

American Thoracic Society

International Conference

Instructions for Facilitators for Thematic Poster Sessions

GOALS

1. Foster the discussion of important scientific and clinical questions relevant to the major themes of the session.
2. Offer specific feedback to the authors concerning their data and its interpretation.
3. Foster dialogue between the presenters and observers of the poster material
4. Since the majority of the abstracts presented at the Conference will be scheduled in this format, the role of the facilitator is extremely important.

FORMAT

- Poster presentations of abstracts closely related in themes
- Session duration:
 - Posters are on display from 9:15 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. for independent viewing of posters
 - Facilitators are in attendance from 11:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

PREPARATION BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

Multiple facilitators will be assigned to each thematic poster session. Facilitators should have some degree of expertise in the theme being presented. Each facilitator will be assigned 7-10 abstracts to oversee. Although each facilitator is directly responsible for 7-10 abstracts, it is highly recommended that the facilitators be familiar with all the abstracts, especially to identify those that focus on the same or related issues. All the abstracts to be presented during the thematic poster session will be sent to the discussion facilitators prior to the conference.

Facilitator Responsibilities:

- Communicate with the lead facilitator and co-facilitators to discuss strategy.
- Thoroughly review all the abstracts assigned to the session, paying particular attention to the 7-10 specific abstracts you have been assigned.
- Meet with other facilitators prior to the session to discuss the common themes of the posters and unique methods for conducting the discussion.

DURING THE THEMATIC POSTER SESSION

Facilitator Role:

- Introduce yourself to the authors of your assigned abstracts. Let them know you are assigned as a facilitator.
- Group Discussion: encourage group discussion among authors and attendees.
 - Sunday, Monday, Tuesday sessions: 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Interaction with attendees: time for authors to interact with the attendees. Facilitators should plan to have contact with each poster author in their group during this time
 - Sunday, Monday, Tuesday sessions: 12:30 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
- Encourage scientific exchange and point out the similarities and differences among posters by interacting with the authors and audience.
- One suggested method is to conduct the poster review in walk arounds, where each facilitator and the authors visit each poster with the group. This could be an effective method for stimulating discussion.
- Encourage viewers' participation and discussion.
- Guide experts to posters so that they may give the authors feedback.