

Molecular Therapy—Oncolytics

Information for Authors

Aims and Scope

Molecular Therapy—Oncolytics is an international, online-only, open access journal focusing on the development and clinical testing of viral, cellular, and other biological therapies targeting cancer. While providing a unique forum for work in the burgeoning fields of oncolytic virotherapy, as well as T cell- and stem cell-based therapies, the journal will consider all top-quality, cutting-edge research that employs innovative molecular and cellular approaches that target cancer cells for destruction, whether by viruses, other microorganisms, vaccination, or by transfer of cells and/or genes. As an official journal of the American Society of Gene & Cell Therapy, *Molecular Therapy—Oncolytics* will build upon the success of *Molecular Therapy* and its sibling journals in publishing important peer-reviewed original research, timely reviews, and editorial commentary.

This page describes our policies and provides information that we think will be helpful to you as you prepare manuscripts for submission and publication. If you have submitted a paper and want information about the status of the paper, please log in to our [online manuscript submission system](#). If you run into any problems or if you have specific questions, you can always email us at oncolytics@molther.org.

Editorial Evaluation Timeline

We read and evaluate every submission, and we try our best to get back to you quickly. We are mindful of how long it can take to publish a paper, so we work with authors and reviewers to minimize that time. Here's how long each step in the process usually takes:

Initial decision to review	1-3 days after submission
Decision after review	3-4 weeks after submission
Time suggested for revision	2-3 months
Time to online publication (optional field)	3-5 weeks from acceptance

Pre-submission Inquiries

Unsure if your paper is suitable for *Molecular Therapy—Oncolytics*? Send us a pre-submission inquiry at oncolytics@molther.org, and we'll let you know in 1-2 days what we think. Please include a title, an abstract, and an explanation of why your paper is significant and broadly interesting.

Relationship between *Molecular Therapy* Journals

Co-submission

If you think your paper might be suitable for two *Molecular Therapy* journals, you can submit the paper for joint consideration. To do this, upload your manuscript to one of the journals. In your cover letter, please indicate that you are seeking co-consideration and mention the name of the other journal.

Transfer of Papers between *Molecular Therapy* Journals

Although each *Molecular Therapy* journal is editorially independent, we have a system that allows you to transfer your manuscript, along with the reviews and the reviewers' identities, from one journal to another. If you have questions about the suitability of your paper for transfer, please contact the editor of the receiving journal. Often, the Editor of the receiving journal will be able to reach a decision based on the existing reviews. Occasionally, the Editor may seek comments from additional reviewers. If you use our online system to transfer your paper, you will have a chance to edit your files before they are sent to the receiving journal. You can always submit your paper to another *Molecular Therapy* journal without mentioning the first review process. In this case, the manuscript will be evaluated as a regular new submission.

Editorial Policies

We want to publish new and exciting science, so we consider papers with the understanding that no part has been published before, electronically or in print, and that the paper is not under consideration elsewhere.

Review Process

All contributions that are selected for peer review are sent to two or more independent reviewers. The identity of reviewers is confidential and manuscripts are considered private information. Papers may be rejected without external review at the discretion of the editorial board following internal review, and may be recommended for submission to one of the *Molecular Therapy* sibling journals based on this initial internal editorial assessment. Authors are encouraged to suggest or recommend for exclusion reviewers at the time of submissions, as this can help speed the review process.

The *Molecular Therapy* family of journals accept for rapid consideration papers rejected from other journals when accompanied by the reviewers' comments from the previous review. This option can facilitate rapid turnaround and publication of papers rejected by, for example, higher-impact Cell Press journals, without the need for a lengthy additional review in cases where the paper is deemed to be of high technical quality but fails to meet the editorial priorities of the referring journal. This option is not limited to Cell Press journals; we have accepted papers previously reviewed by journals such as *Blood*, the *Journal of Neuroscience*, and *Science Translational Medicine*. In the latter cases, authors will need to work with the editors at the referring journals to facilitate the release of reviewers' comments to the editors of *Molecular Therapy* or its siblings.

