

## EDITORS GUIDELINES FOR GEOTECHNICAL SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS (GSP)

Prepared by the Technical Publications Committee of the Geo-Institute of ASCE (14 February 2007)

### 1. Introduction

Geotechnical Special Publications (GSPs) serve as the primary outlet of the Geo-Institute of ASCE (G-I) for the continued tradition of geotechnical knowledge transfer that originated with the proceedings of the first geotechnical specialty conference, held in 1960, on *Shear Strength of Cohesive Soils*. The second specialty conference on *Settlement of Foundations* was held in 1964. These conferences occurred every second year from 1968 through 1974, and afterwards then held annually. The G-I has continued this highly successful tradition of yearly specialty conferences and broader based geotechnical congresses under the aegis of the Technical Coordination Council (TCC), which integrates and coordinates all technical activities of the Institute. In addition to conference proceedings, notable publications also began to emerge from other activities of ASCE's Geotechnical Engineering Division.

The Geotechnical Engineering Division adopted numbered GSPs as an official designation in 1986. Since then, GSPs have continued to reflect the broad variety of geotechnical activities, ranging from a single set of proceedings from a specialty conference to papers presented in one or more sessions at a Geotechnical Congress or ASCE National Convention to guidelines and special reports prepared by technical committees. The sizes of GSPs also vary and have ranged from less than 100 pages to about 2000 pages in two volumes. As of 2007, the number of GSPs now exceeds 175, with as many as 10 to 15 being printed yearly. The GSPs provide an important source of technical literature for members of the G-I and the geo-profession at large.

The following editor's guidelines were prepared towards the following principal objectives:

- Establish a formal process for approval of all GSPs that evaluates their usefulness and marketability.
- Provide a process of selecting editors who will be responsible for maintaining appropriate standards for the quality of all papers.
- Set detailed instruction for preparing papers to set standards for quality and appearance.

### 2. Approval Process for GSPs

Because GSPs are developed from various sources, it is important for Editors to follow the approval process designed for their particular GSP type. The types of GSPs and the corresponding approval process are outlined in Table E-1. Note that TCC approval is required for all GSP publications. Criteria for selection include: (1) Geo-community interest in the topic, (2) confidence in the Editor(s), including prior experience and track record, (3) name-recognition of probable contributing authors, (4) appropriateness of the anticipated size of the GSP, and (5) anticipated conference and post-conference sales.

Appendix I contains the Form: *Request for Approval of a GSP*, which must be prepared for all GSPs. For Type 1 GSPs (single proceedings), the proposers of the conference should submit the form to the TCC. For Type 2 GSPs (multiple GSPs from a conference, etc.), the organizing group for the track or sessions should submit the form to the GSP Coordinator for that event. Proposals for Type 3 GSPs should be submitted to the TCC, which may consult the Technical Publications Committee.

### 3. Obligations of Editors

The Editors will maintain the sole contact with contributing Authors and will work with the ASCE publication staff in preparation of a GSP. The Editors must also work with the reviewers to ensure a fair, professional, and timely critique of the draft papers. The ASCE Book Production Staff can be a highly valuable resource to editors in preparation of GSPs. The Manager of Proceedings Production for ASCE serves as the contact for preparation and printing of GSPs:

Manager of Proceedings Production  
American Society of Civil Engineers  
1801 Alexander Bell Drive  
Reston, VA 20191-4400

Phone: 703-295-6244

Fax: 703-295-6278

Email: [ddickert@asce.org](mailto:ddickert@asce.org)

Editors must inform authors of the deadlines for submittal of papers for review and for final camera-ready manuscript submission. Authors may also be informed of the G-I policies for republication in the JGGE, particularly when editors consider this important to recruitment of contributions such as outstanding case histories and state-of-the-art reviews. The G-I Policy on re-publication of a previous work is documented as an Editorial in the June 1999 Issue of *Journal of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Engineering*, Vol. 125, No. 6, pp. 437.

Authors should also be informed that their GSP papers are eligible for discussion and awards. Editors of GSPs are responsible for informing authors of the format for paper presentation. The editors have final responsibility for ensuring appropriate format of papers included in the GSP. Although no minimum length has been specified for GSPs, successful GSPs typically have at least 100 pages.

