

# **Empowering the Endorsers: Developing Competitive Scientific Session Proposals**

**Hosted by the Scientific Program Committee**

February 14, 2019; 1:00 – 2:00 PM

**Welcome!**



# Discussion Instructions

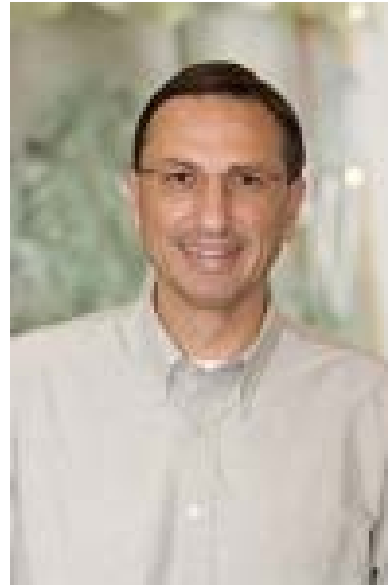
- If you would like to speak and are connected via phone, select the raise hand icon below the panelist list and we will unmute your phone line.
- If you do not have the chance to speak, submit questions and comments via the **Q&A** panel (not Chat) for later follow up.



# Leadership Connection



**Krishna Allamneni**  
Scientific Program Committee



**George Daston**  
2019-2020 Chair  
Scientific Program Committee



**Lynette Rogers**  
Scientific Program Committee



# Overview

- Annual Meeting Sessions
  - Solicitation of Proposals
  - Preparation of Proposals by Organizers (SS/SIG internal review, comment, submission, etc.)
  - Proposal Review (Scientific Program and Continuing Education Committees)
  - Best Practices Related to Accepted Proposals
  - Continuing Education
  - Preparation of Proposals (internal practices)



# Annual Meeting Scientific Sessions

- Cutting-Edge Interdisciplinary Science and New Perspectives
- Depth of Analysis
- Emerging Fields and Their Application to the Field of Toxicology
- Active Involvement in Other Areas of Toxicology



# Annual Meeting Session Types

	Annual Meeting Session Type	Description	# of Speakers	Details
<b>S</b>	Symposia (165 or 90 minutes)	Cutting-edge science: new areas, concepts, or data in the forefront of toxicology.	4-5 speakers (165 minutes) 2-3 speakers (90 minutes)	Up to 3 nonmember speakers provided with full-funding support (165 min.); up to 2 (90 min.)
<b>W</b>	Workshop (165 or 90 minutes)	Informal, interactive presentations that highlight state-of-the-art knowledge in toxicology with an emphasis on discussion (panel discussion must be included)	4-5 speakers (165 minutes) 2-3 speakers (90 minutes)	Up to 3 nonmember speakers provided with full-funding support (165 min.); up to 2 (90 min.)
<b>R</b>	Roundtable (80 minutes)	Controversial subjects; moderated discussions, with 3–4 speakers providing a three to five minute statement and the balance of the time for questions and discussion	3-4 speakers	Up to 2 nonmember speakers provided with full-funding support
<b>HH</b>	Historical Highlights (80 minutes)	Review of a historical topic with toxicology impact	3-4 speakers	Up to 2 nonmember speakers provided with full-funding support



# Annual Meeting Session Types

	Annual Meeting Session Type	Description	# of Speakers	Funding Support Available
<b>IS</b>	Informational Session (usually 80 minutes)	General information and planned scientific activities not based on outcome of scientific research	3-4 speakers	Up to 2 nonmember speakers provided with full-funding support
<b>EC</b>	Education/Career Development (80 minutes)	Tools and resources for toxicologists that will enhance their professional or scientific development	3-4 speakers	Up to two nonmember speakers provided with full-funding support
<b>RI</b>	Regional Interest (165 or 90 minutes)	Central topics of relevance that describe public health and/or ecological problems of that region	4-5 speakers 2-3 speakers (90 minutes)	Up to 3 nonmember speakers provided with full-funding support (165 min.); up to 2 (90 min.)
<b>PL</b>	Platform (165 minutes)	Oral presentations that cover new areas, concepts, or data	Not more than 9 presentations in one platform session	Not applicable
<b>PS</b>	Poster (All Day sessions; 90 minute presenting blocks)	Topic specific presentations that cover new areas, concepts, or data	Not more than 40 abstracts will be programmed	Not applicable



