Soils and Rocks

Last update: May 30th, 2025

Guide for Authors

Soils and Rocks is an international scientific journal published by the Brazilian Association for Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (ABMS) and by the Portuguese Geotechnical Society (SPG). The aim of the journal is to publish original papers on all branches of Geotechnical Engineering. Each manuscript is subjected to either a single-blind or double-blind peer-review process, as the authors choose. The journal's policy of screening for plagiarism includes the use of a plagiarism checker on all submitted manuscripts.

Soils and Rocks embraces the international Open Science program and is striving to meet all the recommendations. Authors are invited to deposit their submissions in reliable preprint servers. Authors who wish to pre-deposit their articles as preprints should contact the editors prior to submission for more information about the process and to sign the Consent Form. Authors are encouraged to make available all content (data, program codes, and other materials) underlying the manuscript text prior to or at the time of publication. Exceptions are allowed in cases of legal and ethical issues.

Soils and Rocks provides a manuscript template available here.

Authors and reviewers: find and remove hidden data and personal information here.

Instructions for "Curriculo Lattes" users: check the format of your name in the DOI metadata of your paper. To do so, go to https://search.crossref.org/ and enter your paper's DOI in the format 10.28927/SR.XXXX.XXXXX. Make sure you have registered, in Lattes, the exact name format used by Soils and Rocks when registering the DOI of your paper. To do so, go to Lattes >> Identificação >> Nome em citações bibliográficas

1. Category of papers

Submissions are classified into one of the following categories:

- **Article –** an extensive and conclusive dissertation about a geotechnical topic, presenting original findings.
- **Technical Note –** presents a study of smaller scope or results of ongoing studies, comprising partial results and/or particular aspects of the investigation.
- **Case Study –** report innovative ways to solve problems associated with design and construction of geotechnical projects. It also presents studies of the performance of existing structures.
- **Review Article –** a summary of the State-of-the-Art or State-of-the-Practice on a particular subject or issue and represents an overview of recent developments.
- **Discussion –** the Journal's policy encourages the submission of discussions only for breakthrough or highly cited papers. Discussion submissions go through a rigorous screening process and must provide a highly significant contribution to the subject matter and findings presented in the original paper. The discussion will be published at the discretion of the editorial board..

Authors are responsible for selecting the correct category when submitting their manuscript. However, the manuscript category may be altered based on the recommendation of the Editorial Board.

When submitting a manuscript for review, the authors should indicate the category of the manuscript, and is also understood that they:

a) assume full responsibility for the contents and accuracy of the information in the paper;
b) assure that the paper has not been previously published, and is not being submitted to any other journal for publication.

2. Paper length

Full-length manuscripts (Article, Case Study) should be between 4,000 and 8,000 words. Review articles should have up to 10,000 words. Technical Notes have a word count limit of 3,500 words. Discussions have a word count limit of 1,000 words. These word count limits exclude the title page, notation list (e.g., symbols, abbreviations), acknowledgments and references, but include any appendices. Each single column and double column figure or table is considered as equivalent to 150 and 300 words, respectively. The number of references should not exceed 30% of the total word count.

3. Scientific style

The manuscripts should be written in UK or US English, in the third person and all spelling should be checked in accordance with a major English Dictionary. The manuscript should be able to be readily understood by a Civil Engineer and avoid colloquialisms. Unless essential to the comprehension of the manuscript, direct reference to the names of persons, organizations, products or services is not allowed. Flattery or derogatory remarks about any person or organization should not be included.

The author(s) of Discussion Papers should refer to himself (herself/themselves) as the reader(s) and to the author(s) of the paper as the author(s).

The International System (SI) units must be used. The symbols are recommended to be in accordance with Lexicon in 14 Languages, ISSMFE (2013) and the ISRM List of Symbols. Use italics for single letters that denote mathematical constants, variables, and unknown quantities, either in tables or in the text.

