



GUIDELINES for Primary Reviewers Geotechnical Special Publications

The Proceedings of this conference will be published in multiple volumes as Geotechnical Special Publications (GSP) of the Geo-Institute of ASCE. GSPs are the primary outlet of the G-I for continuing the tradition of geotechnical knowledge transfer and are recognized internationally as premier publications for geotechnical engineering and the geoprofession. GSPs originated with the proceedings of the first geotechnical specialty conference (held in 1960 on the Shear Strength of Cohesive Soils), and the G-I has administered the publications ever since its formation in 1996.

These publications are special because during a three-phase submission process, the content is subject to a rigorous technical review similar to that of a scientific journal. Each GSP paper must receive a minimum of two positive peer reviews before final acceptance. Papers published in a GSP are indexed in Civil Engineering Database, Google Scholar, and others.

Your participation in this review process is an integral part of a GSP publication. Thank you for volunteering your time to review draft papers; you are making a substantial contribution to the profession and to the success of the conference and your efforts are greatly appreciated.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of a peer reviewer of Geo-Congress 2019 Proceedings draft papers include:

- A reviewer shall objectively judge the quality of a paper on its own merit and shall respect the intellectual independence of the author(s). Papers should be judged on the following qualities:
 - appropriateness for the conference theme or program;
 - originality of approach, concept, and/or application;
 - clarity and conciseness of expression, as well as correctness of English spelling and grammar; and
 - relevance to the geotechnical engineering profession.
- A peer reviewer should disqualify him/herself from reviewing a specific paper if:
 - the reviewer feels inadequately qualified;
 - the reviewer is unable to meet the established deadline; and
 - the reviewer has a conflict of interest or may appear to have one.
Conflicts of interest may include interest in a competing product or service; a close personal relationship, such as parent/child, spouse, or sibling; or likelihood of gaining financially by publication of the paper.
- A peer reviewer will bring the following situations to the attention of the editor or technical committee:
 - The reviewer identifies substantial similarity between the abstract or paper under review and a paper that is already published or under consideration for publication.
 - The reviewer finds convincing evidence that a paper contains plagiarized material or falsified research data. In this case, G-I/ASCE staff should also be notified. (The reviewer should not contact the author directly.)

GUIDELINES for Primary Reviewers / Geotechnical Special Publications – continued

- A peer reviewer shall give unbiased consideration to all papers offered for publication. The reviewer shall judge each on its merits without regard to any personal relationship or familiarity with the author(s), or to the race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, professional association, or political philosophy of the author(s).
- A peer reviewer shall treat all abstracts and papers as confidential documents and shall neither disclose nor discuss it with anyone outside the proceedings editor, the technical committee, or G-I/ASCE Publications staff.
- The following best practices should be observed for written evaluations:
 - Reviewers shall explain and support their recommendations adequately so that the editor and authors may understand the basis of their comments.
 - Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument has been previously published should be accompanied by the relevant citation.
 - Recommendations for revision should be specific and accompanied by a clear explanation of what work is required to address the recommendation.
 - Reviewers shall refrain from personal criticism.

CONDUCTING YOUR REVIEW

You will receive a review request via an email generated by the CATALYST online paper submission system. This request will include:

- A link to the [CATALYST review site](#), from where you can download a copy of the draft paper(s) assigned to you for review and enter your scores and comments about that paper.
- A link to these [GUIDELINES for Primary Reviewers of Geotechnical Special Publications](#)
- A link to a [CATALYST Review Guide](#).

Please complete your review(s) by July 25, 2018
Contact your session chair immediately if this will be a problem.