Related Manuscripts

If you have any related papers submitted or in press elsewhere, please let us know and include them with your initial submission (or with your revision if they were submitted during the revision period). We ask this because having access to related papers often helps us (and reviewers) to assess the submitted work, and it can help prevent potentially difficult scenarios down the road. Failure to provide copies of related manuscripts may delay the review process and may be grounds for rejection. As a matter of publishing ethics, we cannot consider any paper that contains data that have been published or submitted for publication elsewhere.

Preprint Servers

Authors sometimes prefer to post their manuscripts to preprint servers before submitting them to primary research journals. We will consider for publication manuscripts that have been posted on BioArXiv or ArXiv, but will not consider manuscripts that have been posted on other preprint servers or "virtual journal" websites. Questions related to this policy should be directed to oncologytics@molther.org.

Priority

Please be aware that our final decisions are based on evaluation of the literature available on the day of the final decision, not on the day of submission.

Conflict of Interest

Financial conflicts of interest can influence results and the interpretation of those results. For these reasons, we require you to declare any such interests in your cover letter and in a separate section of the manuscript, both for research manuscripts and review material. Conflicts include the following:

- Affiliation with a yearly financial benefit exceeding \$10,000
- Greater than 5% ownership of a company with related interests
- Research funding by a company with related interests

Data and Image Processing

As much as possible, please limit the amount of post-acquisition processing of data. When it is necessary, please keep it minimal and ensure that the final figures accurately reflect the original data. In general, please make all processing transparent. Here are some specific guidelines:

- Any alterations should be applied to the entire image. When this is impossible (e.g., when a single color channel on a microscopy image is altered), please clearly explain the alteration in the figure legend.
- If you crop images, remove lanes from gels and blots, or consolidate your data in any way, please make the alterations obvious.
- Only compare data that are appropriate to compare (e.g., data from the same experiment).
- Individual images should not be used in multiple figures unless the figures describe different aspects of the same experiment (e.g., multiple experiments were performed simultaneously with a single control experiment). If an image is used in multiple figures, please clearly state the reason in the legend.

Data Archiving

We may ask you for your original, unprocessed data, so please take appropriate steps to preserve those data. We recommend that you save all unprocessed data related to your paper and distribute copies of those data to all co-authors. Alternatively, you can upload your original data to [Mendeley Data](#), Dryad, or other appropriate figure/data repositories. If questions about your findings arise, failure to produce original data will make resolution of the issues much more difficult and can be grounds for retraction.

Studies Involving Humans and Animals

Clinical Trials: As defined by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), a clinical trial is any research project that prospectively assigns human subjects to intervention and comparison groups to study the cause-and-effect relationship between a medical intervention and a health outcome. A medical intervention is any intervention used to modify a health outcome and includes but is not limited to drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioral treatments, and process-of-care changes. A trial must have at least one prospectively assigned concurrent control or comparison group in order to trigger the requirement for registration. Non-randomized trials are not exempt from the registration requirement if they meet the above criteria.

If your manuscript reports studies on human subjects, please include a statement in the Materials and Methods section that (1) confirms you received informed consent from all subjects and (2) identifies the committee that approved the studies.

Molecular Therapy journals subscribe to the standards set by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors in *The Lancet* (**364**, 911–912, 2004), requiring that all trials that start enrolling participants after July 1, 2005 must be registered in a suitable publicly accessible register before that date in order to be considered for publication in the Journal. Those trials that started enrollment before July 1, 2005 must register before September 13, 2005 to be considered for publication. Suggested registers include [Clinical Trials.Gov](#) and [Current Controlled Trials](#).

Animals: If your manuscript reports studies on live vertebrates or higher invertebrates, please include a statement in the Materials and Methods section that (1) identifies the committee that approved the studies and (2) confirms that all experiments conform to all relevant regulatory standards. Please refer to [ARRIVE guidelines](#) and recommendations from an [NIH-sponsored workshop](#) regarding experimental design and reporting standards. If we have any concerns, we may contact you for additional information and seek comments from reviewers.

Distribution of Materials and Data

If you publish in *Molecular Therapy* journals, you must be willing to distribute materials and protocols to qualified researchers, with minimal restrictions and in a timely manner. Any restrictions need to be disclosed in the cover letter and in the Materials and Methods at the time of submission. You may request reasonable payment for maintenance and transport of materials. Materials include but are not limited to cells, DNA, antibodies, reagents, organisms, and mouse strains or, if necessary, the relevant ES cells. Datasets must be made freely available to readers at the time of publication and must be provided to editors and peer reviewers at submission.

