

EPA Contest Categories

EPA's annual contest spans two categories: the "Awards of Excellence" and "Higher Goals."

Awards of Excellence

EPA's Awards of Excellence competition honors overall excellence. Judges in this category evaluate a number of criteria, including writing quality, content choices and design. Members compete only against publications in their same category.

There are two divisions: **Print** and **Digital/Online**. Each member publication can enter only the print or digital Awards of Excellence division in which it is a member. Print publication members have the option to hold a dual membership (print and digital) and enter in both the print and digital Awards of Excellence divisions.

For print publications, three consecutive issues must be submitted. For digital publications, the judge will review content as submitted. Please double check that all of your links work so the judge has access to your contents.

Judging criteria in the print division include: Quality of writing | Variety and balance of content | Journalistic creativity | Design and typography | Use of illustrations/photos

Judging criteria in the digital division include: Quality of writing | Variety and balance of content | Journalistic creativity | Website design/aesthetics | Website usability/navigation/mobile responsiveness

The categories in this contest are:

Print

- 101 Campus:** A print publication produced by students — generally a newspaper or magazine.
- 102 Christian Ministry:** A print publication that serves workers in Christian education, churches, or other ministries.
- 103 Denominational:** A print publication serving as the official voice of a sponsoring denominations.
- 104 Devotional:** A print publication offering daily devotional readings and Bible studies to inspire readers.
- 105 General:** A general-interest print publication that is not the voice of organizations or denominations.
- 106 Missions:** A print publication with a theme of missionary evangelism ("home" and/or "international").
- 107 Newsletter:** A timely print publication informing people united by interest in a subject or organization.
- 108 Newspaper:** A newspaper-format print publication, generally serving a geographical area with timely news.
- 109 Organizational:** A print publication that is the official voice of a group other than a denomination.
- 110 Youth:** A print publication intended for youth audiences up to college-age.

Digital

NOTE: Print publication members may only submit in a digital category if they hold a dual membership in both print and digital (with the exception of Campus publications which may enter either or both).

- 201 Campus:** A digital publication or content-rich website produced by students — generally a newspaper or magazine.
- 202 Christian Ministry:** A digital publication or content-rich website that serves workers in Christian education, churches, or other ministries.
- 203 Denominational:** A digital publication or content-rich website serving as the official voice of a sponsoring denomination.
- 204 Devotional:** A digital publication or content-rich website offering daily devotional readings and Bible studies to inspire readers.
- 205 General:** A general-interest digital publication or content-rich website that is not the voice of organizations or denominations.
- 206 Missions:** A digital publication or content-rich website with a theme of missionary evangelism (“home” and/or “international”).
- 207 E-newsletter:** A digital newsletter informing people united by interest in a subject or organization.
- 208 Newspaper/Online News:** A digital newspaper or content-rich website, generally serving a geographical area with timely news.
- 209 Organizational:** A digital publication or content-rich website that is the official voice of a group other than a denomination.
- 210 Youth:** A digital publication or content-rich website intended for youth audiences up to college-age.

Other

- 310 Most Improved (print division only):** A print publication that has made significant content and/or design changes in the past year. (Submit three consecutive issues from this year, and the three corresponding issues from the previous year.)

Higher Goals Categories

The Evangelical Press Association’s Higher Goals competition honors individual aspects of a publication, such as writing, photography and design. Members compete against all other publications.

