

# STRUCTURE<sup>®</sup>

AUTHOR'S HANDBOOK 2026



# Welcome!

*Please review our guidelines carefully. An understanding of STRUCTURE's parameters for articles will provide you with a sound basis for submitting articles that end up in print!*



## STRUCTURE®

The Practicing Structural Engineer's Resource

### Vision

STRUCTURE magazine will be the premier resource for practicing structural engineers.

### Mission

The Editorial Board will engage, enlighten, and empower structural engineers by publishing interesting, informative, and inspirational content in STRUCTURE magazine that is professionally relevant, technically reliable, and intellectually refreshing

### Objectives

Through STRUCTURE magazine, the Editorial Board will:

Disseminate useful tips, tools, and techniques that will help structural engineers increase the quality, productivity, and profitability of their work.

Introduce new and innovative concepts in structural engineering through project descriptions, case studies, lessons learned, and other approaches.

Promote structural engineering as a true profession, not merely a technical avocation, and highlight how it is unique from the other design disciplines.

Thank you for your interest in STRUCTURE® magazine. As a premier publication of the National Council of Structural Engineers Associations (NCSEA), the Structural Engineering Institute (SEI) of ASCE, and the Council of American Structural Engineers (CASE) of ACEC, STRUCTURE communicates with every member of the leading structural engineering associations in the United States. STRUCTURE content is information readers refer to, time and again.

Our goal is to provide structural engineers with casual reading on materials, techniques, professional issues, resources, and more. With each article, we strive to provide a detailed overview of the subject, and encourage readers to reach out for more in-depth information.

STRUCTURE is not a peer-reviewed technical journal, but our Editorial Board does provide oversight to article content. The board is comprised of structural engineers representing a wide cross-section of specialties, and their oversight has made STRUCTURE magazine the premier resource for practicing structural engineers ... providing quality content generated by SEs for SEs.

In addition to assisting in developing/maintaining the magazine's annual Editorial Calendar, Editorial Board members are the primary reviewers for STRUCTURE's articles. An Editorial Board member is assigned to each article proposed for print and provides feedback and assistance to authors on content, criteria, deadlines, article reviews, and more.

We look forward to working with you!

# Article Guidelines and Rules

Remember that articles must be of interest as information to the reader. In general, it is important to write articles that are informative, timely, and practical to structural engineers. We remind authors that STRUCTURE magazine is not a refereed journal. As such, lengthy and detailed “papers” will not be accepted.

Appropriate content for STRUCTURE magazine includes Technical, Project, InSights, and Forum articles, as well as Letters to the Editor; they should be original and not previously published or concurrently submitted elsewhere. Prospective authors may offer articles, or STRUCTURE magazine may invite articles from individuals or organizations.

No articles are guaranteed publication; all articles are subject to the same scrutiny before acceptance, regardless of the source.

For invited articles, STRUCTURE magazine may provide an abstract to guide the author on key points of interest.

Volunteer Editorial Board members are assigned to articles and authors to clarify requirements and assist with content. They are a resource for article content and review. STRUCTURE’s full-time Managing Editor is the main point of contact for article criteria and deadlines.

When preparing an article, consider the following:

- Use simple, clear language and include definitions of terms and abbreviations.
- Write in plain English. Avoid jargon. Use short words.
- You are writing for a publication of general and technical interest. An appropriate rule is to write as if you were describing the contents of your article to a colleague within the structural engineering profession.
- Avoid the inclusion of mathematical equations, unless absolutely necessary.
- Laudatory language and self-promotion are prohibited.
- Do not write in the first person.
- Avoid the use of passive voice (“The project was designed ...”).

References are not published in the magazine, but should be provided on a separate page for posting in the online version of the article on the STRUCTURE magazine website. This allows the reader to access additional information on the topic. Be cautious about including references to Web pages, as websites change frequently, and may or may not be stable.

Other general rules to remember while developing your article include:

- No more than *three authors* will receive byline credits. It is the primary author’s responsibility to obtain article approval from all author’s prior to submission. If the Publisher encounters disagreement between authors at the time of “layout review,” it is likely that the article will be pulled until the issues are resolved.
- Graphics (including photographs, figures and drawings) help tell your story. Consider what images and artwork may accompany your article to help illustrate the point(s) you are making. A general rule of thumb

is to have 3 to 5 graphics for a 1500-word article. Images supplied should be high-resolution and be at minimum 4 inches wide and 4 inches tall at 300 dpi. Limit the use of text within the graphics.