For the following types of data, submission of the full dataset to a community-endorsed, public repository is mandatory. Accession numbers must be provided in the paper (see "Database Linking" below for specific formatting instructions). Examples of appropriate public repositories are listed below.

DNA and Protein Sequences

- Protein Sequences: Uniprot
- DNA and RNA Sequences: Genbank/European Nucleotide Archive (ENA)/DDBJ, Protein DataBank, UniProt
- DNA Sequencing Data (traces and short reads): NCBI Trace and Short-Read Archive, ENA's Sequence Read Archive
- Deep Sequencing Data: GEO or ArrayExpress upon submission to the journal

The sequences of all RNAi, antisense, and morpholino probes must be included in the paper or deposited in a public database with the accession number provided in the paper.

Human genomic data reporting newly described SNPs and CNVs identified in control samples should be deposited in an appropriate repository such as dbSNP, the Database of Genomic Variants Archive (DGVA), or the Database of Genomic Structural Variation (dbVAR).

We encourage but do not require the deposition of human sequence data in an appropriate repository such as dbGaP. We expect that, if data collected for a published paper cannot be included in the paper or made accessible in a public repository, then authors will accommodate legitimate requests for sharing of human genetics data provided that there are no IRB restrictions.

Structures of Biological Macromolecules

The atomic coordinates and related experimental data (structure factor amplitudes/intensities and/or NMR restraints) must be deposited at a member site of the Worldwide Protein Data Bank. Electron microscopy-derived density maps must be deposited into the EJPDB through one of the partner sites (Protein Data Bank in Europe or EJPDataBank). Atomic coordinates fitted to EJP maps must also be deposited to a wwPDB member site. The corresponding database IDs must be included in the manuscript. Authors must agree to release the atomic coordinates and experimental data when the associated article is published. Additionally, if your paper reports a new x-ray structure, you must include the PDB validation report as part of the Supplemental Information of your initial submission.

Microarray Data

MIAME-Compliant Microarray Data: GEO or ArrayExpress upon submission to the journal.

Data must be MIAME compliant, as described at the MGED website specifying microarray standards.

Other Datasets

In addition to the information that must be deposited in public databases as detailed above, authors are encouraged to contribute additional information to the appropriate databases. Authors are also encouraged to deposit materials used in their studies in the appropriate repositories for distribution to researchers.

Examples of repositories that facilitate sharing large datasets, including some that offer the option of anonymous referee access to data before publication, include the following:

- For proteomics data: PRIDE, PeptideAtlas
- For protein interaction data: IMEx consortium of databases, including DIP, IntAct, and MINT

- For chemical compound screening and assay data: PubChem

Where there is no public repository and the datasets are too large to submit to the journal online, authors should either consult the journal editorial office for advice or provide five separate copies of these data to the editors in an appropriate format (for example, CD or DVD) for the purposes of peer review.

Database Linking

We encourage you to connect your article with external databases, giving readers one-click access to relevant databases that help to build a better understanding of the described research. Please refer to relevant database identifiers using the following format in your article: "Database: xxxx" for single accession numbers and "Database: xxxx, yyyy, zzzz" for multiple accession numbers (e.g., "Genbank: NM_000492"; "GEO: GSE6364"; "PDB: 1TUP, 1KW4, 3H5X"). See <http://www.elsevier.com/books-and-journals/content-innovation/data-base-linking> for more information and a full list of supported databases.

Rights, Sharing, and Embargoes

An overview of the rights that *Molecular Therapy* authors retain, the options for sharing articles at various stages, the duration of embargo periods, as well as open access options is available at <http://www.cell.com/rights-sharing-embargoes>.

Permissions

If excerpts from other copyrighted works are included in your manuscript, you must obtain written permission from the copyright owners and credit the sources in the article. If you have adapted a figure from a published figure, please check with the copyright owners to see if permission is required and include a complete citation/reference for the original article. Obtaining permissions can take up to several weeks. As lack of appropriate permissions can delay publication, we recommend that you request permission at the time of submission.