4. Submission requirements and contents

A submission implies that the following conditions are met:

- the authors assume full responsibility for the contents and accuracy of the information presented in the paper;
- the manuscript contents have not been published previously, except as a lecture or academic thesis;
- the manuscript is not under consideration for publication elsewhere;
- the manuscript is approved by all authors;
- the manuscript is approved by the necessary authorities, when applicable, such as ethics committees and institutions that may hold intellectual property on contents presented in the manuscript;
- the authors have obtained authorization from the copyright holder for any reproduced material;
- the authors are aware that the manuscript will be subjected to plagiarism check.

The author(s) must upload two digital files of the manuscript to the Soils and Rocks submission system. The size limit for each submission file is 20 MB. The manuscript should be submitted in docx format (Word 2007 or higher) or doc format (for older Word versions). An additional PDF format file of the manuscript is also required upon submission. Currently, the journal is not accepting manuscripts prepared using LaTeX.

The following documents are required as minimum for submission:

- cover letter;
- manuscript with figures and tables embedded in the text (doc or docx format);
- manuscript with figures and tables embedded in the text for revision (PDF format);
- permission for re-use of previously published material when applicable, unless the author/owner has made explicit that the image is freely available.

4.1 Cover letter

A cover letter is a mandatory part of all submissions and must be written in an open format, with structure and content determined by the authors. Authors are encouraged to briefly outline the novelty and significance of the research, indicate why the manuscript may be a good fit for the journal, and include standard ethical declarations—such as confirming the work is original, not under review elsewhere, approved by all authors, and compliant with applicable ethical guidelines. When authors opt for the double-blind peer review process, information on Acknowledgements and Authors' Contributions should also be included in the cover letter rather than in the manuscript file.

4.2 Title page

The title page is the first page of the manuscript and must include:

- A concise and informative title of the paper. Avoid abbreviations, acronyms or formulae. Discussion Papers should contain the title of the paper under discussion. Only the first letter of the first word should be capitalized.
- Full name(s) of the author(s). The first name(s) should not be abbreviated. The authors are allowed to abbreviate middle name(s).
- The corresponding author should be identified by a pound sign # beside his/her and in a footnote.

- The affiliation(s) of the author(s), should follow the format: Institution, (Department), City, (State), Country. Names of institutions and programs are to be presented in full and in the original language of the of the institution or in the English version for non-Latin writing.
- Affiliation address and e-mail must appear below each author's name.
- The 16-digit ORCID of the author(s) – mandatory
- Link to the authors' CV Lattes – mandatory for authors affiliated with Brazilian institutions only
- Main text word count (excluding abstract and references) and the number of figures and tables

If authors chose the double-blind peer review process, the title page cannot include any authorship detail, such as name, institution, email, and ORCID.

4.3 Permissions

The reuse of materials from other publications, such as figures or tables, must respect copyright restrictions imposed by the copyright owners. While some publications grant the public permission to reuse materials, others may impose copyright restrictions and require the payment of fees for reuse. Soils and Rocks requires authors to explicitly declare the reuse of materials and hold authors responsible for obtaining permission, when applicable, before submitting their manuscript.

1. I hereby declare that the manuscript does not contain any material(s) subject to copyright restrictions.

2. I hereby declare that I have secured explicit permission from the original copyright holder(s) for the utilization of any subsidiary material(s) incorporated in the manuscript.

4.4 Declaration of interest

Authors are required to disclose conflicting interests that could inappropriately bias their work. For that end, a section entitled "Declaration of interest" should be included following any acknowledgments and prior to the "Authors' contributions" section. In case of the absence of conflicting interests, the authors should still include a declaration of interest.