- Limit the use of tables. Although they are useful to present data, remember that large tables can significantly reduce the number of words that will fit into the printable space allotted for your article.
- In all cases, the Publisher reserves the right to edit the article and will make the final decision in the matter.
- All submissions must include a byline, and a one or two-sentence description of the author(s). Each Author Tag should also include an email address or telephone number for readers to contact you for more information. Lengthy biographies and/or resumes are not acceptable. Author photographs will not be included with any article.
- When submitting an article, please include your full name, title, current affiliation, and email address.
- Printed articles may also be posted on the STRUCTURE website.

## ARTICLE TYPES

In general, STRUCTURE magazine prints the following types/lengths of articles:

Project Articles	1,800 to 2,400 words
Technical Articles	1,200 to 2,000 words
InSights Articles	800 to 1,500 words
Forum Articles	700 to 900 words
Letters	100 to 200 words

Our goal for the printed article is tied to the number of pages available. Page count is based on a combination of word counts and the number of graphics in the article.

Following are descriptions of these general article types, including suggestions and restrictions.

## PROJECT ARTICLES

Project Articles should be informative. By definition, a project is something that has been or will be undertaken. These articles should not be written about theory.

To be of interest to STRUCTURE magazine readers, project articles must include unique structural aspects, unusual and/or innovative structural solutions, etc. These aspects should be able to be used by the readers on their own projects. Consider providing:

- Introduction or overview of the project, including why it is exemplary. This portion of the article should be in a newsworthy format, easily read.
- Brief descriptions of project details. Do not include design details to the extreme, or design formulas.

Authors should include as much information as possible that would be of technical interest to practicing structural engineers, such as:

- Structural engineering design features of interest, including special design criteria.
- What is the most significant item in the design?
- Describe any unique challenges.
- Special lessons learned from the design and construction.
- Special conditions, design or research.
- Applicable codes and standards.
- Loadings when appropriate.
- Computer programs used for design and document preparation.
- Costs if appropriate.
- Photographs or graphics depicting design features, construction, unusual elements, etc.
- A listing of **Project Team Members** including city and state of applicable office of:
  - SER—design and/or construction, where appropriate
  - Owner
  - Architect of Record
  - Contractors (primary and specialty)
  - Other integral team members, such as landscape architects, mechanical, HVAC, etc.
  - Structural software used

Project articles are typically **no more than 2,400 words**, and should include at least five general photographs/figures/drawings relating to the material discussed in the article. Graphics can include construction and/or completed project photographs, renderings, line drawings, etc. (See **Graphics Guidelines** for information on type, resolution and submission.)

Include Author(s) contact information, so that the reader may have a point of reference for possible questions.

## TECHNICAL ARTICLES

These articles present technical information on subjects of interest to structural engineers. Topics can include:

- Codes and standards
- Design and analysis
- Technology advances and their use by structural engineers
- Business practices, management, growth, and other business topics
- Education, professional development, and licensure

Technical articles should be **no more than 2,000 words**, and include figures, graphics or other images appropriate to the topic to add visual interest. (See **Graphics Guidelines** for information on type, resolution and submission.)

Include Author(s) contact information, so that the reader may have a point of reference for possible questions.

## INSIGHTS ARTICLES

InSights articles are written about trends, changing technologies, material updates, etc. These articles are limited to one page in length, and are intended to notify structural engineers of evolving issues. InSights articles are limited to a **maximum of 1,500 words** and may include a graphic. (See **Graphics Guidelines** for information on type, resolution and submission.)

## FORUM ARTICLES

Forum articles express opinions on issues relevant to the structural engineering profession. They may take a point/counterpoint form with two opposing opinions, or may present only a single view. Forum articles may be critical of the profession, but criticism must be constructive. Slander or libelous statements are prohibited.

By nature, Forum articles may be controversial. They should encourage healthy debate. STRUCTURE magazine will encourage readers to add to the discussion by submitting comments for possible future publication.

Forum articles are limited to a **maximum of 900 words**.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are encouraged. Guidelines for submission of Letters to the Editor include:

- The subject of the letter must be relevant to an article, editorial, or column in STRUCTURE magazine, printed within the last three issues (determined by the date of receipt of the letter by the Publisher).
- Letters to the Editor should be **no longer than 200 words**, and must be signed.
- All letters will be reviewed by the Chair of the Editorial Board, Editor and Publisher. The Chair and Editor will have the final say regarding what is printed.
- Editor and Publisher reserve the right to edit the letter. Also, in some cases, only a portion of the letter may be printed.
- In some cases, STRUCTURE will provide the author of the original referenced article an opportunity to provide a response to the Letter.
- Due to space constraints, letters to the editor may not be published in the print magazine. However, Letters to the Editor are published to the STRUCTURE website regularly.

# Writing Tips

## CREATE A WORKING TITLE

Your working title helps focus your ideas. Make it brief (three to six words), use an active verb, and aim to be clever but not obtuse. If you cannot limit the title to three to six words, consider breaking the title into a title and subtitle.