Prepublication Publicity

You are welcome to present and discuss at scientific meetings material intended for publication in *Molecular Therapy* journals; however, please do not discuss your findings with the media beyond your formal presentation. An embargo date is not automatically set for articles because accepted manuscripts are usually published within two days of formal acceptance. If your institution would like to submit an embargoed press release, please let us know as soon as possible if you'd like to embargo this article and we will work with you to set a date.

Additionally, please do not discuss in-press papers in review articles before publication. However, you can discuss your embargoed paper with other scientific journals if the paper will be covered in review or news material that is intended to coincide or follow publication of your paper.

If you have any questions about our pre-publication policies, or if your institutional press office wishes to issue a press release, please contact our Press Officer, Joseph Caputo (jcaputo@cell.com).

Preparation and Online Submission of Original Articles

You can submit your manuscript using our online submission system, [Ejournal Press \(EJP\)](#). For assistance, please contact us at oncologytics@molther.org.

EJP will send all communications (including the request for final approval and the confirmation of submission) to the person who is selected as corresponding author at submission or, if no name is designated, to the person whose account is used to submit the manuscript. If you want to specify a different author for correspondence after submission, please contact oncologytics@molther.org.

Cover Letter

In your cover letter, please explain what was previously known, the conceptual advance provided by your work, and the significance to a broad readership. You may suggest appropriate reviewers and make up to three requests for reviewer exclusions. Please use the cover letter to notify us of information that is relevant to our handling and evaluation of your paper (e.g., related work, time constraints, competition, etc.). The cover letter is confidential and will not be seen by reviewers.

Initial Submissions

For initial submissions, you do not need to strictly adhere to our formatting guidelines (see those guidelines below). However, we do ask that you stay close to our length restrictions and that you use page numbers.

Also, for initial submissions, you can upload your paper as a single PDF (using the “combined manuscript file” designation in EJP). In doing this, you can intersperse the figures and figure legends within the Results section to aid evaluation of your paper. If you choose the single PDF option, please keep the PDF under 20 MB, and please separately upload the cover letter and any special file types such as videos and spreadsheets. If you do not choose the single PDF option, EJP will build a composite PDF file of individually uploaded items. This PDF will contain links that editors and reviewers can use to download individual high-resolution files. The composite PDF will not contain the cover letter.

Formatting Guidelines

All research article formats for *Molecular Therapy* journals generally contain the following sections in the following order. The text (title through legends) should be provided as one document, which may also contain the tables. Figures and Supplemental Information should be provided separately.

There is no word limit, but an article may contain no more than eight figures and/or tables. Gene symbols should be italicized; protein products of the loci are not italicized. Non-standard abbreviations should be defined when first used in the text. Use of abbreviations should be kept at a minimum. Manuscript file types that we can accept for submission include Word, RTF, and TXT. Required items differ for each article type and are specified during the submission process.

Please note that the text should be double spaced, and pages should be numbered. Although summaries need to be entered as text files separate from the body of the manuscript during the online submission process, they should also be included within the manuscript file as usual.

Title page—Page 1

The title page should include the following:

- Brief, informative title of 120 characters or less
- Authors' full names, departments, and institutions (indicate affiliations numerically with numbers placed after authors' names and before the institutions; indicate the corresponding author using the format "Correspondence should be addressed to J.A.S. (johnsmith@university.edu)")
- City, state, and country in which the work was done
- Corresponding author's address, telephone, fax, and email (email address required)
- Short title of 50 characters or less, including spaces

Abstract—Page 2

- Must be a single paragraph and not exceed 200 words
- Briefly summarize the main findings of the paper without headings
- Do not include abbreviations or acknowledgments and do not refer to footnotes or references—write with a general scientific audience in mind

Introduction

The article should begin with a brief introductory statement that places the work in perspective and explains its intent and significance. The Introduction should be as concise as possible and should not be longer than two double-spaced typed pages.

Results

The Results section should briefly present the data in text, tables, or figures.

Discussion

The Discussion should focus on the interpretation and significance of the findings with concise objective comments that describe their relation to other work in the area. It should not repeat information from the Results. The Results and Discussion sections together should not exceed nine double-spaced typed pages.