4.5 Authors' contributions

Authors are required to include an author statement outlining their individual contributions to the paper according to the CRediT taxonomy (as per https://credit.niso.org). The minimum requirements of contribution to the work for recognition of authorship are: a) Participate actively in the discussion of results; b) Review and approval of the final version of the manuscript. A section entitled "Authors' contributions" should be included after the declaration of interest section, and should be formatted with author's name and CRediT role(s), according to the example:

Samuel Zheng: conceptualization, methodology, validation. Olivia Prakash: data curation, writing - original draft preparation. Fatima Wang: investigation, validation. Kwame Bankole: supervision. Sun Qi: writing - reviewing and editing.

Do not include credit items that do not follow the Taxonomy established by CRediT Contributor Roles Taxonomy.

The authors' contributions section should be omitted in manuscripts that have a single author. In case the authors opt for the double-blind review process, the authors' contributions should be stated in the cover letter and omitted from the manuscript.

4.6 Data availability

A data availability statement must be included in any original research article. Authors should include information on where data supporting the findings reported in the article can be found, if applicable. Persistent hyperlink to make available archived datasets evaluated or produced during the study are to be included. "Data" is the minimal dataset necessary to understand, replicate and develop based on the results presented in the article. Cases in which sharing research data is not possible, data availability is still to be stated in the manuscript including any requirements for access.

4.7 Use of generative artificial intelligence for textual, visual, and data enhancement

The use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has proven to be a valuable tool for translation and for improving the quality of texts, images, graphic elements, as well as for the treatment and compilation of data and results in scientific publications. However, Soils and Rocks considers that at no time can GenAI tools be considered as the author or co-author of the work since authorship and co-authorship are exclusively attributed to human action. Such tool should be used as aid and should be always supervised by humans.

The use of Generative Artificial Intelligence to enhance text, images, graphic elements, treatment, and compilation of data and results, must be explicitly declared in a section entitled "Declaration of use of generative artificial intelligence". Such a declaration should follow the template presented below and be positioned after the "Data availability" section.

Declaration of use of generative artificial intelligence
This is a statement example. This work was prepared with the assistance of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) [*specify the name of the tool/service*] with the aim of [*specify how GenAI was used and for what elements of the manuscript*]. The entire process of using this tool was supervised, reviewed and when necessary edited by the authors. The authors assume full responsibility for the content of the publication that involved the aid of GenAI.

5. Plagiarism checking

Soils and Rocks follows the ethics of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), of the Code of Ethics American Educational Research Association, the Code of Good Scientific Practice - FAPESP and the Council of Science Editors (CSE) concerning publication. Any material published in is in agreement with the SciELO Guidelines on Best Practices for Strengthening Ethics in Scientific Publication.

Submitted papers are expected to contain at least 50 % new content and the remaining 50 % should not be verbatim to previously published work.

All manuscripts are screened for similarities. Currently, the Editorial Board uses the plagiarism checker Plagius (www.plagius.com) to compare submitted papers to already published works. Manuscripts will be rejected if more than 20 % of content matches previously published work, including self-plagiarism. The decision to reject will be under the Editors' discretion if the percentage is between 10 % and 20 %.

The Editorial Board will be responsible for analyzing reports of plagiarism, duplicate or redundant publication after the articles have been published. The article will be removed immediately from the Journal if the complaint is confirmed. Authors may also be subjected to the penalties.

Corrections and retractions may be corrected through an Erratum in case that errors and shortcomings do not imply in "Misconduct in publication", which will be recognized as fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism (as per SciELO Guidelines on Best Practices for Strengthening Ethics in Scientific Publication).

IMPORTANT OBSERVATION: Mendeley software plug-in (suggested in this guide) for MS-Word can be used to include the references in the manuscript. This plug-in uses a field code that sometimes includes automatically both title and abstract of the reference. Unfortunately, the similarity software adopted by the Journal (Plagius) recognizes the title and abstract as an actual written text by the field code of the reference and consequently increases considerably the percentage of similarity. Please do make sure to remove the abstract (if existing) inside Mendeley section where the adopted reference is included. This issue has mistakenly caused biased results in the past. The Editorial Board of the journal is now aware of this tendentious feature.