## WRITE A LEAD SENTENCE OR PARAGRAPH

This should compel your audience to read the article. A surprising statistic, a witty or shocking quotation, a question, a scenario, or an analogy, are among the devices you can incorporate into a lead. Most important, your lead must be relevant to your topic and get to the point quickly. What is the purpose of your story?

## THE BODY OF THE ARTICLE

Use headings/subheadings in the manuscript to signal to the reader the direction and focus the story is taking.

Be comprehensive. Use details that add clarity. Provide statistics, dates, and quantities that support your points.

Pertinent information that is related but perhaps self-contained (e.g., steps in a process or a list of resources) can often be organized in a sidebar – a box of information that stands apart from, but within, the article. Sidebars are included in maximum word counts.

## IN CONCLUSION

Make your conclusion as memorable as your lead. To quote the editors of Harvard Business Review, “A good conclusion adds something new, but relevant, to the article – a forecast, a challenge, a clinching bit of evidence, or, ideally, something to do on Monday morning.”

## BY-LINE AND AUTHOR INFORMATION

Provide the full name(s) of the author(s). Include appropriate suffixes (e.g. Ph.D., P.E., S.E., SECB). A maximum of three authors are permitted for printed articles. Write a one- or two-sentence Author Tag for each author that includes an email address or telephone number for readers to contact you for more information. Lengthy biographies and/or resumes are not acceptable Author Tags.

## EDIT AND RE-WRITE

Edit your article thoroughly at least twice. Delete unnecessary words and phrases. Turn passive sentences into active ones. Rewrite or reword to achieve continuity and clarity. Make sure that every paragraph follows logically from the one before it. Don't be satisfied until every sentence says precisely what you want it to say.

## TECHNICAL TIPS

- Spell out measurements and other abbreviations (e.g. “inches”, not “in.”; “feet”, not “ft.”). Do not use symbols to replace words (e.g. " for inch; ' for feet).
- If an organization, code, or other title has an acronym, spell it out once (the first time it is used) and provide the acronym. After that, you only need to use the acronym; e.g., the National Council of Structural Engineers Associations (NCSEA); after this reference, the acronym NCSEA can be used on its own.
- Avoid the inclusion of mathematical equations, unless absolutely necessary.
- All graphics, illustrations, line art, and photographs used with articles in STRUCTURE are labeled as **Figures**. If you will refer to a graphic in your article, use the term **Figure** for all of them (do not switch from **Figure** to **Photograph** to **Drawing** labels within the article). Begin numbering with the first time you reference a graphic, and proceed with numbering logically.
- Write in plain English. Avoid jargon. Use short words.
- Do not write in the first person. (e.g., “We provided several alternatives, each incorporating different materials.” Instead write, “The design firm provided several alternatives, each incorporating different materials.” Replace “I” with “the author”.)
- Write in an active, not passive, voice. A simple tip on defining passive sentences is to look for the word “by”, or sentences that could be expanded with “by me”, “by the designer”, “by them,” etc. Or, look for instances when the “what” of the verb begins the sentence. To change the voice to active, replace “by” with the active form of the verb referenced; then, make the “what” of the verb end the sentence. For example:

Passive voice	Active voice
The music is <i>heard</i> by me.	I <i>hear</i> the music.
The music is <i>being heard</i> by me.	I am <i>hearing</i> the music.
The music was <i>being heard</i> by me.	I was <i>hearing</i> the music.
The music <i>had been heard</i> by me.	I <i>had heard</i> the music.

## DIMENSIONS

Dimensions should be in English units whenever possible. Metric equivalents can be included in parentheses after the English unit. Spell out units whenever feasible; in particular, do not use ' or " marks to denote feet and inches. For example, do not use 5'. Use 5 feet instead.

## DOUBLE-CHECK ARTICLE ACCURACY

Review your original source material and verify every name, date, fact and figure. Content accuracy is your responsibility, not that of NCSEA, CASE, SEI, the Publisher, or the Editorial Board.

# Submission Guidelines

The first step in the submission process is to fill out the author intent form on the STRUCTURE website at [www.structuremag.org](http://www.structuremag.org). This form tells us you plan to submit an article on a specific topic. All articles, graphics, and forms will be submitted directly to the Managing Editor. Once an author intent form is received and the article concept accepted for publication, the Managing Editor will reach out to the author with proposed publication dates and deadlines and will explain the magazine's perception of content for the expanded article. **Contact information** for the Managing Editor is included at the end of this document.

The length of article will be based on word count for ease of reference, and should be discussed prior to submission. Articles must be submitted electronically in .doc or .txt format. **PDF formats are not acceptable.** Avoid any additional formatting, unless the author is trying to emphasize portions for the editorial staff. Include full name, title, current affiliation, location and contact information for all authors at the end of the manuscript.

