



Guidelines for Session Chairs

- ➔ Please check in at the Speakers' Centre at least **4 hours** before the start of your session
- ➔ Chairpersons are required to collect their final session schedule and important security information and instructions at the Speakers Centre.

Your role as chair is the key to a successful session. Like a master of ceremonies or 'anchorperson', your job is to guide the session to achieve its intended purpose in the time available. This includes:

- Preparing well with speakers and others before the conference.
- Opening the session and introducing speakers (and stopping them if they overrun their time) A presentation timer is available at the table – you are responsible for keeping the presentations to time.
- Making sure that the session promotes dialogue, and respectful and productive interaction.
- Managing delegate contributions, questions and answers.
- Making interventions to move thinking forward and promote dialogue such as: making links between points made by speakers / other contributors; bringing in different perspectives; managing conflicting viewpoints; noting where there is agreement / common ground or disagreement; noting key ideas / proposals / agreements for action; summing up areas of agreement and disagreement and next steps.
- As moderator your own speaking time is limited. Please make sure you give space to presenters and audience.
- Thanking speakers and delegates at the end of the session.

Preparation beforehand:

- First of all, make contact with your co-chair and agree on your respective roles in the session.
- Familiarize yourself with the presentation topics or abstracts before the session.
- Make contact with the speakers ahead of time. You are encouraged to ask them to send you their PowerPoint presentation and speaking notes beforehand so that you have an idea of what they are going to say. This is to support you in your preparations – the presenters are still responsible for uploading their slides at the Speakers Centre onsite.
- Prepare questions that will stimulate audience participation and interaction, if applicable.



At the Conference:

- If possible, meet up with speakers ahead of your session. Run through the 'choreography' of the session. Do what you can to make sure speakers are clear about and feel comfortable with their role and with one another.
- Ask speakers how they would like you to introduce them – a personal touch is often welcome.
- Check the room where the session will be held and familiarize yourself with the space and equipment. Introduce yourself to technical staff and room staff.
- Arrive at the session room at least 15 minutes before the start of the session.