6. Formatting instructions

The text must be presented in a single column, using ISO A4 page size, left, right, top, and bottom margins of 25 mm, Times New Roman 12 font, and line spacing of 1.5. All lines and pages should be numbered.

The text should avoid unnecessary italic and bold words and letters, as well as too many acronyms. Authors should avoid capitalizing words and whenever possible to use tables with distinct font size and style of the regular text.

Figures, tables and equations should be numbered in the sequence that they are mentioned in the text.

Abstract
Please provide an abstract between 150 and 250 words in length. Abbreviations or acronyms should be avoided. The abstract should state briefly the purpose of the work, the main results and major conclusions or key findings.

Keywords
A minimum of three and a maximum of six keywords must be included after the abstract. The keywords must represent the content of the paper. Keywords offer an opportunity to include synonyms for terms that are frequently referred to in the literature using more than one term. Adequate keywords maximize the visibility of your published paper.

Examples:
Poor keywords – piles; dams; numerical modeling; laboratory testing
Better keywords – friction piles; concrete-faced rockfill dams; material point method; bender element test

List of symbols and abbreviations
A list of symbols and definitions used in the text must be included before the References section. Any mathematical constant, variable or unknown quantity should appear in italics. List lower case characters first, then upper case. Latin alphabet characters must appear before Greek alphabet characters.

Appendix
Use the Appendix when necessary to provide supporting or supplementary information that is part of the study (e.g. tables, graphs, or datasets). The Appendix should be placed after the References. For more than one appendix, organize the titles with letters like Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C.

6.1 Citations

References to other published sources must be made in the text by the last name(s) of the author(s), followed by the year of publication. Examples:

- Narrative citation: […] while Silva & Pereira (1987) observed that resistance depended on soil density
- Parenthetical citation: It was observed that resistance depended on soil density (Silva & Pereira, 1987).

In the case of three or more authors, the reduced format must be used, e.g.: Silva et al. (1982) or (Silva et al., 1982). Do not italicize “et al.”

Two or more citations belonging to the same author(s) and published in the same year are to be distinguished with small letters, e.g.: (Silva, 1975a, b, c.).

Standards must be cited in the text by the initials of the entity and the year of publication, e.g.: ABNT (1996), ASTM (2003).

6.2 References

A customized style for the Mendeley software is available and may be downloaded from this link.

Full references must be listed alphabetically at the end of the text by the first author’s last name. Several references belonging to the same author must be cited chronologically. Provide DOI (Digital Object Identifier) whenever available.

The number of references should not exceed 30% of the total word count.

Some formatting examples are presented here:

> Journal Article
> Bishop, A.W., & Blight, G.E. (1963). Some aspects of effective stress in saturated and partly saturated soils. *Géotechnique*, 13(2), 177-197. https://doi.org/10.1680/geot.1963.13.3.177.

Castellanza, R., & Nova, R. (2004). Oedometric tests on artificially weathered carbonatic soft rocks. *Journal of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Engineering*, 130(7), 728-739. https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1090-0241(2004)130:7(728).

Fletcher, G. (1965). Standard penetration test: its uses and abuses. *Journal of the Soil Mechanics Foundation Division*, 91, 67-75.

Indraratna, B., Kumara, C., Zhu S-P., Sloan, S. (2015). Mathematical modeling and experimental verification of fluid flow through deformable rough rock joints. *International Journal of Geomechanics*, 15(4): 04014065-1-04014065-11. https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)GM.1943-5622.0000413.

Garnier, J., Gaudin, C., Springman, S.M., Culligan, P.J., Goodings, D., Konig, D., ... & Thorel, L. (2007). Catalogue of scaling laws and similitude questions in geotechnical centrifuge modelling. *International Journal of Physical Modelling in Geotechnics*, 7(3), 01-23. https://doi.org/10.1680/ijpmg.2007.070301.

