



SESSION CHAIR HANDBOOK

This document contains all the instructions, responsibilities, and details associated with being a Scientific Session Chair/Co-Chair.



Congratulations on having your Scientific Session proposal selected for presentation at the SOT Annual Meeting and ToxExpo.

This handbook contains the major deadlines, important instructions, and other details that will assist you in fulfilling your obligations as a Scientific Session Chair.

If you need assistance or have any questions, contact [SOT Headquarters](#).

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RESPONSIBILITIES SURROUNDING THE MEETING

Tentative Acceptance Responsibilities

Stage 1: Tentative Acceptance BY JULY 21

If your proposal is tentatively selected for the SOT Annual Meeting and ToxExpo, you will need to take the following actions:

1

Confirm your session title. If a new title was requested, send the revised title to SOT Headquarters. If there are any other changes to your session from the proposal (e.g., change in speaker), send those to SOT Headquarters, too.

2

Confirm the list of presenters by assuring that they are available and able to attend the meeting in person. Remember that SOT members do not receive funding for being a session speaker.

3

Provide nonmember speaker contact information to SOT Headquarters: company/institution, full mailing address, zip or country codes, telephone number, and email address. SOT will contact nonmembers in October with information regarding registration and travel funding.

4

If you have nonmember speakers from Europe or Canada, those individuals need to send an email to SOT Headquarters providing consent to receive emails related to this session.

Tentative Acceptance Responsibilities



Stage 2: Resubmission

JULY to MID-AUGUST

Now that you have confirmed or reconfirmed your speakers and the session details, you will receive information via email about resubmitting your session using the online portal. This process should take 15 minutes or less.



About Resubmission

-  The resubmission should be based on suggested changes provided to you by your SPC liaison—if no changes were suggested you still must resubmit the proposal.
-  The individual who submitted the proposal must be the one who resubmits the proposal. Proposals cannot be transferred between accounts.

Key Tasks



Get feedback from your SPC liaison and finalize your session overview abstract.



Obtain final abstracts from your speakers.



Confirm membership status of Chair, Co-Chair, and speakers.

Tips for Resubmission Success



Start Now!

Speaker abstracts may require an internal review and approval by their employer, especially for speakers from federal agencies. This process takes time and should not be left to the last minute.

Consult Your Liaison!

You should provide copies of the final abstracts to your SPC liaison well before the August 15 so that they have time to review them and make recommendations for enhancing them.



Important Dates

August 15

Proposal resubmission deadline

September 25

You will receive a final decision from the SPC regarding your session's acceptance. This message will include the date/time of your session if accepted.

Questions?

Contact your SPC liaison or [David Rossé](#).

Tentative Acceptance Responsibilities

Stage 3: After Resubmission MID-AUGUST to OCTOBER

You should complete two administrative items while you await a final decision from the SPC.



DEADLINE:
September
12

Finalize presentation lengths.

A draft schedule for speaker timing is developed based on your proposal and will be emailed to you. You must review this timing and make any needed adjustments. Durations should be in multiples of five minutes, and Workshop and Roundtable Sessions are required to feature a Panel Discussion during their allotted session time. If not included, SOT also will add a five-minute "Introduction to the Session," listing the Chair or Co-Chair as the speaker.

➡ Send times to [David Rossé](#) by 9/12/2025.

Final Acceptance Responsibilities

Final acceptance notifications are delivered in late-September. Notification of final acceptance will include your session's day/time assignment.



Action Needed

You should communicate the following information to your speakers.



Your Session's Day and Time

All speakers are expected to make their presentation in-person in San Diego. If a speaker cannot travel, please attempt to find a replacement and inform [David Rossé](#) of the change.



Your Abstracts Are Considered Final

The overview and individual presentation abstracts that you submitted during resubmission will be the ones used in all Annual Meeting materials. You do NOT need to resubmit these abstracts again.

Final Acceptance

Registration and Funding



Member Speakers

All SOT members who are part of your session must register themselves for the meeting. The early-bird deadline is in January.



Nonmember Speakers

SOT staff will register your funded nonmember speakers. Speakers that are awarded full travel funding will receive detailed information from SOT Headquarters in October to arrange their travel.



Details on Speaker Funding

Your acceptance letter contained information regarding which nonmember speakers were full funded and which were funded with registration only.

Full funding for nonmember speakers consists of free registration, round-trip, nonrefundable, economy travel; one night of housing in San Diego with the SOT hotel block; and up to \$50 in meal reimbursement for two days.

Responsibilities Surrounding the Meeting

BEFORE THE MEETING



01. Organize the Session

Complete all the tasks outlined in the previous pages to prepare your session and speakers for the meeting.

Chairs should review the presentations to ensure that all slides are appropriate and contain the required information (guidelines provided separately).



03. Determine Speaker Preferences

Introductions for each speaker should be professional and collegial without jokes or references to personal topics.



05. Develop Questions

Scientific debate and dialogue are beneficial, but disrespectful or aggressive language and actions are not. Review the SOT Code of Conduct for more information regarding the SOT policies and protocol.



07. Speaker Ready Room

02. Review the Slides



Make sure you know how to pronounce each speaker's name and how they prefer to be addressed and introduced (Dr., Professor, etc.). Plus, communicate how time reminders will be conveyed during the session.

04. Prepare the Intros



Formulate a question to ask each speaker to avoid awkwardness during the session if no questions are asked. If the audience is asking questions, wait until the audience is done before asking any additional questions.

06. Review Code of Conduct



Provide the Speaker Ready Room location and hours to your speakers. Encourage them to visit the Speaker Ready Room to (1) upload their presentations at least one hour before the session if they did not do so before the meeting or (2) review their slides.

Responsibilities Surrounding the Meeting

DURING THE MEETING

Plan on getting to your session room 5–10 minutes before the scheduled start. Introduce yourself to the AV technician in the room and make sure you know who is responsible for each piece of equipment and how it works.

08. Arrive Early



08. Welcome All

Children are allowed in Scientific Session as long as they are under full parental/guardian control and not disrupting the session. All registrant types, except guests, are allowed in all Scientific Sessions.

Remind the audience to silence their electronic devices and that no talks should be photographed or recorded.

10. Issue Photo Policy Reminder



11. Pay Attention

Give each speaker your undivided attention. Do not use electronic devices while the speaker is presenting. If you want to take notes, do so by hand.

AFTER THE MEETING

After your session, SOT Headquarters will email you a survey to gather feedback about your session. Please respond!

12. Provide Feedback