The paper submission and review process will be handled using an on-line paper management system. The weblink for the paper management will be provided on the conference website. The paper management system allows for submission of the abstracts and draft papers, reviewer access to the paper, acceptance or declination of the paper, and final submission of the paper. Editors will be responsible for managing the paper review process using the on-line system. A short tutorial is available from Geo-Institute staff.

The following materials must be prepared by the Editors of the GSP and submitted to ASCE Manager of Book Production:

1. "Front matter", both hard copy and electronic files (Microsoft Word strongly preferred), including the following:

- Title page: title, subtitle (if any), "official" editor or committee name(s), date, and meeting location.
- Abstract: 150-word summary of contents.
- Table of contents: title and author names for each paper, in order of appearance in the GSP.
- Preface or Introduction or Tribute: longer description of purpose or contents of the publication. Should mention review process used and whether papers are eligible for awards.
- Other optional pieces of front matter are dedication, glossary, notation on abbreviation list, acknowledgments, list of committee members, and/or list of reviewers.

## 2. Cover Suggestion:

- Original photos, graphics, or illustrations.
- Color preferences, if any.

Also, for papers required in a hard copy submission format, the editors also need to secure the following:

3. Papers in final camera-ready form, as well as in electronic copy (Word and/or PDF), as appropriate.
4. *Permission Verification Form* and *Copyright Transfer Agreement* for all papers, signed by authors.

ASCE Publications will manage the production of the GSP, including paginating, typesetting front matter, printing and binding, fulfillment, and marketing. Examples of past GSP designs and frontal details can be found in any of a number of the 175+ GSPs already published.

## 4. Instructions to Authors for Paper Preparation

The instructions to authors are included in a separate document entitled "Author's Guide to Preparing Papers for GSPs". Editors should provide this document to GSP authors. The length of a paper is commonly set at 6 to 15 pages, including figures, tables, appendices, and references. This length may be too restrictive for select papers presenting case histories, state-of-the-art reports, or special keynote lectures. Therefore, GSP Editors may, through coordination with the TCC, allow a limited number of longer papers to be included in a GSP.

## 5. Paper Review Process

Editors are responsible for the quality of contributions to the GSP, both in terms of technical content and professional presentation by authors. This responsibility includes a fair peer review of each manuscript by qualified individuals. Members of G-I Technical Committees often review papers for GSPs. In addition, each author submitting a paper to a prospective GSP could serve as a potential reviewer. All GSP papers require one or more positive peer reviews for acceptance. The editor must include a statement in the Preface concerning the specific peer review process used in developing the GSP. Depending on the adopted review process, one or more negative reviews may preempt a paper's decline for a GSP. An example hard-copy version of the ASCE GSP Review Forms are provided on the G-I website; however, from 2007 and beyond, online reviews will be conducted.

## 6. Schedule of Activities and Deadlines

A GSP serving as the conference proceedings should be available for distribution at the time of the meeting for the convenience of the attendees and to maximize conference and post-conference sales. To meet this publication requirement, the timeline & schedules given in Table E-2 are to be met.

Abstracts may be solicited through a general call for papers for the conference, but editors should also solicit papers and abstracts through personal contacts and other forms of connection for the appropriate technical community to ensure appropriate contributions in terms of number and quality of papers.

## 7. Additional Editorial Responsibilities

The following items should be cross-checked and verified by the editors during the review process and before final submission to the ASCE Proceedings Manager:

- a) Copyright issues - photos, figures, or other graphic elements and especially material taken from the internet is often copyrighted and cannot be reproduced without permission. This is the author's responsibility. If you see a photograph/figure/map taken from a copyrighted publication like Mapquest, the New York Times, Encarta, CNN, AP, etc., please double check with the author that permission has been obtained - it usually has not. Authors looking for quick maps and good pictures often grab images off the Internet totally unaware that they need permission just as you would if the image came from a print publication. If the copyright symbol, the "c" in a circle, and a name follows it, the author needs permission.
- b) Copyright Transfer Agreement - At least one author from each paper must agree to the copyright transfer agreement. A faxed signed CTA is okay.
- c) Errors in the converted files - If you are receiving papers by electronic means, please double check the print copy that you will be sending the Proceedings Manager to assure that there are no printing errors. Contrary to popular belief, PDFs are vulnerable to font substitutions when printed outside of the network on which they were created. This is especially true with equations, special characters, and Asian language packs. Note that papers created on A4 (European paper sizing) may have formatting problems when reflowed onto American size 8.5 x 11.
- d) General paper format - the most important formatting issue is the one of margins. The table below contains the margin settings the authors should have used.

