

ASM GUIDELINES FOR THE PROPOSAL OF SYMPOSIA AND WORKSHOPS

Revised: February 2005, January 2015, January 2018, January 2019, June 2020

GENERAL INFORMATION

ASM supports two types of contributed sessions at its annual meetings. Symposia are featured events during each meeting and, in most cases, will be scheduled as unopposed sessions. **The topics of symposia should be comprehensive and of interest to a large segment of the Society.** Symposium presentations should push the edges of traditional Mammalogy and integrate multiple disciplines in which mammals are the study subjects. In essence, symposium topics should be of broad interest and should inspire discussion throughout the meeting.

Workshops provide for **discussion of a specific topic of more restricted interest.** The structure of workshops is flexible with an emphasis on participatory learning; structured presentations and demonstrations should be balanced by time for discussion and questions. Workshops may be scheduled concurrently with contributed paper sessions, during an unopposed evening, or as a “pre-meeting” event during the first day of the meeting, typically the day of the Board of Directors’ meeting.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Proposal Deadline: Proposals for symposia and workshops should be submitted by **mid-March** of the year prior to the desired date (i.e., ~15 months in advance). The Program Committee sets the exact deadline annually.

Proposal Submission: The organizer(s) should submit symposium or workshop proposals electronically to the Chair of the Professional Development Subcommittee. By submitting a proposal, the organizer(s) is committing to overseeing the planning and execution of the proposed event if it is recommended by the Program Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Specifically, if a proposal is accepted, the organizer(s) is responsible for (1) ensuring that speakers submit abstracts by the posted deadline for that year and (2) sending copies of all abstracts to the Professional Development Subcommittee Chair. The Program Committee has the authority to cancel a symposium if the abstracts are not received by the appropriate date.

Proposal Review: Proposals received by the deadline will be reviewed by the Program Committee and final decisions regarding which events to sponsor will be made at the next annual meeting (i.e., ~12 months in advance of the symposium or workshop date). Review criteria include relevance of the topic to a broad ASM membership, time since any thematically similar events, diversity of speakers, potential to forward the science of mammalogy, cost of the proposed event, and a willingness to pursue publication of the proceedings in the *Journal of Mammalogy*. Our workshops and symposia also should promote human diversity. Therefore, symposia and workshop applications with speakers from diverse backgrounds will be viewed favorably.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Proposal Format: The organizer(s) must complete the “**ASM Application for the Proposal of Symposia and Workshops**”. This includes the 1-page cover sheet as well as a description of the proposed event (**see Proposal Description below**). The application form requires contact information for the organizer(s) and **ALL** speakers, meaning that these individuals should already have been identified and contacted about the potential of participating.

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Proposal Description: The proposal must contain a detailed description of the goals of the symposium or workshop and an explanation of the relevance of this topic to the Society; particularly how it will appeal to mammalogists. Further, the organizer(s) should include a justification for the inclusion of each speaker or instructor, as well as an explanation of each speaker or instructor's general background and contribution to the event (including a proposed title and 2–3 sentence description of each talk for symposia). For each speaker or instructor, give the name, institution, career stage, and how the speaker contributes to a symposium or workshop of diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

In general, symposia and workshops **should not exceed two hours in length**. The proposed format should be explained in the proposal and adequate time must be available for questions from the audience within that two-hour limit. Requests for longer periods, or use of an unusual format, should be justified in the proposal; further, it may benefit symposium and workshop organizer(s) to consult with the Professional Development Subcommittee Chair about such a request prior to proposal submission. If workshops require more than two hours, they should be scheduled **during an unopposed evening or as a pre-meeting event**.

Proposal Budget: Organizer(s) can request travel support for symposia and workshop participants. Only event participants who are **not** regular attendees of the annual meeting of the ASM are eligible for travel support. A “regular attendee” is defined as anyone who has attended three or more annual meetings in the last ten years. The organizer(s) must identify speakers for which travel funds are requested and confirm that these speakers are eligible.

If travel support is requested, proposals must include a detailed budget (**example shown below**). For each eligible speaker, budget requests should include adequate funds for travel (e.g., airfare [coach, booked well in advance to ensure low fares], shuttles, registration [regular rate], meals [per diem; please see www.gsa.gov for specific rates], and lodging [on-campus housing if available]). Make sure that speakers (especially those supported by ASM travel funds) plan to attend the entire meeting (prerequisite for travel support) in order to maximize interaction between themselves and meeting attendees, and that speakers funded by ASM understand **what** travel expenses will be paid or reimbursed by ASM. Remember that the amount requested sets the cap on funds that may be used to defray the costs of eligible speakers. **No honoraria will be paid by ASM funds provided via the Program Committee**. Organizer(s) proposing events with large travel budgets may need to seek additional sources of funding.

Due to the limiting nature of an early event, **pre-meeting workshops** will require a fee structure to help support **meeting room, AV, and other expenses**. The purpose of the workshops is to provide high-quality opportunities to learn or expand skills at a low cost, especially for student attendees, so the fee is **not** intended to cover speaker travel. Therefore, requests for pre-meeting workshops should include information for speaker travel as described above, as well as the specifics on needs for meeting rooms, AV, etc. Please consult with the Professional Development Subcommittee Chair to determine the necessary costs for hosting such a workshop.

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Example Budget:

Registration (regular rate): \$300 X 2 speakers = \$600
Housing (on-campus): \$25/day X 5 days X 2 speakers = \$250
Meals (per diem): \$50/day X 5 days X 2 speakers = \$500
Airfare for Speaker 1 (from A): \$500
Airfare for Speaker 2 (from B): \$250
Ground Transportation: \$100/speaker X 2 speakers = \$200
TOTAL REQUEST: \$2,300

A FEW TIPS FOR PREPARING A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Symposia: Topics from any subject area may be proposed for a symposium – **the key is to present the material in a fashion that is understandable and exciting to an audience with varied interests.** Speakers should be allowed sufficient time to develop their topic and to integrate the results of several workers, not just give a brief description of their own work. The presentations should represent the state-of-the-art and provide an overview of the significant questions in the chosen topic. A useful approach is to prepare a symposium talk as you would a seminar for a general biology department. Media presentations should be of the highest quality. Remember that a symposium is a featured event of the meeting and needs to hold the interest of many people.

Symposia are intended to occur unopposed and thus should be sufficiently broad in scope as to be of interest to most meeting attendees. If you wish to propose a more narrowly focused symposium that could be scheduled concurrently with other events, please explain this as part of the proposal. Please note that ASM may be less inclined to allocate funding to symposia that are not intended to run unopposed.

Workshops: Workshops are generally scheduled concurrently with contributed paper sessions. The purpose of a workshop is to provide a venue for hands-on learning or extensive discussion of a specific topic. Although a time limit of 2 hours is suggested, the format and time limits are flexible and limited only by the ability of the Program Committee to accommodate the needs of the workshop. Workshops may be coordinated with symposia to provide a more detailed discussion of ideas or hands-on experience with equipment or procedures presented in the symposia.

If a proposed workshop is of a suitable topic and the organizers would consider scheduling the event for the day before the start of the meetings (on the day of the first meeting of the Board of Directors), please indicate this in the workshop proposal. Holding a workshop prior to the start of the meetings may allow for alternate formats (e.g., longer than two-hour workshops) that do not work well during the regular meeting schedule. **Pre-meeting workshops will include a small registration fee to help support meeting room, AV, and other expenses required to hold the workshop prior to the regular portion of the meeting (see details above). Workshops intended for the regular part of the meeting do not require a fee.**