

EPA Contest Categories

HIGHER GOALS

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

Higher Goals

EPA's Higher Goals competition honors individual original aspects of a publication, such as writing, photography and design. Article/image reprints from other sources, including newswires, are not eligible for the contest. Members compete against all other publications.

Three new categories have been added for the 2021 contest.

- **508 Photography Use (Digital)**
- **512 Infographic**
- **704 Podcast**

The Photography Use (Digital) and Podcast categories are restricted to those holding a digital membership.

The categories in Higher Goals are:

Editorial

401 Article Series: Multiple original articles on a topic from two or more consecutive issues (not a regular column or feature). Maximum 5,000 words combined.

Judging Criteria: Originality of treatment | Thoroughness of coverage | Cohesiveness across editions | Effective development of idea | Writing style

402 Biblical Exposition: Any original article with the biblical or theological treatment of a doctrine or Scripture passage.

Judging Criteria: Cogency of arguments | Clarity | Writing style | Significance | Effective treatment of ideas

403 Critical Review: An original 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

404 Department: Regular section with a recurring title, with one or more writers. Submit from two consecutive issues. Maximum 5,000 words combined.

Judging Criteria: Writing style | Fit with publication purpose | Appeal to intended audience | Originality of treatment | Takeaway value for reader

405 Devotional: An original 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

406 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

407 Evangelism: An original 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

408 Fiction: An original short story (including a parable).

Judging Criteria: Believable characters | Believable conflict | Credible resolution | Quality of writing | Takeaway value for reader

409 First-Person Article: Autobiographical account.

Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality

410 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

411 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

412 General Article – Intermediate: Any original nonfiction article with a word count between 901 and 1,600.

Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality

413 General Article – Long: Any original nonfiction article with a word count between 1,601 and 3,500.

Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Sincerity and believability | Writing style | Takeaway value for reader | Dramatic quality

414 Humorous: An original fiction or nonfiction article or editorial using humor to communicate.

Judging Criteria: Perception shown | Imagination | Phrasing | Impact | Effectiveness of humor

415 Interview Article: An original 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

416 Personality Article: An original biographical account, either historical or contemporary.

Judging Criteria: Content/human interest | Timeliness | Credibility | Writing style | Originality of treatment

417 Poetry: A single original poem.

Judging Criteria: Idea | Rhythm/metre | Language use | Perceptiveness | Tone and theme

418 Reporting: Any news story originating with the publication.

Judging Criteria: Fairness | Thoroughness | Timeliness | Significance | Quality of writing

419 Standing Column: A regular column under a recurring head by one or more authors. (Submit columns from two consecutive issues.)

Judging Criteria: Writing style | Well-expressed opinions | Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Effective development of idea | Consistent quality

420 Student Writer of the Year: An original article by an undergrad 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

501 Cartoon: A single original cartoon (or panel, or cartoon in comic book format) not illustrating an article.

Judging Criteria: Originality | Draftsmanship | Design | Concept | Impact

502 Original Art – Digital/Mixed Media: Original 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

503 Original Art – Traditional: Original 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

504 Single Photo – Candid: Original photo of subject acting naturally or spontaneously in uncontrolled lighting and conditions.

Judging Criteria: Impact | Composition | Creativity | Technique | Appropriateness for context

505 Single Photo – Controlled: Original photo (not stock) of subject posed in situation with controlled lighting and other conditions.

Judging Criteria: Impact | Composition | Creativity | Technique | Appropriateness for context

- 506 Photo Feature:** Text and photography for a single article originating with the publication.
- Judging Criteria:** Impact | Design/layout | Creativity | Technique | Text-photo coordination
- 507 Photography Use - Print (2 consecutive issues):** The use of photography for the publication as a whole. Submit two consecutive issues by mail. *(Restricted to Print members.)*
- Judging Criteria:** Overall impact | Overall technical quality | Artistic success of images | Cohesiveness of photos within layout | Fit with publication purpose
- 508 NEW Photography Use - Digital:** The use of photography for the website or digital publication as a whole. *(Restricted to Digital members.)*
- Judging Criteria:** Overall impact | Overall technical quality | Artistic success of images | Cohesiveness of photos within digital presentation | Fit with publication purpose
- 509 Table of Contents:** 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
- 510 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)
- 511 Cover:** A single cover, which must use the publication name. *(Open also to digital members who produce a digital publication with a cover.)*
- (You have the option to mail in submission if physical nature of cover warrants review.)
- Judging Criteria:** Skill of execution | Creativity | Aesthetic appeal | Typography (including logo) | Communicative power
- 512 NEW Infographic:** The visualization of a concept or narrative that relies on a compilation of statistics, imagery, visual data and minimal text, designed to communicate a topic quickly and clearly.
- Judging Criteria:** Creative approach | Informative and practical | Clarity of information | Accurate data representation | Visual design
- 513 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
- 514 Publication Design (2 consecutive issues):** The graphic presentation of editorial content of the publication. Submit two consecutive issues by mail. *(Restricted to Print members.)*
- Judging Criteria:** Graphic vitality | Graphic execution | Continuity and pacing | Distinctiveness | Appropriateness for content

515 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. *(Restricted to Print members.)*

Judging Criteria: Improved graphic vitality | Improved execution | Improved continuity/pacing | Improved distinctiveness | Improved fit with content

Digital

601 Blog: Single Post: A single blog post. Can be part of an organization's website or other online site. *(Restricted to Digital and Associate members.)*

Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Effective development of idea | Writing style | Use of imagery/emotion | Originality of treatment

602 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 Digital and Associate members.)*

Judging Criteria: Idea (timeliness, appeal) | Consistent quality | Writing style and voice | Uniqueness of contribution | Aesthetic appeal

603 e-Newsletter: A digital newsletter informing people united by interest in a subject or organization. *(Restricted to Digital members.)*

Judging Criteria: Quality of writing | Originality of treatment | Effective development of idea | Use of imagery (photos, graphics, illustrations) | Aesthetic appeal

604 Website design: Overall aesthetic appeal and usability of a website. *(Restricted to Digital members.)*

Judging Criteria: Aesthetic appeal | Use of graphic elements | Organization/navigation | Usability/mobile responsiveness | Page load times

Other

701 Feature Article: 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

702 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. *(Print entries are recommended, but not required, to be submitted by mail.)*

Judging Criteria: Organization and layout | Writing | Use of imagery (photos, graphics, illustrations) | Thoroughness of coverage | Title

703 Titles: Enter three feature story titles that powerfully draw readers into each story. Submit entire layout for each article.

Judging Criteria: Creativity | Relevance to the story | Audience appeal | Typography & Design

704 NEW Podcast: A single audio program presented as a broadcast version of editorial content.
(*Restricted to Digital members.*)

Judging Criteria: Originality of treatment | Effective development of topic | Cultural relevance | Clarity of thought | Production quality

705 Cause of the Year Article — Christian Citizenship: Any original article with a central theme of Christian Citizenship.

Judging Criteria: Effectiveness of presentation | Quality/thoroughness of research | Use of imagery/emotion | Relevancy to audience | Writing style

706 Cause of the Year Illustration/Photo — Christian Citizenship: Any original illustrative artwork or photo with a central theme of Christian Citizenship.

Judging Criteria: Composition | Technique | Appropriateness to context | Clarity of communication | Impact for reader