12TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ethnobiology

Hishuk-ish tsawalk... everything is one, everything is connected.

SESSION CHAIR GUIDELINES[1]

The quality and tenor of the session depends greatly on the active and early participation of the session chair. The chair can build a network among the presenters, set the tone for the session, make connections among the people and topics, ensure fair allocation of the time available, and foster collegial and professional exchange. Should challenges arise, the chair will be looked to for guidance. Throughout the session, the chair will be looked to for leadership. The role of the chair ideally includes both pre-conference preparation and during-conference facilitation. We offer these guidelines to you as the chair of a valuable session.

Preparation BEFORE the session

1. **Format of sessions:** During the 12th International Congress of Ethnobiology, there are nine 90 minute sessions of contributed papers – presentations that have been grouped together by the Congress Organizing Committee. The Congress Organizing Committee will initiate an email introduction of the chair and all session presenters, providing presenter guidelines and logistical details. Each 90 minute session has 4 – 6 papers to be delivered.

2. **Presenters responsibilities:** Each presenter will be instructed that they have a 15 minute time slot, and that they should present for 10-12 minutes, allowing time for a few questions. For those sessions that have less than six presenters, the remaining time can be used for further questions or facilitated discussion – at the Chair's discretion.

   Each presenter will be asked to provide (to the chair) a two sentence biography or introduction if they wish to be introduced by more than just their name, affiliation, and country.

   Presenters will be required to deliver digital copies of their Powerpoint presentations to the Registration Desk the evening BEFORE their presentation (ideally named simply as their LAST NAME, e.g., Smith.ppt or Ngweno.ppt). Congress staff members will deliver the files to the venue ahead of time.

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[1] *Adapted from the American Evaluation Association (www.eval.org).*

3. **Assist the Congress Organizing Committee:** Please assist the Congress organizers by helping to remind the speakers in your session that it will be an **extreme inconvenience** to have their digital presentations brought to the session and time delays will be deducted from their presentation time.

* Please note that we are able to accept Powerpoint presentations (as *.ppt or *.pdf) in advance of the Congress via email to ice2010tofino@gmail.com. Powerpoint files must be in 1997-2003 compatible format.

IF YOU ARE A CHAIR of a session that you organized independently of the Congress Organizing Committee (i.e., it is not a session of contributed papers), it is up to you to ensure that all digital files are delivered to the Registration Desk the evening before.

At the Session:

1. **Please arrive to your session early** to welcome speakers and delegates. Several volunteers will be on hand to assist in welcoming and seating delegates. Volunteers or staff will be on hand to run the laptop and computer projector and to trouble shoot. At no time should you need to leave your position as chair – any trouble shooting should be directed to Congress volunteers who can contact people, find water, or do whatever needs to be done. Should the projector not work, the room be too hot or too cold, or something happen to the room itself (a spill, noise intrusion, etc.), talk to the volunteers.

2. **Please start on time and end on time**. Because shuttles are involved in moving delegates between some venues, it is essential that sessions end on time allowing delegate to catch their shuttles.

***TIP**: If a presenter does not show up or cannot be located, simply move forward without that person. If they arrive late, they can go last in the order of speakers. If they do not show, there is more time for questions and discussion with other speakers.

3. **Set the stage – introduce yourself**:

   <u>Example introduction (you should write out the introduction for your session(s))</u>
   "Welcome everyone to this session of contributed papers focusing on using surveys as a data collection tool. Thank you for joining us on this lovely Friday morning. My name is Shara Ibaru. I work at the Data Center at the University of West Florida, and I will be serving as the session chair. We have ninety minutes for today's session and five presentations. Each presentation will be allocated 15 minutes during which time the presenter will speak for 10-12 minutes and then take a few short questions. However, once the time elapses for each presentation, we will move on to the next and ask that further questions be held until after all of the presenters have had the opportunity to present. I will stop presenters who run over their allocated time out of fairness to all. Today we'll be hearing about innovations in surveying using new technologies, useful ways to access difficult to survey populations, and how a targeted survey provided actionable information to a multifaceted nonprofit. Together, today's presentations offer both process and product lessons for improving our own surveying practices. Let's begin."

4. **Introduce each presentation**. Transition between presentations by thanking the previous presenter and introducing the next, noting the name and affiliation of the individual or group, the title and the general topic.

   <u>Example transition between each speaker</u>

   "Cori and Anu, thank you for sharing your work. Now we will turn to our colleagues from Think and Do Consulting so that we may learn about the strategies they used to access and survey homeless men and women in Detroit. Welcome!"

5. **Watch the clock!** A volunteer will assist with clock watching by holding up a sign saying "5 minutes left", visible to you and the speaker, at 10 minutes, meaning that the speaker should end his/her talk and allow 2-3 minutes for questions. At 12 minutes, a second sign will be held up saying "3 minutes left" meaning that the speaker should wrap up and allow for questions. If absolutely necessary, a third sign saying "STOP" will be employed at 15 minutes.

   ***TIP**: Should the presenter be unaware of the signs and go right to 15 minutes, you **must** interrupt and end the presentation, moving on to the next speaker. Remember – it may feel awkward to shut someone down but it is the speaker's lack of preparation that will put the remaining speakers and all of the audience in an uncomfortable position. It will not reflect poorly on you in being courteous to the vast majority of people in the room.

   <u>Example of closing down long-winded presenters:</u>

   "Manuel, thank you for your time. I realize that you have more to share, but we must move on to be fair to all of the presenters. I encourage everyone to reconnect after the session, or after the conference via email, to learn more. Now, I am pleased to introduce…"

   Should the need to close down a presenter occur, the time keeper will hold up the card saying STOP and the technician will load the next presentation.

6. **Facilitate the question period**.
   a. During discussion periods, keep notes as to who has raised hands and call on people in turn. Set an expectation for professional, courteous, discourse. Ask that questions be short and targeted and encourage attendees to follow-up after the session as well. If there are many people with questions, avoid letting one person monopolize the discussion.
   b. **Repeat back questions from the audience**: to be sure that everyone heard the question clearly. The audience member is likely facing front and those behind her or him may find it difficult to hear the question posed.
   c. **Wrap-up and end**: Provide a clear conclusion to the session by thanking the presenters and the audience and stating that the session has concluded. At the end of the session, if there is a session following, ask that everyone leave the room and continue the discussion in the foyers so that the next session will have time to set up.

Thank you for agreeing to chair a session. We look forward to your contribution to the success of the 12th International Congress of Ethnobiology!