Session Chair Onboarding
for the 74th ACA Annual Meeting in Denver, CO
October 18-19, 2023
Thank You

Thank you for volunteering to be a session chair! We appreciate the time & effort you devote to the ACA.

The annual meeting would not be possible without your dedication and support.
Session Chair Responsibilities

1) Write a session description
2) Invite speakers
3) Solicit session sponsorship
4) Monitor abstract submissions
5) Organize the session
6) Shepherd speakers
7) Chair the session
   • You must attend in-person
   • You must be a member of the ACA
8) Write a session summary for ACA Reflexions
1: Write a Session Description

- Finalize the title for your session
- Write a brief paragraph (1-6 sentences) describing the scope of topics for the session
  - Link to Sample Session Descriptions
  - Authors will use this to decide which session to submit their abstract to; be informative but concise
- **Due Wed Oct 25**
  - Link to Submit your Title & Session Description to HQ
  - HQ (headquarters) = Kristin Stevens & Kristina Vitale
  - You will need to log in to the ACA website
    - Only ACA members can log in, so **if you are not currently an ACA member, you will need to join**. You will need to join as part of the meeting registration anyway (the non-member registration fee includes the membership fee), so you might as well join now
2: Invite Speakers

- 6 or 7 speakers are needed to fill a half-day session
  - 5 speakers minimum, 8 speakers maximum
- At least 40% of talks should come from contributed abstracts
- For most half-day sessions, this means you should plan for
  - 3 to 4 talks by invited speakers
  - 2 to 3 talks from other contributed abstracts
- Certain sessions will take ALL talks from contributed abstracts, such as the General Interest, Cool Structures, & Hot Structures session(s)

Recommended Timeline:
- Make a list of 4-6 potential speakers now (Oct)
- Contact top 3 speakers (Nov)
- Contact additional speakers as necessary (Dec)
- Secure 3 to 4 invited speakers by Jan
2: Invite Speakers

Speaker invitation policies:

• Speakers must attend the meeting in-person
• Speakers must be ACA members (or must join this year)
• Speakers can only submit one abstract
  1 registration = 1 abstract
  • Exception: A 2nd abstract may be submitted to an educational session including DEI, Would You Publish This, and Career Odyssey sessions. But please check with the Meeting Committee before submitting.

• All speakers must BOTH register AND submit an abstract
  • The ACA does NOT issue complimentary registrations, either to chairs or invited speakers
  • If you wish to offer a subsidy to any speakers, you must solicit sponsorship for your session. *You cannot subsidize your own fees
3: Solicit Session Sponsorship

- **Link to How to Raise Sponsorship Funds**
  - Ask early! **Begin in Nov/Dec**
  - Target appropriate sponsors
  - Identify the correct person to contact
  - Write a persuasive letter on official letterhead
    - Include an appropriate amount of information
  - Follow-up with a telephone call within 1-2 weeks
  - Once a sponsor commits, ensure funds are transferred
  - Write a thank-you letter
4: Monitor Abstract Submissions

- Ensure your invited speakers submit their abstract (Jan/Feb) [Link to Oxford Abstracts]
- Monitor the # of abstracts submitted to your session
- If there are not at least 5 abstracts submitted to your session by the end of February, recruit more speakers
  
  NOT yourself!

- Abstract submission closes
  March 29, 2024
5: Organize the Session

**Session timing options**

- **Morning Sessions:**

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5: Organize the Session

**Link to Oxford Abstracts**

**Timeline:**

- **Jan** → Registration & abstract portal opens.
  - Ensure your invited speakers submit their abstracts
- **Feb** → **Spring On-Boarding session (Feb/March)**
  - Ensure at least 5 abstracts have been submitted to your session. Recruit more as needed
- **March** → **Abstract submission deadline March 29, 2024**
  - SIG chairs review and select Etter Award Winners
  - **All Etter Award Winners** should give an oral presentation
  - If one of the winners is in your session, include them in your lineup
- **April** → **Sessions to be organized by April 19, 2024**
  - Oral authors notified by HQ via email of the date/time/session of their talk on or after April 29
- **May** → **Poster abstract submission deadline May 3, 2023**
  - Poster authors notified on or after May 10
  - **Submit speaker reimbursement requests to the Meeting Committee**
    - **Early registration ends May 17, 2024**
- **July** → Annual Meeting begins July 7
  - Submit photos and a summary of the session to RefleXions at the conclusion of the meeting
6: Shepherd Speakers

• Ensure all talks will have at least 1 author in-person at the meeting to present
• Ensure all speakers are registered
• Ensure all speakers secure accommodations
• Answer speaker’s questions between May – July
  • Forward any questions you can’t answer to the Meeting Committee
• Check in with speakers just before the conference
  • Email them 1-2 weeks before the conference to answer last minute questions & ensure arrangements are final
7: Chair the Session

- Arrive 15 min before your sessions starts
- Project a slide with sponsor logos
- Help speakers load their talks
  - All talks should be loaded onto the provided ACA laptop before the session starts
- Begin the session
  - Introduce yourself, the session, & the sponsors
  - Ask the audience to take a seat & silence phones
- Introduce each speaker
  - Ask beforehand how to pronounce names
- Keep speakers on time
  - Give speakers warnings
- Facilitate questions after each talk
  - Solicit questions from the audience. Have individuals identify themselves
  - Prepare a list of questions for each speaker in case the audience has none
  - Cut questions off in time for the next talk
- Remember to take a group photo
  - With all session chairs and speakers
8: Write a Session Summary

• Session chairs should submit a session summary and any photos to the RefleXions editor within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the conference for inclusion in the Fall issue.

• Examples of past session summaries can be found in the fall issue of archived issues of RefleXions.
Communication

• Email
  • The predominant method of communication from HQ is email
  • Please safelist the ACA to ensure timely delivery of emails, notices, deadlines from HQ
    (aca@hwi.buffalo.edu, kstevens@hwi.buffalo.edu, kvitale@hwi.buffalo.edu)

• Slack
  • The Meeting Committee primarily utilizes Slack: https://aca-backstage.slack.com/
  • Contact Kristin & Kristina at HQ if you need an invite to the workspace

• Website: https://acas.memberclicks.net/session-chair-information

• Meeting Committee Members:

  Brandon Mercado  
  brandon.mercado@yale.edu  
  Will be replaced in Jan 2024  
  (20-23)

  Anna Gardberg  
  anna.s.gardberg@gmail.com  
  (21-24)

  Samantha Powell  
  samantha.powell@pnnl.gov  
  (22-25)

  Stacey Smith  
  stacey.smith@byu.edu  
  (23-26)
Link to Session Chair Worksheet

https://acas.memberclicks.net/session-chair-information