The categories in this contest are:

Editorial categories

- 101 Article Series:** Multiple articles on a topic from two or more consecutive issues (not a regular column or feature).
Judging Criteria: Originality of treatment | Thoroughness of coverage | Cohesiveness across editions | Effective development of idea | Writing style

- 102 Biblical Exposition:** Any original biblical or theological treatment of a doctrine or Scripture passage.
Judging Criteria: Cogency of arguments | Clarity | Writing style | Significance | Effective treatment of ideas
- 103 Cause of the Year:** International Religious Freedom.
Judging Criteria: Effectiveness of presentation | Quality/thoroughness of research | Use of imagery/emotion | Relevancy to audience | Writing style
- 104 Critical Review:** A review of book(s), video and movies, drama, music and concerts or other media.
Judging Criteria: Informs about subject | Critical perceptivity | Validity of reviewer criteria | Writing style | Reviewer's subjective response
- 105 Department:** Regular section with a recurring title, with one or multiple writers. Submit from three consecutive issues.
Judging Criteria: Writing style | Fit with publication purpose | Appeal to intended audience | Originality of treatment | Takeaway value for reader
- 106 Devotional:** Inspirational biblical or spiritual piece to aid spiritual growth, with application. May be part of a series.
Judging Criteria: Writing style | Effective development of ideas | Appeal to intended audience | Originality of treatment | Takeaway value for reader
- 107 Editorial:** Any opinion piece written by an editorial staff member.
Judging Criteria: Timeliness of issue | Breadth of appeal to audience | Clarity | Cogency of arguments | Writing style
- 108 Evangelism:** An article to Christians meant to help believers learn to share the gospel more effectively.
Judging Criteria: Faithfulness to Gospel | Cultural relevance | Practicality/usefulness | Clarity of writing | Motivational effectiveness
- 109 Fiction:** An original short story (including a parable).
Judging Criteria: Believable characters | Believable conflict | Credible resolution | Quality of writing | Takeaway value for reader
- 110 First-Person Article:** Autobiographical account.
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality
- 111 Freelance Article:** Articles in this category must be entered by a freelance writer who is an EPA Associate member. The article must have appeared in an EPA member publication or, if published in a non-EPA publication, it must have a faith-relevant theme. (Publication members are not eligible to enter this category.)
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality
- 112 General Article – Short:** Any original nonfiction article with a word count of 900 or less. .
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality
- 113 General Article – Intermediate:** Any original nonfiction article with a word count between 901 and 1,400.
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality
- 114 General Article – Long:** Any original nonfiction article with a word count of 1,401 or more.
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality
- 115 Humorous:** An original fiction or nonfiction article or editorial using humor to communicate.
Judging Criteria: Perception shown | Imagination | Phrasing | Impact | Effectiveness of humor

- 116 Interview Article:** An article based on in-depth interviewing (can be a Q-and-A or use direct and indirect quotations).
Judging Criteria: Subject's unique significance | Structure of article | Relevance of topics discussed | Clarity of subject's opinions | Writing Style
- 117 Personality Article:** A biographical account, either historical or contemporary.
Judging Criteria: Content/human interest | Timeliness | Credibility | Writing style | Originality of treatment
- 118 Poetry:** A single original poem.
Judging Criteria: Idea | Rhythm/metre | Language use | Perceptiveness | Tone and theme
- 119 Reporting:** Any news story originating with the publication.
Judging Criteria: Fairness | Thoroughness | Timeliness | Significance | Quality of writing
- 120 Standing Column:** A regular column under a recurring head by one author. (Submit columns from three consecutive issues.)
Judging Criteria: Writing style | Well-expressed opinions | Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Effective development of idea | Consistent quality
- 121 Student Writer of the Year:** Article by a student writer and published in an EPA member publication. (Entered by publication.)
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Effective development of idea | Writing style | Use of imagery/emotion | Originality of treatment

