

TMS 2022

151st Annual Meeting & Exhibition

Guidelines for Organizing a Successful TMS Symposium

To assist you in developing a symposium with the greatest potential impact, the TMS Programming Committee offers the following recommendations. These are based on best practices and support the programming modifications that TMS has introduced in recent years to make the Annual Meeting as productive and enriching as possible.

Stage 1: Developing a Symposium Concept

- **Start early.** While some ‘hot topics’ only germinate a year before the conference, most symposium ideas can be developed two or more years in advance. This allows them to be discussed to build better coherence in the program.
- **Communicate your idea.** Identify relevant technical committees (see program book or TMS website). Attend each committee’s meetings and discuss your idea. There may be other similar ideas on the table. Be prepared to merge ideas or delay to a later conference. When potential overlap exists, clearly differentiate or organize joint sessions.
- **A clear, concise, differentiating symposium title is crucial.** The first word of the title should be most important, e.g. “Fracture: Measurement Principles.” Use the title to differentiate from similar symposium topics.
- **Enter the symposium on the TMS ProgramMaster website.** To further facilitate communication and coherent programming, upload an idea as soon as possible. Upload at the idea stage and finalize after committee approval.

Stage 2: Call for Abstracts

- Once your symposium has been approved by the Program Committee and opened for abstracts, you can begin to publicize it to your colleagues and others in your field. TMS will provide tools to assist you with promoting your symposium, including a PDF flier, social media graphics, and a sample invitation letter. **The call for abstracts deadline is July 1.**
- **Review the full call for abstracts as if you were looking to submit a talk.** Identify related symposia and alert staff if symposia should be assigned to rooms in the same “neighborhood”.
- Invited talks are a great way to add interest to your symposium. Consider presenters who may not typically attend a TMS meeting or who are from outside of the materials discipline in order to encourage collaboration.
- The TMS Technical Divisions can be a source for meeting registration fee waivers when individuals are lacking the financial resources to participate in the conference. Registration assistance is available on a limited basis and requires submission of the request from a symposium organizer. This submission process will become available in late August for organizers. No commitment should be made to a speaker before final decisions are made.
- **NEW: Encourage symposium participation, but do not solicit more abstracts than can be reasonably accommodated in eight or fewer oral sessions and a poster session.** The Program Committee does not permit parallel sessions within the same symposium, and with a maximum of eight oral session slots

available (Monday morning through Thursday afternoon), the greatest number of 20-minute oral presentations that can be accommodated is 80; fewer oral presentations can be accepted if invited talks are scheduled for more than 20 minutes. Poster sessions do not have a limit but should be kept to a reasonable number for a 90-minute poster session.

Stage 3: Reviewing Submitted Abstracts

- **Optimize the coherency of your sessions.** Please help improve the quality of the TMS Annual Meeting by being selective about content. Identify talks that are off-topic and either reject or move them to a symposium that better aligns with their content.
- **Downselect multiple posters.** If there are multiple abstracts from the same presenter, please select only two abstracts for the poster session.
- **Coordinate joint sessions** with other symposia that cover related topics.
- **Give students a chance.** Allocate some talk slots to students or early career professionals.

Stage 4: Organizing Coherent Sessions

- **Adhere to Session Start and Stop Times.** Follow the session design and schedule provided by staff in July.
- **Maintain a minimum talk time of 20 minutes.** Per TMS Program Committee policy, the minimum presentation slot duration is 20 minutes. Note that 40-minute slots should be reserved for keynote or high-level invited talks.
- **Distribute keynote and invited talks throughout your symposium.** Start or end later sessions with invited talks.
- Place **at-risk presenters**, such as those who are uncertain about travel or who may not receive a visa, toward the ends of sessions to minimize disruption to session flow.
- **Consider Panel Discussions to draw more dialogue.** You can invite panelists and discussion leaders.
- **Consider a “Poster Preview” slot during the oral presentations.** Ask each poster presenter to give a 1-slide, 3-minute summary of their poster during the oral session. This helps connect the oral sessions to the poster session.
- **Set an example.** Consider having your own research group submit appropriate contributions as poster presentations.

Stage 5: Just Before and During the Conference

- **Confirm attendance prior to the conference.** Send an e-mail confirming that the speakers will indeed attend. Communicate cancellations to TMS staff.
- **Backfill.** Replace holes in the program due to cancellations with other speakers, e.g. poster presenters.
- **Attend your symposium.** At least one organizer should always be present to address issues and show support.
- **Report no-shows.** Presenters who do not give their presentations will receive a warning.

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