Authors may submit graphics embedded within articles, but they must also supply graphics separately as individual files.

Articles submitted for publication should be original, and not previously published or under consideration for publication elsewhere. All articles published become the copyrighted property of NCSEA. Authors are required to fill out and submit the "New Material Assurance and Reprint Consent Form" prior to publication. Reprint of the article in other venues, as printed in the magazine, will be by permission of NCSEA only.

Copyright refers to the article as printed, not the intellectual content. Authors are free to use the content, in a re-written article, in other venues. Graphics remain the property of the author, but release for use in STRUCTURE also grants permission for the magazine to use a credited copy of the graphic in a future issue(s).

The Publisher assumes that materials submitted for publication are properly available for general dissemination to the readership of the publication for which the article is intended. It is the responsibility of the author(s), not STRUCTURE magazine, to determine whether disclosure of material requires prior consent from other parties, and if so, to obtain it.

The Editorial Board may consider the inclusion of previously published articles upon receipt of appropriate written permission of the original author and/or publisher. If the article is a reprint, this must be indicated in the "New Material Assurance and Reprint Consent Form."

## ARTICLE ACCEPTANCE

Manuscripts/abstracts are evaluated based on originality of topics, readability, soundness of content, timeliness, and interest to our readers. We may accept your article outright, or accept it contingent on your revision(s). All accepted articles are subject to editing for style, clarity, unacceptable language and grammar, and length.

The Publisher assumes that all authors have approved article content *before* the article is submitted for publication. If the Publisher encounters disagreement between authors at the time of "layout review," it is likely that the article will be pulled until the issues are resolved.

## ISSUE ASSIGNMENT AND EDITING

Your article will be assigned an issue upon agreement to write the article. In rare cases when STRUCTURE magazine has either too much material for a given issue, or needs to publish an article immediately, your article may be moved to another issue. Please note that Editorial Board members will suggest changes for article length and readability. Should the author not be comfortable with suggested changes, the article can be pulled from consideration for publication.

Your writing style is your own, and we make every attempt to preserve it as we prepare your manuscript for publication. We do try to make the copy as substantive, clear, and lively as possible. If your article is substantially revised, we will send you the edited version, and you will have approximately three days to review it.

The Publisher provides authors with a courtesy review copy of the article "as laid out." This quick final review is to ensure that photos and captions are appropriately paired, symbols and other non-standard items are correct, etc. Your review is limited to graphical layout and any errors in text. Please refrain from large edits and re-writing of the article. Substantive changes to article content are not permitted during this review. If content changes are required at this stage, the article may be pulled and printed in a future issue.

If questions arise after that, we will call you, but otherwise, the next time you see your article will be when it is in print!

Please refer to the **Graphics Guidelines** section for information on submitting artwork, figures, line drawings, photographs, etc.

All articles, graphics, and forms will be submitted directly to the Managing Editor. Once an author intent form is received, the managing editor will reach out to the author with proposed publication dates and deadlines. **Contact information** for the Managing Editor is included at the end of this document.

# Graphics Guidelines

Photos, drawings, and other graphics not only add information, but provide appeal to an article as well. When submitting your article, include good-quality artwork. In general, a 1,500-2,000 word article is supported by 3 – 5 graphics. Supplied artwork, graphics, and photographs should follow the mechanical specifications noted below.

Please contact the Managing Editor for uploading instructions for large files. (Refer to the **Contact Us section** of this document).

Images should be sent electronically via email or through an electronic file sharing site. STRUCTURE may offer non-copyright stock images for use with the article.

Each image must be submitted as an **individual file**. Acceptable formats include JPEG, TIF, EPS, or high-resolution PDF. Do not send GIF files. All images should be submitted at the highest resolution possible (minimum 300 DPI). Low resolution graphics **CANNOT** be digitally enlarged. Low resolution electronic artwork and photos will not be printed. All the

text in the photo, graphic, or drawing must be readable at print resolution or the graphic will not be included in your article.

Photos embedded in word processing documents are helpful for determining placement in your article, however, individual files must still be submitted.

If you have a graphic that you would like to submit as a possible cover option, it needs to be at least 8"x11" at 300 DPI.

Make sure that your graphics submission is accompanied by a listing of all captions, written in complete sentences. The captions should be clearly linked to each image's file name. If there are copyright references necessary for any graphics, include them in the captions.

Please contact the Managing Editor if you have any questions regarding graphics preparation and submission.

Article graphics can be submitted via email or to the publisher's cloud storage. Contact the Managing Editor for a direct link.

## Contact Us

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### STRUCTURE website

[www.STRUCTUREmag.org](http://www.STRUCTUREmag.org)