Margin Settings for GSP Proceedings Papers

<b>Margins</b>	8.5 x 11 (letter)	A4
Top	1"	3.5cm
Bottom	1"	3.5cm
Left	1.375"	3.25cm
Right	1.375"	3.25cm

- e) Color Graphics - For CD-type proceedings, color graphics are possible. On the other hand, for hard copy-type GSP proceedings will be printed in black and white. Therefore, please check for figures in color and see how the printed version works for hard copy-type GSPs. If necessary, have the author convert them to black and white.

**Table E-1. Types of Geotechnical Special Publications (GSP) and Their Approval Process.**

<b>Types of GSP</b>	<b>Approval Process</b>
<p>1.1 Single Proceedings from Specialty Conference or Specialty Track at an G-I GeoCongress</p> <p>1.2 A single CD containing all proceedings papers from all technical sessions at a conference or G-I GeoCongress</p>	<p>The conference proposal that is submitted to the TCC must describe the plans for proceedings and include names of the proposed editors (who usually also serve on the G-I conference organizing committee). The TCC will approve the GSP editors. The G-I staff negotiate costs for the GSP with ASCE. Then, ASCE coordinates the schedule with the Editor and G-I staff. The GSP Editor, along with G-I staff and ASCE, estimate the post-conference sales.</p> <p>As above, with proper coordination with TCC</p>
<p>2. Multiple GSPs from Tracks and Sessions at a Specialty Conference or G-I GeoCongress (book format only)</p>	<p>For a specialty conference, the proposal to the TCC should designate one member of the G-I conference organizing committee to serve as the GSP Coordinator. Note: If the conference has several major tracks, it may be appropriate to have more than one GSP Coordinator. The TCC approves the GSP Coordinator(s). This same basic procedure also applies to G-I events at ASCE National Conventions.</p> <p>Proposals for individual GSPs are submitted to the GSP Coordinator, who then makes recommendations to the G-I organizing committee for final approval. The G-I staff negotiates costs with ASCE. The GSP Coordinator works with G-I Staff and ASCE to estimate sales for each GSP. The Coordinator and G-I staff negotiate schedules with ASCE.</p>
<p>3. Guidelines &amp; Reports, generally developed from specific G-I Technical Committees</p>	<p>The proposal for the GSP is submitted to the TCC. The TCC will coordinate with the Technical Publications Committee.</p>

**Table E-2. GSP Timetable and Schedule of Deadlines Towards Publication**

<b>Weeks to Conference</b>	<b>Task Due</b>
70	Call for Abstracts
56	Submission of abstracts to editors.
50	Notify authors of abstract acceptance. Give instructions for paper preparation.
32	Authors submit draft copies of manuscripts to editors.
24	Return of review comments to authors. Request for final paper preparation.
18	Final manuscripts due to GSP Editor. Copyright Forms due also.
15	Submission by editors of all required materials to ASCE

**APPENDIX I. Request for Approval of a Geotechnical Special Publication (GSP).**

1. Title of proposed GSP:
2. Summary of topics to be included in GSP/title of conference for which GSP is proposed (if applicable):
3. Organizing committee/group proposing GSP. If GSP requires collaboration with other groups, clearly indicate the nature and degree of commitment to this collaboration.
4. Description of proposed peer review process. Include principal source of reviewers (e.g., names of technical committees, local section or branch, and other relevant affiliations).
5. Names, titles, affiliation, address, telephone, fax, and email of proposed editors. Indicate the designated contact editor.
6. Schedule (specify if a call for papers is planned)
  - 6.1 Solicitation for abstracts/papers:
  - 6.2 Receipt of abstracts:
  - 6.3 Notification of acceptance of abstract:
  - 6.4 Receipt of papers for review:
  - 6.5 Notification of paper acceptance:
  - 6.6 Receipt of camera-ready papers:
  - 6.7 Conference date:
7. For Proceedings: Proposed Venue for the meeting/conference:
8. For Proceedings: Estimated attendance (or sales, if not included in the registration fee) at the meeting:
9. *For GSP Types 2 and 3*, on an additional page, list anticipated invited authors, paper topics, length of papers, and the degree of certainty of each of the contributions.
10. Submitted By
  - 10.1 Name:
  - 10.2 G-I affiliation:
  - 10.3 Address
  - 10.4 Date:
  - 10.5 Email: