

Instructions for Session Chairs

Session Chairs are asked to:

1. Obtain biographies of the presenters in your assigned session in advance of the conference. These will be made available electronically. Please familiarize yourself with your assigned presenters and prepare an introduction for each that briefly and concisely summarizes their accomplishments. Note: It is not necessary to read the entire biography for each presenter. Additionally, if you are the chair of a panel session, you need only to welcome the audience and introduce the panel moderator (who will introduce the rest of the panel).
2. Arrive in your assigned room at least 10 minutes prior to the start of your session to greet attendees as they enter. You may also wish to introduce yourself to the audio-visual technician, as you may need to call upon them for assistance.
3. Before the session begins, introduce yourself to each presenter and review with them the order of events and the amount of time allotted for their presentation. Please be sure presenters understand that this time is inclusive of introductions, prepared statements, as well as questions and answers. Each participant has been given explicit instructions in advance that indicates an ending time five minutes before the next participant or session is to begin. This transition time is to be used for participants to prepare the area and to set up any audio-visual equipment.
4. Encourage attendees to sit in the front section of the room, or if attendees are standing in the back of the room, ask them to fill in the seating.
5. Please begin the session on time and do not change the order of the presentations or the times. If a speaker cancels or does not show up please announce this and either promote discussion during that time or declare a break. It is important that you stick to the printed schedule, as attendees move from session to session and will plan on hearing the next presentation at the scheduled time.
6. Welcome the audience and introduce each presenter using your prepared introductions. It is also helpful to make an announcement to please turn off all cellular phones as a courtesy for all in attendance.
7. Acknowledge presenters following their presentations and thank them for their participation.
8. **Keep the session on schedule.** This is the most important duty of the session chair! It is recommended that you develop a system of hand signals, flash cards, or other means to professionally communicate to the presenter that their time is almost out, has run out, or that they have exceeded their time and must conclude immediately. Remember, if your session runs too long, every successive session in your room will run behind as well.