Bicalho, K.V., Gramelich, J.C., & Santos, C.L.C. (2014). Comparação entre os valores de limite de liquidez obtidos pelo método de Casagrande e cone para solos argilosos brasileiros. *Comunicações Geológicas*, 101(3), 1097-1099 (in Portuguese).

Book
Lambe, T.W., & Whitman, R.V. (1979). *Soil Mechanics, SI version*. John Wiley & Sons.
Das, B.M. (2012). *Fundamentos de Engenharia Geotécnica*. Cengage Learning (in Portuguese).

Head, K.H. (2006). *Manual of Soil Laboratory Testing - Volume 1: Soil Classification and Compaction Tests*. Whittles Publishing.

Bhering, S.B., Santos, H.G., Manzatto, C.V., Bognola, I., Fasolo, P.J., Carvalho, A.P., ... & Curcio, G.R. (2007). *Mapa de solos do estado do Paraná*. Embrapa (in Portuguese).

Book Section
Yerro, A., & Rohe, A. (2019). Fundamentals of the Material Point Method. In *The Material Point Method for Geotechnical Engineering* (pp. 23-55). CRC Press. https://doi.org/10.1201/9780429028090.

Sharma, H.D., Dukes, M.T., & Olsen, D.M. (1990). Field measurements of dynamic moduli and Poisson´s ratios of refuse and underlying soils at a landfill site. In *Geotechnics of Waste Fills - Theory and Practice* (pp. 57-70). ASTM International. https://doi.org/10.1520/STP1070-EB.

Cavalcante, A.L.B., Borges, L.P.F., & Camapum de Carvalho, J. (2015). Tomografias computadorizadas e análises numéricas aplicadas à caracterização da estrutura porosa de solos não saturados. In *Solos Não Saturados no Contexto Geotécnico* (pp. 531-553). ABMS (in Portuguese).

Proceedings
Jamiolkowski, M.; Ladd, C.C.; Germaine, J.T., & Lancellotta, R. (1985). New developments in field and laboratory testing of soils. *Proc. 11th International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering*, San Francisco, August 1985. Vol. 1, Balkema, 57-153.

Massey, J.B., Irfan, T.Y. & Cipullo, A. (1989). The characterization of granitic saprolitic soils. *Proc. 12th International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering*, Rio de Janeiro. Vol. 6, Publications Committee of XII ICSMFE, 533-542.

Indraratna, B., Oliveira D.A.F., & Jayanathan, M. (2008b). Revised shear strength model for infilled rock joints considering overconsolidation effect. *Proc. 1st Southern Hemisphere International Rock Mechanics Symposium*, Perth. ACG, 16-19.

Barreto, T.M., Repsold, L.L., & Casagrande, M.D.T. (2018). Melhoramento de solos arenosos com polímeros. *Proc. 19º Congresso Brasileiro de Mecânica dos Solos e Engenharia Geotécnica*, Salvador. Vol. 2, ABMS, CBMR, ISRM & SPG, 1-11 (in Portuguese).

Thesis
Lee, K.L. (1965). *Triaxial compressive strength of saturated sands under seismic loading conditions* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of California at Berkeley.

Chow, F.C. (1997). *Investigations into the behaviour of displacement pile for offshore foundations* [Doctoral thesis, Imperial College London]. Imperial College London's repository. https://spiral.imperial.ac.uk/handle/10044/1/7894.

Araki, M.S. (1997). *Aspectos relativos às propriedades dos solos porosos colapsíveis do Distrito Federal* [Master's dissertation]. University of Brasília (in Portuguese).

