

## 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.

#### Categories that require hard copy entries to be mailed to Nashville:

- 507 Photography Use – Print (two consecutive issues)
- 514 Publication Design (two consecutive issues)
- 515 Publication Redesign (1 issue after redesign and 1 issue prior to redesign)
- 702 Single-Theme Section or Issue
  
- 511 Cover (optional—you have the option to mail in submission if the physical nature of cover warrants review, i.e., die cut, embossing, etc.)

#### New Categories for 2023

- 606 Social media video — up to 2 minutes max
- 607 Short-form video – 2-10 minutes max
- 608 Long-form video – 10-60 minutes

#### 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:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness of research and sources

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

**Judging Criteria:** Clarity | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness of research

**403 Critical Review:** An original review of book(s), video and movies, drama, music and concerts or other media.

**Judging Criteria:** Critical perceptivity | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Informs about subject | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | 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:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Strength of writing

**405 Devotional:** An original inspirational biblical or spiritual piece to aid spiritual growth, with application. May be part of a series.

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Emotive impact | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice)

**406 Editorial:** Any opinion piece written by an editorial staff member.

**Judging Criteria:** Cogency of arguments | Critical perceptivity | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Quality of writing (including style/voice)

**407 Evangelism:** An original article to Christians meant to help believers learn to share the gospel more effectively.

**Judging Criteria:** Faithfulness to the Gospel | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Motivational effectiveness | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice)

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

**Judging Criteria:** Believable characters | Believable conflict | Credible resolution | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Quality of writing (including style/voice)

**409 First-Person Article:** Autobiographical account.

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness

**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:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness

**411 General Article – Short:** Any original nonfiction article with a word count of 900 or less.

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness

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

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness

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

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness

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

**Judging Criteria:** Effectiveness of humor | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Imagination | Perception shown | Quality of writing (including style/voice)

**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:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Subject's unique significance/human interest

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

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Subject's unique significance/human interest

**417 Poetry:** A single original poem.

**Judging Criteria:** Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Language use | Perceptiveness | Rhythm/metre | Tone and theme

**418 Reporting:** Any news story originating with the publication.

**Judging Criteria:** Fairness/objectivity | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness of research and sources

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

**Judging Criteria:** Critical perceptivity | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Well-expressed opinions

**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:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness

## 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 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 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 from a website serving exclusively as a blog. Can be from a clearly identified blog hosted on a publication's or organization's website. *(Restricted to Digital and Associate members.)*

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Use of imagery/emotion

**602 Blog: Website:** A complete blog website authored by one person or a group of individuals. Can be hosted on a publication's or organization's website, but must be clearly identified as a blog. *(Restricted to Digital and Associate members.)*

**Judging Criteria:** Design/Use of imagery/Aesthetic appeal | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization/navigation/mobile responsiveness | Quality of writing (including style/voice)

**603 e-Newsletter (2 issues):** A digital newsletter informing people united by interest in a subject or organization. *(Restricted to Digital and Associate members.)*

**Judging Criteria:** Design/Use of imagery/Aesthetic appeal | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Idea (timeliness, appeal, takeaway value) | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice)

**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

**605 Podcast:** A single audio program (episode) 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

**606 NEW Social Media Video – 2 minutes max:** A single video that tells a story in 2 minutes or less. May contain a CTA, but cannot be marketing or self-promotional throughout. *(Restricted to Digital members.)*

members.)

**Judging Criteria:** Script (messaging) | Production (lighting, sound, music, graphics, video quality) | Performance (acting, speaking, presentation) | Creativity/Uniqueness | Impact/cultural relevance

**607 NEW Short-form Video – 2 to 10 minutes max:** A single video that tells a story or shows an interview in 2 to 10 minutes. May contain a CTA, but cannot be marketing or self-promotional throughout. *(Restricted to Digital members.)*

**Judging Criteria:** Script (messaging) | Production (lighting, sound, music, graphics, video quality) | Performance (acting, speaking, presentation) | Creativity/Uniqueness | Impact/cultural relevance

**608 NEW Long-form Video – 10 to 60 minutes max:** A single video that tells a story or shows an interview in 10 to 60 minutes. May contain a CTA, but cannot be marketing or self-promotional throughout. *(Restricted to Digital members.)*

**Judging Criteria:** Script (messaging) | Production (lighting, sound, music, graphics, video quality) | Performance (acting, speaking, presentation) | Creativity/Uniqueness | Impact/cultural relevance

## 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:** Design/use of imagery (photos, graphics, illustrations) | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Thoroughness of coverage

**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. Submit entire issue by mail. *(Restricted to Print members.)*

**Judging Criteria:** Design/use of imagery (photos, graphics, illustrations) | Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Titles

**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 Cause of the Year Article — Unity:** Any original article with a central theme of Unity.

**Judging Criteria:** Grammar/punctuation/sentence structure | Organization and flow | Quality of writing (including style/voice) | Relevancy to topic | Thoroughness of research and sources

**705 Cause of the Year Illustration/Photo — Unity:** Any original illustrative artwork or photo with a central theme of Unity.

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