

# ***Uncoverings* Submission Guidelines**

[UPDATED 2026]

[Submission Formats](#)

[The Submission Process](#)

[The Review Process](#)

[The Editing Process](#)

## **Introduction**

In 2025, AQSG held a retreat that gathered a Strategic Planning Committee to develop key priorities that support a long-term vision for the organization that would be fully actualized by 2035, with priorities to be addressed in the years 2026–2028. As part of this commitment to deepening and expanding our cultivation of quilt research and scholarship, the Publications Committee has instituted updates to the submission requirements for *Uncoverings*, which go into effect through the 2026 call for submissions (to be published in 2027).

These updated guidelines preserve the standards and editorial processes that have defined *Uncoverings* while expanding the scope, formats, and accessibility of the journal to reflect the evolving landscape of quilt scholarship.

## **Purpose and Aims**

The updates outlined in this document were developed in alignment with AQSG Strategic Priority #2:

### **Strategic Priority II—Advance Quilt Scholarship and the Community that Sustains It.**

Promote high standards for quilt-related study by curating research, publishing significant work, and fostering interdisciplinary learning. Strengthen the community of scholars, curators, makers, and educators who drive the field forward.

## **Objectives**

- Develop a structured process to identify and elevate emerging voices in the quilt research field.
- Expand collaboration with academic and museum-based scholars on exhibitions, articles, and public programs.
- Expand the scope of *Uncoverings* to highlight diverse and interdisciplinary perspectives on quilt study.

We are confident that through the expansion of submissions for *Uncoverings*, as well as the amendment of word count ranges and formats, we will:

- Increase the number of annual submissions to the journal from our current membership
- Raise visibility for new audiences and grow interest (and potential membership) in AQSG
- Deepen the connections between quilt research and underrepresented disciplines

## Scope

*Uncoverings* welcomes scholarship that connects quilt research to a variety of disciplines and research areas. We value scholarship that speaks across disciplinary boundaries, drawing on relevant theoretical frameworks while remaining accessible to our diverse readership of scholars, historians, museum professionals, educators, collectors, researchers, and quiltmakers.

Manuscript topics should relate to quilts, quiltmaking, quiltmakers, the textiles and materials of quilts, or a closely related subject. Before submitting manuscripts, prospective authors should examine recent volumes of *Uncoverings* to determine if their work is appropriate for the scope of this research journal.

## Submission Formats

*Uncoverings* accepts the following submission formats. All submissions must be based on the author's own original research and analysis, and must not have been previously published elsewhere. To determine if earlier versions of a work constitute prior publication, please contact the *Uncoverings* editor or the paper selection chair.

### Articles and Interviews

**Articles** are long-form, research-based writing that presents original findings shaped around a key thesis or investigation. An article typically follows a standardized structure—introduction, methods, findings, and discussion—allowing readers to understand and evaluate the research process. Articles contribute new knowledge to the field by building on existing literature and furthering quilt research and scholarship.

**Interviews** should be formatted as a structured conversation between a researcher and participant(s) that is transcribed, edited, and published to share insights, perspectives, or experiences relevant to quilt scholarship. Interviews must include analysis of the conversation and topics discussed beyond the initial transcript. Standalone transcripts without analysis will not be reviewed.

**Word count:** 4,000 to 9,000 words in length, including notes and appendix materials. Articles below the 9,000-word limit are encouraged.

**Image count:** Maximum 15

**Keywords:** Authors are asked to submit 5–7 keywords in addition to their abstract.

### **Exhibition-Focused Studies**

Exhibition-focused studies highlight significant research and contributions to quilt study that have emerged through the presentation of work by an individual artist or group of artists, and/or research undertaken by a curator or institution. Submissions should extend beyond a traditional review and critique of the works on view. Through these studies, readers should understand:

- The significance of the exhibition and its area(s) of focus to the field of quilt study and research
- What knowledge it furthers
- New or deepened findings based on the conducted research and work on view

**Word count:** 2,500 to 4,000 words in length, including notes and appendix materials.

**Image count:** Maximum 12

**Keywords:** Authors are asked to submit 5–7 keywords in addition to their abstract.

### **Visual Essays**

Visual essays combine scholarship with artistic storytelling for a more creative presentation of research and archival work. Authors are expected to contextualize the imagery in specific research themes, inclusive of proper citation and attribution where applicable. Visual essays may be suited for the following types of work:

- Original artwork developed by an author to reflect their research-based quilt practice or response to other quilt-related inquiry
- Material and technical analysis of specific quilts or quilt collections
- Documentation of quilt-making processes, techniques, or regional traditions
- Visual comparisons across time periods, makers, or geographic regions
- Exploration of pattern development and evolution
- Analysis of quilts as primary historical documents
- Conservation and preservation techniques and impact case studies
- Digital humanities projects involving quilt databases or mapping
- Practice-based research documenting contemporary quilt-making

**Word count:** 2,000 words maximum, including notes.

**Image count:** Maximum 10

**Keywords:** Authors are asked to submit 5–7 keywords in addition to their abstract.

## **Updates on Previously Published Papers**

In addition to the formats above, AQSG welcomes updates on previously published papers. Updates go through the same process of review and selection as all other submissions. Updates are brief—to 2,500 words—and should include a quick summary of the original paper and additional or new information of significance. The author will have fifteen minutes to present the update at Seminar. All formatting and submission guidelines apply.

## The Submission Process

- Anyone (both members and non-members) may submit manuscripts for consideration for presentation at the annual Seminar and publication in *Uncoverings*. If the author is not a member and their work is selected, they will need to join the American Quilt Study Group. Submissions from paid employees of member institutions will also be accepted and do not require an individual membership. Presenters usually receive grants to help offset travel costs for attending Seminar.
- Submissions must be received no later than June 1 for work to be presented in the fall of the following calendar year, approximately fifteen months later.
- Papers must be submitted digitally. Potential authors should reach out to AQSG ([aqsg2@americanquiltstudygroup.org](mailto:aqsg2@americanquiltstudygroup.org)) directly or through the AQSG website to request a Dropbox folder for uploading the paper, illustration files, and digital photos. Authors should email from the address associated with their Dropbox account. It is free to sign up for a basic Dropbox account at <https://www.dropbox.com/individual>. AQSG will send the author a link to a Dropbox folder accessible only to the author and the AQSG office. The AQSG office will send the digital submissions to the paper selection chair.
- Submissions by fax or hard copies via the mail are not accepted.
- Submissions for *Uncoverings* must be in the form of complete works. Proposals, abstracts, or other incomplete submissions will not be considered.
- Submitted manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with AQSG's guidelines for style and format. While manuscripts will not be rejected outright for disregarding guidelines, reviewers will make note of deviations that hinder the evaluation process.
- Authors of accepted traditional articles must be able to attend the entire Seminar and present their papers, per sponsorship guidelines. New formats (i.e. interviews, exhibition case studies and visual essays) will have an opportunity to present at Winter Virtual Seminar, if desired. All authors must also be available to work with the editor during the publication year to revise and proof their work as needed. (See The Editing Process, below.)
- AQSG holds the copyright for each volume of *Uncoverings* and any reproduction (print or online) of the volume as a whole. Individual authors retain copyright of their own articles in any other form. Authors of accepted work will be required to sign a publication agreement to this effect.
- Authors do not receive payment for their articles, but each author receives three copies of the volume containing their article and a discount of 40% for purchasing additional copies.

## Items to Submit for Consideration

Prospective authors must submit the following three items:

- 1) **A cover sheet** as a separate digital file with the submission title, the author's name, mailing/email addresses, and phone numbers. This is the *only* place the author's name appears in the entire submission.
- 2) **A digital copy of the completed work** as a Word document or PDF, beginning with the elements described below and ending with collected notes. The work should be organized as follows:
  - **Abstract:** Before the text, include a summarizing abstract of no more than 200 words that includes:
    - A brief summary of the research content or subject
    - A description of the research methods and/or principal sources
    - A statement of the research purpose or question
    - A statement of the main conclusions or findings that answers the research question.
    - **Note:** The abstract is a summary of the argument, not the introduction. It is usually written last, after the work is complete.
  - **Keywords:** Include 5–7 keywords following the abstract to aid discoverability and indexing.
  - **Text:** The body of the work follows the abstract and keywords. Refer to the Submission Formats section above for word count requirements by format.
  - **Formatting:** Use standard letter-sized pages (8.5 x 11 inches with 1-inch margins). Double-space the entire text, including abstract, quotations, and endnotes. Use 12-point Times New Roman (or an equivalent font) for all text. Do not justify right margins. Indent the first line of each paragraph. Number the pages consecutively.
  - **Appendices** should appear after the end of the text and before the Notes and References section.
  - **Notes and References** should all appear at the end and should be inserted using Microsoft Word's "Insert References" feature. Endnotes should follow the [\*Chicago Manual of Style\*](#) and the *Uncoverings* Style Sheet.
- 3) **A list of captions and illustrations** as a Word document or PDF.
  - The list of captions should include captions written in the order in which images will appear. Captions should include a label indicating the figure number (e.g., Figure 1.) followed by a description of the image and the source information (credit line). See the Style Sheet for examples. The maximum number of illustrations varies by submission format (see Submission Formats above).