As you review your colleagues' draft paper, you will:

1. **Conduct an evaluation of the paper**, providing answers online to 16 questions about: 1) treatment of the subject, 2) overall quality, and 3) how well the paper conforms to the required ASCE proceedings paper format. The questions are ranked on a scale of 1 = poor to 5 = excellent.
(Find more information about specific review questions and FAQs at the end of this document.)
2. **Provide comments to the authors of the paper.** Enter comments for the paper's authors that will direct their final paper. These could summarize the outcome of your review, go into more detail about content issues or specific evaluations, or clarify suggested changes versus strongly recommended or even mandatory changes.
3. **Provide comments and a recommendation to the session chair:** Enter comments and a recommendation specifically for the session chair making the decision of whether or not to invite the authors to submit a final version of the paper. (The authors will not see these.) Should the paper be accepted or declined? Why?

In addition to entering review scores online, **you may choose to mark up the draft paper** with your comments and suggestions **(this is optional, but very appreciated by authors)**. If you opt to do this, you can scan a copy with your hand-written comments, or use 'Comments and Track Changes' options. *Please note, if you do this, you must take additional steps to preserve your anonymity in the document. A good source of how to do so is found here:*

https://wordribbon.tips.net/T010222_Making_Sure_Changes_and_Comments_are_Anonymous.html

FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT REVIEW QUESTIONS

General Evaluation of Paper

The following evaluation statements are considered in assessing the paper and scored on a scale of 1 = poor to 5 = excellent. Any editorial and minor technical comments can be marked on the margins of a review copy, or noted in the comment section.

General Assessment:

1. Work is original and makes a contribution to geotechnical or geoenvironmental engineering.
2. Material is not presented for commercial or private advantage.
3. Manuscript does not contain excessively speculative or other unwanted materials.
4. Overall technical quality of paper is acceptable.
5. Scientific contribution and breadth of attendee interest is significant.

Subject Treatment:

6. Abstract includes primary findings and conclusions.
7. Objectives are clearly stated and achieved.
8. Background information is adequately covered.
9. Information given is accurate and consistent.
10. Technical material is clearly presented in text.
11. Graphics are clearly presented.
12. All conclusions follow logically from text.

Presentation:

Information about the required ASCE format is available here:

<http://ascelibrary.org/pb-assets/images/CUSTOM%20PAGES/FILES/author%20formatting%20instructions.pdf>

13. Paper is in acceptable ASCE format.
14. Quality of figures and tables is acceptable.
15. References, symbols, & units (SI) are consistent with requirements.
16. Paper length is appropriate for the material that is covered.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PAPER TYPES

This conference allows for two different types of paper submissions: “technical papers,” and “case study papers.” Each of these paper types should be reviewed with appropriate consideration of the different expectations for each paper type:

- **Technical Papers:** Technical paper submissions should be 8-10 pages in length, and should describe in significant detail the results from research or practice-oriented projects that will be of broad interest to the geotechnical engineering community.
- **Case Study Papers:** Case study paper submissions should be 10-15 pages in length, and should provide more extensive details and information about an individual field case study that will be of broad interest to the geotechnical engineering community. The additional pages allowed for these papers is intended to allow additional material needed to properly document the case study for the long-term benefit of the geotechnical community.

On rare occasions, and subject to the approval of the Program Committee, 1-2 extra pages may be allowed for special circumstances, and this approval will not be unreasonably withheld. Draw the attention of your Session Chair to any over-length papers you encounter.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHORS AND PRIMARY REVIEWERS

Every effort is made to preserve the anonymity of paper reviewers. Authors are informed that responses to reviews are not expected, but they are expected to address the changes suggested by reviewers in their final paper. If they have a question or comment regarding a review, they are instructed to send it via email to the session chair for this session.

QUESTIONS?

- **For issues related to the content of a paper you’re reviewing:** Contact your [session chair\(s\)](#).
- **For technical support related to the CATALYST submission system:** Once signed in, click on **Support** at the top to submit a support ticket. If you are having trouble logging in, contact the CATALYST Help Desk by clicking on **Site Support** at the bottom of the log in page.
- **For issues related to overall program content, ASCE conference policy, or the technical paper submission process:** [Helen Cook](#)