



## Editorial

James L. Hanson

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I am honored to assume responsibility to serve as Co-Editor of *Geotechnical and Geological Engineering*. I am thankful to Prof. Tuncer B. Edil for entrusting me to take over as his replacement and to the Springer staff for approving my nomination to serve in this capacity. I am excited at this opportunity, specifically to take on the challenge of continuing the growth of the Journal. Under the highly capable leadership of outgoing Co-Editor-in-Chief Tuncer B. Edil and continuing Co-Editor-in-Chief Prof. Paul G. Marinos, the Journal is on a healthy trajectory inclusive of increasing submissions (significant increase in recent years), steadily increasing citations, and increased full-text downloads. Each of these statistics deserves special attention to maintain this positive progress.

I am impressed at the international diversity and reach of the Journal, having published papers with over 2000 co-authors representing 70 countries since its inception. The variety of earthen materials and natural conditions present as a function of geography, together with differences in geotechnical and geological practices as well as methods of design and construction throughout the world, highlights the benefits of maintaining the strong international

presence for the Journal. I personally have a strong history of establishing and fostering international partnerships and organizing international events related to the geo-profession. I look forward to bringing this perspective to promoting growth of the Journal across geopolitical boundaries, whether from representation of authors, reviewers, and Editorial Board members, or from technical aspects such as theme issues on location-specific geomaterials or comparative practices in different countries.

In today's data-driven and ranking-conscious world, the impact factor has become a critical and often perceived as even singular parameter to evaluate success of journals. Therefore, I intend to place high effort on continuing the current trend of increasing the visibility and citations of the Journal content through several specific initiatives.

I will work with the Editorial staff at Springer to increase visibility of the contents of the Journal apparent through internet searches as well as through social media. This increased visibility naturally leads to increased citations of papers in the Journal.

In consultation with Paul Marinos and the Publisher, I plan to rapidly expand the number of Associate Editors and Editorial Board members—with particular attention to diversity (including technical specialization, gender, and country of origin)—to promote timely, relevant, critical, and constructive reviews of the growing number of manuscripts submitted to the Journal. In addition, I will work with

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J. L. Hanson (✉)  
Civil and Environmental Engineering Department,  
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo,  
USA  
e-mail: jahanson@calpoly.edu

Paul and the Publisher to initiate and promote theme issues and special issues of the Journal devoted to highly specific topics of relevance in our profession. These special issues can contribute to increasing the number of citations by bundling together papers on timely topics that are of high interest to the research and engineering practice communities.

Processing durations (i.e., submission to first decision or submission to publication) are largely dictated by the review stage. While identifying and engaging proficient and conscientious reviewers has become increasingly difficult with the advent of new journals each year, I plan to place effort on establishing a larger pool of reviewers to draw upon to keep processing durations at a minimum through a concerted approach. I plan to initiate a practice at the Journal wherein authors published in the Journal are strongly encouraged to join the database of reviewers for the Journal. It seems reasonable and fair that authorship in the Journal lead to an expectation for some review service to the Journal in the coming year(s). This practice can efficiently expand the pool of potentially qualified and technically appropriate reviewers.

In addition, I plan to establish a framework and implement a paper award system in which annually, outstanding contributions to the Journal are recognized. Such recognition is critical for promoting excellence in the geo-profession, as well as in the

long term, promoting excellence in submissions to the Journal. The framework for the awards system will be established in cooperation with Paul Marinos, the Associate Editors, the Editorial Board, and the Publisher.

The high quality of the Journal is directly attributed to the people involved in contributing and processing of published materials (inclusive of authors, Editorial Board members, reviewers, and publications staff). We as a group of stakeholders are tasked with the challenge of promoting and achieving quality enhancement of published content. With the increased number of submissions to the Journal, I will work with the Editorial Board members to increase expectations for publishing papers, which simply results in continued quality in published materials in the Journal as we strive for ongoing improvement in this regard.

I am very pleased to be assuming this role and I am enthusiastically looking forward to the task as well as taking on the associated challenges. Please let me know if you have suggestions for the Journal, and of your experiences with interactions with the Journal as well as current procedures and policies.

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