- Digital copies of potential images should follow the list of captions. The images should be inserted in a Word document or PDF, with each image on a separate page. (Note: this document is for the review process only. Selected authors will later transfer high-quality images to the editor for the book designer.)
- After publication, *Uncoverings* papers are available online through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Digital Commons.

## The Review Process

The AQSG office receives the submitted manuscripts, checks them for completeness, and then sends them digitally to the paper selection chair.

### Evaluation

Each year, after all submitted papers are received, the editor of *Uncoverings* and the paper selection chair work together to select qualified readers to review all submissions. This includes a generalist reviewer who reads all papers, plus two qualified readers with relevant content expertise for each submission. Reviewers are selected from a standing board of reviewers and from qualified scholars and researchers with expertise in the topic of the paper. Each submission will have two expert readers in addition to the generalist.

When a paper is a resubmission of work not previously accepted, efforts will be made to send the paper back to the original reviewers to ensure consistency of feedback. Readers evaluate the manuscripts blind, without knowing the identities of the authors.

Readers rank each paper using a ten-point scale to address the following criteria:

- **Significance.** Does the work make a contribution to the field? Does it present new or little-known material based upon original research, or does it treat familiar material in an innovative, new, or stimulating manner? Will the work have a productive and lasting impact? Has the work, or anything very similar, been published recently? (1–10 points)
- **Quality of Research.** Is the scholarship sound and thorough? Is the author's thesis valid, convincing, and supported by evidence? Are the citations appropriate, accurate, and complete? Is the author in command of both primary sources and standard secondary literature appropriate to the topic? Should the author have cited additional sources? (1–10 points)
- **Presentation.** Is the work well organized, clearly presented, and written in an interesting manner? Is the length within the specified range for its format? Did the author follow the AQSG manuscript guidelines? Are the citations in the correct form? Is the work written primarily in active rather than passive voice? Would the manuscript benefit from substantive rewriting or reorganization? (1–10 points)

- **Publication Readiness.** (10) Publishable with minor editing. (9–7) Publishable with editing and further work by author. (6–4) Publishable with major editing and significant further work by author. (3–1) Not publishable.

The readers report their rankings to the paper selection chair, who compiles the scores and reports the results to the AQSG executive director, and the editor of *Uncoverings*.

### Post-Evaluation

#### *Acceptance*

Traditionally, 4–6 papers have been accepted for publication and presentation at Seminar each year. With the incorporation of new formats, we are allowing flexibility for the accepted submissions based on the length and alignment. The paper selection process typically takes four months. Authors will be notified via email, by October 1, whether their manuscripts were selected. Each author receives a copy of the reader comments from the three readers as well as comments from the editor of *Uncoverings*. Comments from the editor will provide guidance for revision of both accepted and not-accepted work.

#### *Non-acceptance*

Authors whose work is not accepted will be encouraged to revise and resubmit the next year when such encouragement is warranted. The names of authors whose manuscripts are not accepted are not revealed to the readers. Authors whose work is not accepted (and those submitting manuscripts for the first time) are encouraged to enlist the advice of a mentor.

#### *Mentorship*

For assistance, contact the chair of the AQSG Mentoring Committee. (Contact information is available in Blanket Statements or from the AQSG office.) Alternatively, authors may identify and contact potential mentors themselves. Generally, an author should contact a mentor a minimum of two months before the June 1 submission deadline. A well-written, well-organized submission based on thorough, original research on a quilt-related topic, citing appropriate resources, has an excellent chance of being accepted. Please contact the AQSG office with any questions regarding these guidelines.

