

Society of Toxicology Scientific Session Chair Standard Operating Procedures

SOT prides itself on being the “preeminent organization for toxicologists around the world.” As such, each member’s behavior is important in projecting a positive and professional face for the Society. One setting in which professional behavior is extremely important is in the chairing of scientific sessions at the Annual Meeting. Please review these guidelines as you prepare for your session.

Communicate with your Co-chair prior to the Annual Meeting to organize your session.

- 1) Familiarize yourself with the abstracts of the talks to be presented in your session prior to the Annual Meeting. Slide decks should be shared by speakers several weeks or days **before the session** at the Annual Meeting for Chair review to ensure no inappropriate or provocative slides appear.
 - ✓ Any slides displaying animals in distress or perceived distress should be removed. Please review the [issue statement regarding use of animals in toxicology](#).
 - ✓ Slides that point fingers and/or blame individuals should be removed and no names or photographs of specific people should be included.
 - ✓ No slides or presentations should contain promotion of commercial products or “infomercials.”
- 2) Communicate with presenters prior to the Annual Meeting:
 - ✓ Make sure that you know the correct pronunciation of presenter names.
 - ✓ Determine how your speakers wish to be addressed during the session (“Dr.,” “Professor,” or first name).
 - ✓ Remind speakers of their time allocations and how time will be monitored and communicated.
 - ✓ Remind speakers that their slides should be prepared based on the amount of time they have to speak during the session.
 - ✓ **Sessions must begin on time and all presentations within sessions must begin, and end, on time according to the published schedule.**
 - ✓ Remind speakers to include a Conflict of Interest statement (even if there is no COI) as their second slide.
- 3) Assure that speaker introductions are professional and collegial. If a speaker is a good friend, it is fine to say that, but do not make jokes or references to personal topics that the audience will not understand.
- 4) Arrive in your session room about 10 minutes before the session begins and communicate with the A/V team in that room. Ask whom should be contacted if there are problems with equipment (microphones, timers, pointers, etc.)
- 5) Remind the audience members that talks are not to be photographed or recorded.
- 6) Give each speaker your undivided attention during the presentation. There should be no appearance of distraction (there should be no use of phones, laptop computers/pads, etc.) while the speakers are speaking.
- 7) Formulate a question to ask each speaker ahead of time. It is very awkward to open the floor for questions and have none asked. The Chair can ease the tension by asking a question if there are none from the audience. If you have a question of genuine interest, feel free to ask after members of the audience have had their chance.
- 8) If you plan to have polling during your session: One of your session panelists should manage the polling with their personal device (laptop or tablet). Be sure to advise the A/V technician in the room before the session begins that polling will be occurring (the poll manager should arrive in the session room at least 20 minutes before the session begins to advise the technician). SOT staff or the A/V technicians will not manage any session polling during the session.
- 9) After the session, SOT HQ will email you a survey for feedback about your session. Please respond!