Design & photography categories

- 201 Cartoon:** A single cartoon (or panel, or cartoon in comic book format) not illustrating an article.
Judging Criteria: Originality | Draftsmanship | Design | Concept | Impact
- 202 Cover:** Must use the publication name. (For print periodicals only.)
Judging Criteria: Skill of execution | Creativity | Aesthetic appeal | Typography (including logo) | Communicative power
- 203 Original Art – Digital/Mixed Media:** Illustration based on or incorporating photographic elements. May include special use of type.
Judging Criteria: Composition | Technique | Appropriateness to context | Clarity of communication | Impact for reader
- 204 Original Art – Traditional:** Non-photographic illustration. (May be a cartoon illustrating an article. May include use of type.)
Judging Criteria: Composition | Technique | Appropriateness to context | Clarity of communication | Impact for reader
- 205 Photo Feature:** Text and photography originating with the publication.
Judging Criteria: Impact | Design/layout | Mood | Photographic technique | Text-photo coordination
- 206 Photography Use (3 consecutive issues):** The use of photography for the publication as a whole. Submit three consecutive issues by mail (for print periodicals only).
Judging Criteria: Overall impact | Overall technical quality | Artistic success of images | Cohesiveness of photos within layout | Fit with publication purpose
- 207 Publication Design (3 consecutive issues):** The graphic presentation of editorial content of the publication. Submit three consecutive issues by mail. (For print periodicals only.)
Judging Criteria: Graphic vitality | Graphic execution | Continuity and pacing | Distinctiveness | Appropriateness for content
- 208 Publication Redesign:** For significant design change. Submit hard copy of one issue with the new design, plus the corresponding issue from the previous year by mail. (For print periodicals only.)
Judging Criteria: Improved graphic vitality | Improved execution | Improved continuity/pacing | Improved distinctiveness | Improved fit with content

- 209 Single Photo – Candid:** Original photo of subject acting naturally or spontaneously in uncontrolled lighting and conditions.
Judging Criteria: Impact | Composition | Mood | Photographic technique | Appropriateness for context
- 210 Single Photo – Controlled:** Original photo (not stock) of subject posed in situation with controlled lighting and other conditions.
Judging Criteria: Impact | Composition | Mood | Photographic technique | Appropriateness for context
- 211 Table of Contents (new for 2016):** Overall concept and design that includes blend of typography, text, photo, and/or illustration.
Judging Criteria: Organization and layout | Creativity and style | Skill of execution | Aesthetic appeal | Typography
- 212 Two-Page Spread Design:** Graphic presentation that includes blend of typography, text, photo, and/or illustration.
Judging Criteria: Use of space | Creativity/aesthetic appeal | Use of art and photography | Design and typography | Appropriateness for context
- 213 Typography and Lettering:** Use of typography and/or lettering to enhance communication and appearance. Can be a single page, a spread or an entire article.
Judging Criteria: Creativity | Skill and execution | Appropriateness to context | Impact and communicative power | Use of color (including black)

Other

- 301 Feature Article (new for 2016):** The entire multi-page presentation of a single feature article, including editorial content, related sidebars, title, use of imagery, overall design.
Judging Criteria: Organization and design | Writing | Use of imagery (photos, graphics, illustrations) | Thoroughness of coverage | Title
- 302 Single-Theme Section or Issue:** In-depth treatment of a single topic with multiple articles, including editorial content, related sidebars, title, use of imagery, overall design. This can be a multi-page section within an issue or the entire issue.
Judging Criteria: Organization and layout | Writing | Use of imagery (photos, graphics, illustrations) | Thoroughness of coverage | Title
- 303 Titles:** Enter three feature story titles that powerfully draw readers into each story. Submit entire layout for each article.
Judging Criteria: Creativity | Typography | Design | Relevance to the story | Audience appeal
- 401 Blog: Single Post (new for 2016):** A single blog post. Can be part of an organization's website or other online site. (Restricted to Online /Digital and Associate members.)
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Effective development of idea | Writing style | Use of imagery/emotion | Originality of treatment
- 402 Blog: Website:** A complete blog site authored by one person or a group of individuals. Can be part of an organization's website or other online site. (Restricted to Online /Digital and Associate members.)
Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Consistent quality | Writing style and voice | Uniqueness of contribution | Aesthetic appeal
- 403 Website design (judge will visit site):** Overall aesthetic appeal and usability of a website. (Restricted to Online /Digital.)
Judging Criteria: Aesthetic appeal | Use of graphic elements | Organization/navigation | Usability/mobile responsiveness | Page load times