

# Author Guidelines: *National Civic Review*

## ABOUT THE *NATIONAL CIVIC REVIEW*



*National Civic Review* is a quarterly publication of the National Civic League, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that promotes civic engagement, community building, racial equity and inclusion, collaborative problem-solving and democratic governance. Our readership consists of civic actors and thinkers, community leaders, local government officials and staff, leaders within the nonprofit and foundation world, students and educators in public administration, political science, and urban planning.

We are not looking for “academic articles” as traditionally defined. We are looking for articles, including those from researchers and educators, that share important discoveries and insights into ways of strengthening democratic institutions and making them more inclusive, accountable and responsive to citizens.

The scope of the publication encompasses representative democracy and forms of democracy that directly engage citizens in deliberative discussions and civic action.

The *National Civic Review* publishes several categories of articles: essays, case studies, reports, updates and “how to” articles about civic innovation. Articles range in length from **1,200 words to 3,200 words**.

Essays feature original thinking, analysis and fact finding on topics related to the mission of the National Civic League. These may be about general areas of civic life, for instance, “neighborhood groups and local government” or more specific examples of innovation, for instance, “the future of neighborhood councils in Los Angeles.” We also publish interviews with innovative civic leaders and thinkers in a Q&A format. NCR has a strong focus on community and local government, though we publish some essays on state or national topics.

Articles should be attached as Word Documents and e-mailed to [mikem@ncl.org](mailto:mikem@ncl.org).

## SOME EXAMPLES OF TOPICS OR ISSUES WE COVER

**Community Building.** Efforts to build civic infrastructure and bridge gaps between citizens, community leaders and elected or appointed officials' community-based planning and problem-solving efforts; cooperative efforts between the public, private and nonprofit sectors; comprehensive community development programs; Study Circles discussion groups and other forms of deliberative democracy.

**Trends in Civic Engagement.** Efforts to promote a broader and deeper civic involvement by the public--neighborhood organizing, advocacy, service learning and civic engagement programs at schools and universities, government planning efforts that use innovative methods of involving and empowering ordinary citizens.

**Local Government.** Regional cooperation, re-inventing government, government structure or systems change and innovative programs on housing, education, social services, transportation, economic development, environmental sustainability and financial sustainability.

**Racial Equity and inclusion.** Racial equity is a standard in which race can no longer be used to predict how people fare in life. Efforts to eliminate the influence of institutional and/or structural racism in public policies, practices and programs. Efforts to institute procedures and policies that ensure and value the inclusion of a broad diversity of residents (age, race/ethnicity, religion, income residents, etc.) in the shaping of public policy and programs.

## **LANGUAGE AND STYLE**

We are looking for writing that is dynamic, straightforward, and jargon free--writing that will actively reach out to and capture the interest of a broad audience. Feel free to use the first person when it will improve clarity and to use casual, reader-friendly language. As you move from point to point in your article, please pay special attention to transitions--try as much as possible to help readers see the relationship between various issues, topics, and information you discuss and offer them as many guideposts as you can to help them navigate the discussion you are providing in your article.

In addition to the general guidelines above, we specifically ask that you pay attention to the following:

- When using proper names—whether of individuals or institutions—please double-check for accuracy.
- Avoid passive constructions (EXAMPLE: “It has for a long time been accepted that ....”); use the active voice as much as possible (EXAMPLE: “For a long time we in local government have accepted that ....”).
- Use of the first person, singular and plural, is permissible and encouraged where appropriate.
- Use a person’s full name the first time she or he is mentioned.
- Double check every name for accurate spelling.

## References

The *National Civic Review* is not an academic journal, so please don't use academic-style citing of references with the names of the authors in parenthesis.

Authors may sparingly use endnotes as described in *The Chicago Manual of Style* to substantiate specific facts, figures, and sources of direct quotes in the text. Or they may list their sources in alphabetical order at the end of the article.

## Photos and Graphics

The *National Civic Review* is now a full-color publication. Authors are encouraged to submit photos, charts and graphs to illustrate their articles and break up the monotony of print. These items should be attached as jpegs or some other high-resolution format. Please indicate in the text of the article where the photo or chart should be placed.