Sotomayor, J.M.G. (2018). *Evaluation of drained and non-drained mechanical behavior of iron and gold mine tailings reinforced with polypropylene fibers* [Doctoral thesis, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro]. Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro's repository (in Portuguese). https://doi.org/10.17771/PUCRio.acad.36102.*
* *official title in English should be used when available in the document.*
Report
ASTM D7928-17. (2017). Standard Test Method for Particle-Size Distribution (Gradation) of Fine-Grained Soils Using the Sedimentation (Hydrometer) Analysis. *ASTM International, West Conshohocken, PA.* https://doi.org/10.1520/D7928-17.
ABNT NBR 10005. (2004). Procedure for obtention leaching extract of solid wastes. *ABNT - Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas*, Rio de Janeiro, RJ (in Portuguese).

DNIT. (2010). Pavimentação - Base de solo-cimento - Especificação de serviço DNIT 143. *DNIT - Departamento Nacional de Infraestrutura de Transportes*, Rio de Janeiro, RJ (in Portuguese).

USACE. (1970). Engineering and Design: Stability of Earth and Rock-Fill Dams, Engineering Manual 1110-2-1902. *Corps of Engineers*, Washington, D.C.

Web Page
Soils and Rocks. (2020). *Guide for Authors*. Soils and Rocks. Retrieved in September 16, 2020, from http://www.soilsandrocks.com/.

6.3 Artworks and illustrations

Each figure should be submitted as a high-resolution image, according to the following mandatory requirements:

- Figures created as a TIFF or JPEG file format with minimum resolution of 500 dpi.
- Use Times New Roman for figure lettering. Use lettering sized 8-10 pt. for the final figure size.
- Lines should have 0.5 pt. minimum width in drawings.
- Titles or captions should not be included inside the figure itself.
- Size the figures according to their final intended size. Single-column figures should have a width of up to 82 mm. Double-column figures should have a maximum width of 170 mm.
- Figures should be sized according to the standard column formats illustrated in the examples of Figure 1 Four typical figure sizes are accepted: a small single-column figure equivalent to approximately 150 words (Figure 1a), a double-column figure equivalent to 300 words (Figure 1b), a tall single-column figure also equivalent to 300 words (Figure 1c), and a full-page double-column figure equivalent to 600 words (Figure 1d). Figures do not need to exactly match the sizes shown in the examples; however, for the purpose of word count, authors should use the word equivalent that most closely corresponds to the actual size of their figure. All figures must remain within the page margins.

Figures must be embedded in the text near the position where they are first cited. Cite figures in the manuscript in consecutive numerical order. Denote figure parts by lowercase letters (a, b, c, etc.). Please include a reference citation at the end of the figure caption for previously published material. Authorization from the copyright holder must be provided upon submission for any reproduced material.

Figure captions must be placed below the figure and start with the term "Figure" followed by the figure number and a period. Example:

