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

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) | Thoroughness

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 (Submit as a single image of the spread, not two separate files).

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 *(Print members are not eligible to enter digital categories unless they hold a dual print/digital membership)*

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.

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.

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 consecutive issues): A digital newsletter informing people united by interest in a subject or organization.

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.

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

605 Podcast: Single Episode: A single audio program (episode) presented as a broadcast version of editorial content.

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

606 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.

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

607 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.

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

608 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.

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 — Fostering & Adoption: Any original article with a central theme of Fostering & Adoption.

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 — Fostering & Adoption: Any original illustrative artwork or photo with a central theme of Fostering & Adoption.

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