Materials and Methods

Readers should be able to reproduce the experiments from the information in the methods section, figure legends, table footnotes, and references. Please provide the manufacturer's name and location (city, state if within the US; city, country if outside the US) for materials purchased.

Acknowledgments

The Acknowledgments section is mandatory. All authors are expected to disclose all funding sources—institutional and corporate—as well as any commercial affiliations or consultancies, stock or equity interests, or patent-licensing arrangements that could be considered to pose a financial conflict of interest related to the submitted manuscript. This information must be included at this stage and will be published as part of the paper.

Author Contributions

This section is required for all papers. Please use this section to include information about each author's contributions. Please be concise and use initials to indicate author identity. We are happy for you to use a traditional format (e.g., A.B. and C.D. conducted the experiments; E.F. designed the experiments and wrote the paper) but would encourage you to use [the CRediT taxonomy](#).

References

Only articles that have been published or are in press should be included in the reference list. Unpublished results or personal communications should be cited as such in parentheses in the

text. Personal communications must include the source's name and the year, e.g., "(L. Chen, personal communication, 2013)." Submitted manuscripts should be cited as follows: "(J. Smith and R. Davis, manuscript submitted)."

References should be cited in the text in numerical order (1, 2, 3, ..., n), in order of appearance. The citations should be superscripted (for example, "Jones and colleagues³ found that..."). Arrange the reference list in numerical order beginning with the references cited in the text, followed by those cited only in the figure legends and tables. For references with more than six authors, list the first six authors followed by *et al.* The titles of journals should be abbreviated according to PubMed.

Samples:

1. Zhong, L., Archer, E.S.J., Holmgren, A., Smith, J., Taylor, N.M., Jr, Franklin B.R., III, et al. (2000). Structure of mammalian thioredoxin reductase. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 92, 1311–1319.
2. Hagag, N., and Viola, M.V. (1993). *Chromosome Microdissection and Cloning: A Practical Guide* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press), p. 179.
3. Harley, N.H., and Vivian, L. (1974). Invading microorganisms. In *Mechanisms of Disease*, 4th edition, W.A. Sodeman and A. Smith, eds. (Philadelphia, PA: Saunders), pp 457–472.
4. US Department of Health and Human Services. *Hypertension in the United States, 2009. Report 12345*, pp 445-449. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2010.
5. World Health Organization (2011). *Management of severe malnutrition: a manual for physicians*. <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/1999/a57361.pdf>.

Tables

Tabular presentations should be self-explanatory and not duplicate content in the text. Tables should be presented at the end of the manuscript (one table per page), numbered sequentially (1, 2, 3), and cited in chronological order in the text. Each table should include an informative title. You do not need to provide a table legend, but please supply information such as the description of the experiment, definition of columns or abbreviations, etc. in footnotes to the title and table contents. Label footnotes with superscripted lowercase Arabic letters (a, b, c, etc.), not symbols. Define errors in the table by a footnote, e.g., "mean + SD" or "mean + SEM." Authors should ensure that the data in the tables are consistent with those cited in the relevant papers in the text, totals add up correctly, and percentages have been calculated correctly.

When creating a table, please use the Microsoft Word Table function. Tables not created with the Microsoft Word table function may need to be revised by the author.

When creating tables, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not submit tables in Excel or PDF format. Do not place an Excel table in a Word document.
- Format tables with Word's Table function; do not use tabs or spaces to create a table.
- Tables should be in black and white; rows and columns should not be shaded.
- Do not use line breaks or spaces to separate data within a cell. Use separate cells for all discrete data elements within a table.
- Number distinct tables as Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, etc., rather than as Table 1a, Table 1b, Table 1c, etc.
- If bold or italic font is used within a table to indicate some feature of the data, please give an explanation of its usage in the legend.
- All abbreviations within a table must be defined in the table legend or footnotes.
- Footnotes should be listed with superscript lowercase letters, beginning with "a." Footnotes may not be listed with numbers or symbols.

Figure Sizing

To avoid size reduction, authors should submit artwork of exact column measurements and crop out unnecessary areas (1 column = 86.50 mm; 2 columns = 178 mm). Most figures should be presented at 1 column width (or quarter page in size).