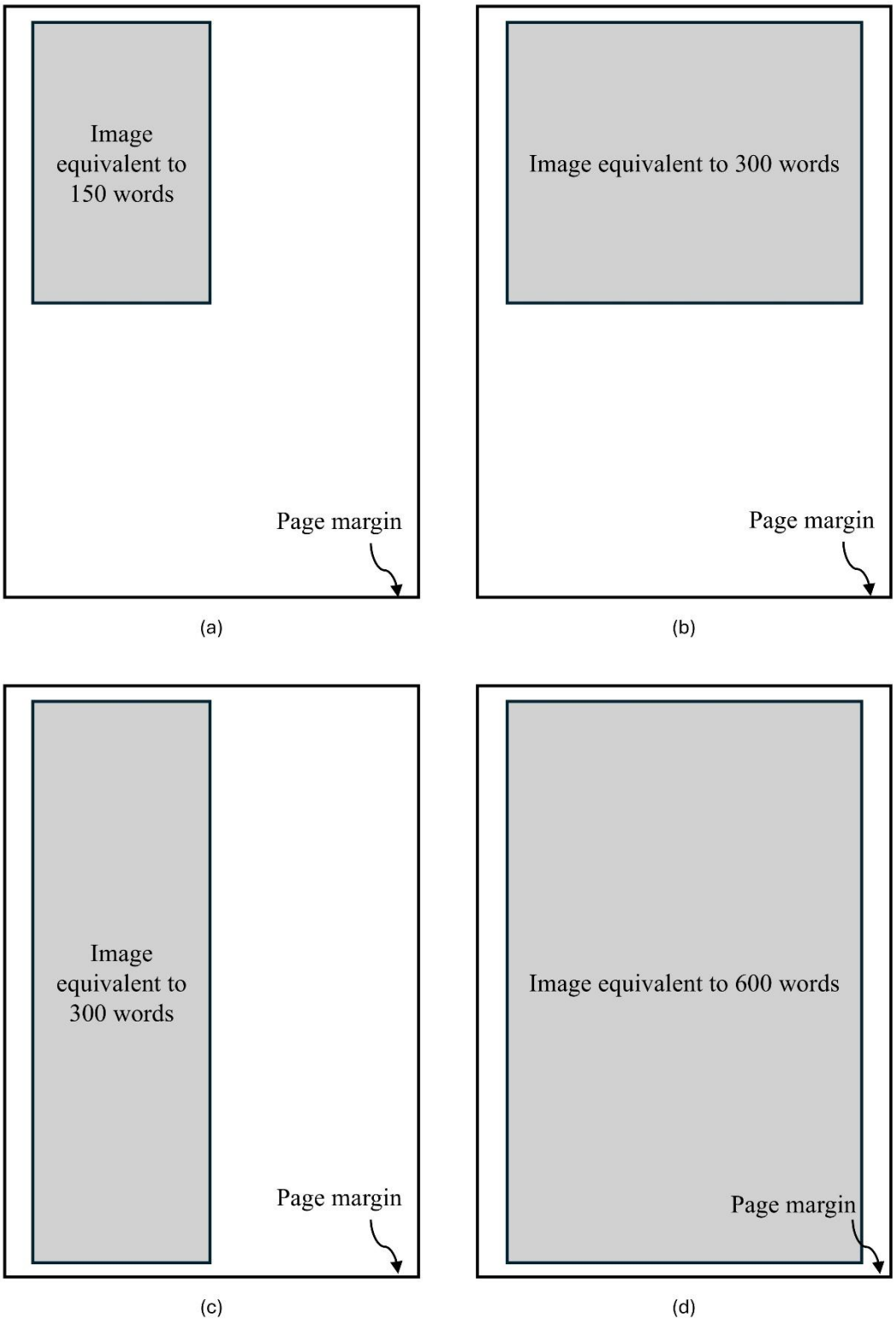


Figure 1. Standard figure sizes and their approximate word count equivalents: (a) small single-column - 150 words, (b) double-column figure - 300 words (c) tall single-column figure - 300 words, and (d), full-page double-column figure - 600 words.

Do not abbreviate “Figure” when making cross-references to figures.

All figures are published in color for the electronic version of the journal; however, the print version uses grayscale. Please format figures so that they are adequate even when printed in grayscale.

Accessibility: Please make sure that all figures have descriptive captions (text-to-speech software or a text-to-Braille hardware could be used by blind users). Prefer using patterns (e.g., different symbols for dispersion plot) rather than (or in addition to) colors for conveying information (then the visual elements can be distinguished by colorblind users). Any figure lettering should have a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1

Improving the color accessibility for the printed version and for colorblind readers: Authors are encouraged to use color figures because they will be published in their original form in the online version. However, authors must consider the need to make their color figures accessible for reviewers and readers that are colorblind. As a general rule of thumb, authors should avoid using red and green simultaneously. Red should be replaced by magenta, vermillion, or orange. Green should be replaced by an off-green color, such as blue-green. Authors should prioritize the use of black, gray, and varying tones of blue and yellow.

