears).

---ES and CUP will circulate fliers and posters on the new initiative.

---Econometrica should have a permanent advertisement page for the books published in the ES series.

The Editors will coordinate it with the Editor of Econometrica and CUP.