## **The Editing Process**

### Correspondence

If a submission is selected, the author will be expected to work with the editor to prepare it for publication. The editor and authors will correspond primarily by email. The author will send their work to the editor as an email attachment in MS Word. The author may need to convert files

to a compatible format if using a different word-processing program, a different version of Word, or a different operating system.

The author will also send all potential illustrations and photos as individual files along with their work so that the editor can begin evaluating the quality of the illustrations (see Submitting Illustrations for an Accepted Paper, below). The editor will use the Track Changes function in MS Word to edit accepted work.

The editing process roughly follows this schedule:

- **October 1:** Authors are notified of accepted or non-accepted status and editor follows up to begin the editing process. Authors will be asked to send a short biographical note to the AQSG office and make a commitment to complete necessary revisions and present at Seminar the following year.
- **October 1–December 31:** Authors work with the editor to make necessary substantive, organizational, and content edits as well as address any issues in illustration quality.
- **January 1:** Deadline for authors to complete major revisions.
- **January:** The editor develops an editorial and production schedule and shares the timeline for each submission with the authors. Authors provide a list of index terms for their work.
- **May 1–July 31:** Page proofs created and shared with authors. No substantive edits can be made at the page proof stage.
- **Fall:** The published volume of *Uncoverings* will be available at the AQSG Seminar concurrent with the oral presentation of the papers.

## **Submitting Illustrations for an Accepted Paper**

If a submission is accepted, the author will be asked to supply high-quality images for publication. Authors whose work is selected will be required to obtain written permission to use images owned by others and to pay any costs related to the use or duplication of these images. (See Permissions, below.) Some institutions will provide reproduction-quality images at reduced cost for scholarly, un-reimbursed articles, so be sure to ask.

- The editor and the designer will determine which and how many illustrations will be published. The maximum number of published illustrations varies by submission format (see Submission Formats above).
- Each illustration should be submitted as a separate digital file.
- Name each illustration with a short form of the paper name and the figure number. For example: Inscribed Quilts Fig01

All illustrations are published in full color in *Uncoverings*, so there is no need to separate illustrations into figures and color plates. Each illustration must be called out in the text of the article. This callout must appear at the end of a sentence before the period and takes the form of “(fig. 1).” The designer will make every effort to place the image of each figure as close as possible to its text reference while working within the parameters of the layout.

Illustrations may include photographs, graphic illustrations, drawings, graphs, charts, tables, or maps that visually enhance the content and illustrate the concepts or points of the work.

*Uncoverings* accepts digital files and original artwork such as sketches, maps, and diagrams.

### **Digital Illustrations**

- Send digital files as individual files in their original format extension. .tif is preferred but .jpeg is also acceptable. Please do not convert the image files and do not embed the images in the manuscript (the Word document) as this compromises the image quality.
- The minimum size requirement for digital files is for images that are 6 inches in width or 9 inches in height at 300 pixels per inch (ppi).
- Digital maps, graphs, and charts should be created in a vector-producing program such as Photoshop, Word, or Excel. Vector images remain clear and legible at all sizes. To verify an image is vector, zoom in to 400% to make sure nothing becomes pixelated or blurry.
- All digital files must be sent to the editor either via an online file transfer service such as Dropbox (which can be set up for the author upon request) or on a thumb drive. Digital files sent as email attachments are not acceptable. Label each thumb drive with the author’s name and the shortened title of the paper.
- Please work with the editor of *Uncoverings* to submit original photographs, archival materials, or slides that need to be scanned and turned into digital files.

### **Original Artwork**

- Ideally, each author will scan or have scanned original artwork and send the digital file to the editor. If this is not possible and the author is submitting original artwork such as a diagram, map, or sketch, the author should retain a copy. Artwork submitted must be the original version, prepared on a white background. Artwork sent should be scan-ready and suitable for publication.
- Label each page of artwork with the author’s last name and the figure number, written in the margin or on a post-it note.

**The maximum finished size for illustrations in *Uncoverings* is 4.25 x 7 inches.** The type for any text in any illustration needs to be legible at this scale. The editor will share with the author

suggestions from the designer for improving the quality of illustrations judged to be insufficient. However, if it is not possible to improve the quality of problematic illustrations for publication, they may be rejected.

The designer will contact the author suggesting options for photo-editing. Authors are responsible for any costs involved in photo-editing. The editor and designer select a professional-quality image for the cover photograph of each volume of *Uncoverings*. Authors are welcome to suggest appropriate illustrations for the cover.

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