These rules of thumb serve as general orientations, but authors must consider that there are multiple types of color blindness, affecting the perception of different colors. Ideally, authors should make use of the following resources: 1) for more information on how to prepare color figures, visit https://jfly.uni-koeln.de/; 2) a freeware software available at http://www.vischeck.com/ is offered by Vischeck, to show how your figures would be perceived by the colorblind.

6.4 Tables

Tables should be presented as a MS Word table with data inserted consistently in separate cells. Place tables in the text near the position where they are first cited. Tables should be numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals and have a caption consisting of the table number and a brief title. Tables should always be cited in the text. Any previously published material should be identified by giving the original source as a reference at the end of the table caption. Additional comments may be placed as footnotes, indicated by superscript lowercase letters, exclusively to complement information within tables. The use of footnotes in the main body of the manuscript is not permitted; all essential information must be fully integrated into the main text.

When applicable, the units should come right below the corresponding column heading. Horizontal lines should be used at the top and bottom of the table and to separate the headings row. Vertical lines should not be used.

Table captions must be placed above the table and start with the term “Table” followed by the table number and a period. Example:

Table 1. Soil properties.

Do not abbreviate “Table” when making cross-references to tables. Example:

Table 1. Soil properties

Parameter	Symbol	Value
Specific gravity of the sand particles	G_s	2.64
Maximum dry density (Mg/m^3)	$\rho_{d(max)}$	1.554
Minimum dry density (Mg/m^3)	$\rho_{d(min)}$	1.186
Average grain-size (mm)	d_{50}	0.17
Coefficient of uniformity	C_u	1.97

6.5 Mathematical equations

Equations must be submitted as editable text, created using MathType or the built-in equation editor in MS Word. All variables must be presented in italics.

Equations must appear isolated in a single line of the text. Numbers identifying equations must be flushed with the right margin. International System (SI) units must be used. The definitions of the symbols used in the equations must appear in the List of Symbols.

Do not abbreviate "Equation" when making cross-references to an equation.

7. Reviewing procedures

All manuscripts are evaluated following a **single-blind** or a **double-blind** peer-review process. In a single-blind evaluation the reviewers are kept anonymous. In a double-blind evaluation, both the reviewers and authors are not identified to each other.

Authors **must opt** for either a single or double-blind evaluation process during the submission of their manuscripts. The Associated Editor appointed to your manuscript chooses appropriate reviewers based on the manuscript's subject and may or may not appoint reviewers suggested by the authors.

Manuscripts submitted to the Journal enters a pre-review assessment by the Editor-in-Chief who decides whether it can be sent for further review. Three criteria are considered in this first evaluation: i) adequacy to the Journal's scope; ii) compliance with the instructions in the Guidelines for Authors; iii) paper is an original manuscript. Following, an associate editor is assigned to the submission and the paper is sent at least to two independent reviewers, which evaluates the scientific content. Reviewers may recommend to the Associate Editor either: a) accept as it is; b) accept with minor revision by authors; c) accept with major revision by authors; d) reject encouraging further resubmission after extensive changes; e) reject without any possibility of further resubmission.

Typically, two to three evaluations are required before the Associated Editor makes a decision recommendation to the Editor-in-Chief, which may be either: a) accept for publication; b) requires format revision; c) requires content revision due to similarity check; d) requires minor revision; e) requires major revision; f) reject. Currently, invited reviewers are given a deadline of 40 days to provide their assessments.

The deadline for authors to submit revised manuscripts is 20 days for minor changes, whereas for major changes it is 30 days.

8. Instructions for authors opting for a double-blind evaluation procedure

Authors opting for a double-blind evaluation of the manuscript must: 1) Clearly indicate their option for a double-blind evaluation in the cover letter; 2) Remove from the submitted manuscript files any indication of authorship;

a. First page: remove all authorship details, such as institution, email, and ORCID;

b. Acknowledgements and Authors' Contributions: please omit these sections since they often can reveal details regarding the manuscript's authorship. The information from these sections should be **included in the cover letter** and, at a later stage, in the manuscript after it is accepted for publication.