Figure Legends

Legends should be included in the submitted manuscript as a separate section. Each figure legend should have a brief title that describes the entire figure without citing specific panels, followed by a description of each panel. For any figures presenting pooled data, the measures should be defined in the figure legends (for example, "Data are represented as mean \pm SEJP."). Each legend should refer to any supporting items in the Supplemental Information (e.g., "See also Figure S1.>").

Graphical Abstract

A graphical abstract allows readers to quickly gain an understanding of the main take-home message of the paper. Please visit the [graphical abstract guide](#) for specifications and examples. On the page where you are asked to upload your files, please choose "Graphical Abstract" to upload your file.

Supplemental Information

In general, please limit Supplemental Information to data and other materials that directly support the main conclusions of your paper but cannot be included in the main paper due to space or file format restrictions. SI should not be used to present data that are preliminary or that conceptually go beyond the main point of the paper.

Before submitting your supplemental materials, please refer to our complete instructions in the [Supplemental Information guidelines](#). This page also contains information on submitting movie and other multimedia files.

Submission of Revised/Final Manuscripts

In addition to the sections described above, revised manuscripts should also contain a detailed point-by-point response to the comments of the reviewers and/or editors. The cover letter should briefly summarize how the revised manuscript addresses these comments. In general, we allow 2–3 months for revision; if you think you might need more time, please contact the handling editor for guidance.

Checklist for Final Submission

1. Please make sure your final manuscript:

- Includes database accession numbers for new gene sequences, protein sequences, structures, or microarray data
- Includes explanation of statistical methods and sufficient detail of procedures in the Materials and Methods section
- For any figures presenting pooled data, defines the measures in the figure legends.

2. Please submit your final materials through [EJournal Press](#).

3. Please include all of the following when you are resubmitting your final materials:

- A modifiable electronic version of the final text (Microsoft Word .docx file is preferred). **This must not include embedded figures**, which should be supplied separately.
- High-resolution digital files of the main figures in an accepted format (see [digital figure guidelines](#))
- Supplemental Information set and submitted as outlined in the [Supplemental Information guidelines](#)
- Additional Supplemental Information files such as movies and spreadsheets
- Conflict of Interests section (please refer to your [EJournal Press](#) letter for requirements)
- **Optional:** Graphical Abstract (.jpg, .gif, or .png). A graphical abstract allows readers to quickly gain an understanding of the main take-home message of the paper. Please visit the [graphical abstract guide](#) for specifications and examples. On the page where you are asked to upload your files, please choose "Graphical Abstract" to upload your file.
- Cover letter

Article Formats

Article Description	Abstract And Keywords	Unsolicited considered?	Word Limit/ Tables/Figures
<p>Original Articles These are investigational studies presenting basic and/or preclinical studies applying gene therapy or other molecular medicine interventions to specific disease models or biological problems; studies aimed at establishing proof-of-principle for novel therapeutic approaches; studies defining new methodological tools or improving established methods; and reports on the results of human clinical trials of gene therapy and other molecular medicine approaches to disease.</p> <p>Studies should be organized as follows: Title page, Abstract, Introduction, Results, Discussion, Materials & Methods, Acknowledgments, Supplemental Information, References, Tables, Figure Legends. Manuscripts that do not conform to these guidelines will be</p>	<p>Unstructured abstract of no more than 200 words; 5-10 keywords</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No word limit, but a limit of 8 display items (figures plus tables). Additional items can be published online only as Supplemental Information. Lengthy papers may be returned to authors for additional editing.</p>

returned to the author for correction prior to review.			
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Production and Proofs

Once your paper is accepted, our production team will contact you with an overview of the process, copyedit the paper, and prepare it for print. At this stage, any major changes are subject to review and may delay publication. Please be aware that we may resize figures during the production process.

We will send you proofs of your paper by email about 2 weeks before publication. You will have 24 hours to return the proofs with vital corrections. If you will be unreachable at all during this period or anticipate any problems with this timeline, please contact moleculartherapy@cell.com.

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For manuscripts with a first or corresponding/senior author who is an active ASGCT member: the article processing charge for Open Access papers is \$2,600 (plus VAT where applicable).

For manuscripts without a first or corresponding/senior author who is an active ASGCT member: The article processing charge for Open Access papers is \$3,200 (plus VAT where applicable).

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