# Competitive Nature of Proposals

(Statistics)

AM Year	# Submitted	# Accepted	Acceptance %
2013 (San Antonio)	144	60	42
2014 (Phoenix)	146	62	42
2015 (San Diego)	145	59	41
2016 (New Orleans)	130	57	44
2017 (Baltimore)	135	58	43
2018 (San Antonio)	126	61	48
2019 (Baltimore)	128	73	57

**Space is limited for sessions thus, proposals are very competitive.**

The number of proposals that can be accepted/sessioned each year is directly dependent on the location of the Annual Meeting and the rooms and their sizes that have been contracted. Contracts may be set up to 5 years in advance.





# Full SOT Session Proposal Information

Can be found on this page:

[https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2019/preparing\\_proposals.asp](https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2019/preparing_proposals.asp)



# A Good Proposal has...

- Clearly Presented Focus/Message
- Session objectives stated clearly
- All speakers should be confirmed
- Integrated Overall Abstract
  - Speaker abstracts that either build upon each other, contrast respective views, or otherwise contribute to the overall theme of the proposal.
- *Primary* Endorsement by a SS/SIG/Committee with favorable ranking and/or insightful comments.
  - Additional endorsement by up to two more SSs/SIGs/Committees encouraged to facilitate interactions between component groups.
  - Consider endorsement by the Specialty Section Collaboration and Communication Group.



# Proposal Quality

- Make sure the proposal is fully developed.
  - Proposals submitted with general topics for speakers, no proposed speakers, no detailed description of what each speaker will cover, and/or 1-3 general sentences about the topic for the proposal (or speaker) generally do not fare well.
- The proposal should stand out to each SPC member so that he or she can determine the significance of the topic, the relationship of each talk to the topic and the inter-relationship of the talks to one another.
  - SPC members are selected with an effort to have a broad expertise across toxicology specialties and to be equally representative of job sectors and gender.
  - Proposals are independently reviewed and scored by SPC members without knowing how the other members are scoring.



# Breadth of Topic and Speakers

- Make sure topic is relevant to toxicology.
- The SPC is sensitive to meeting the needs of the component groups, but tries to balance the scope of the proposal with the potential audience.
- Avoid topics that are too broad which may seem like a survey of the literature.
- Avoid having too many speakers from the same institution, job sector, etc. This helps provide diversity in perspective.
  - Diversity in perspective is most important for controversial topics but SPC understands this may not be appropriate for all topics



# Member vs. Nonmember Speakers

- **Speaker Funding:**
  - SOT will fully fund (travel and meeting registration) up to three nonmembers in a 165-minute session (SYM, WKSP, RI), or up to two for an accepted 80-minute or 90-minute session.
  - SOT has many members; membership has broad expertise and we should utilize it.
- **Utilize nonmember speakers if they are the best presenters for a specific talk.**
- **Exceptions:**
  - Topic is very novel.
  - SPC is trying to increase exposure to scientific topics not normally at the Annual Meeting, but that impact toxicology.
  - Apply for IAT (Innovations in Applied Toxicology) or ITS (Innovations in Toxicological Sciences) designation, which can allow for up to four nonmember speakers to receive full-funding. Complete information on IAT and ITS designation can be found on the 2019 Session Proposal website:
  - [https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2019/submitting\\_proposals.asp](https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2019/submitting_proposals.asp)



# Nonmember Speaker Funding

- Funding needs must be identified with submission.
- SOT Members are NOT eligible for funding support, including Annual Meeting registration.
- Two levels—all nonmember speakers will receive complimentary registration to attend the meeting.
  - **Full-Funding**—registration, lodging (up to two nights), travel (lowest economy), two days reimbursable expenses (meals up to \$50 per day, ground transportation, etc.).
    - Full-Funding requests apply to both North American (US, Canada, Mexico) speakers and overseas speakers.
  - **Registration Only**—nonmember speakers who receive registration only support are not eligible for reimbursement at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting. This type of funding is typically requested if three speakers (SYM, WKSP, RI), or two speakers (other session types), are already marked for full funding in the proposal, or if the nonmember speaker cannot accept full funding (e.g., speakers from Government agencies).



# Endorsement

- Primary endorser: The component group (SS/SIG/Committee) which developed the proposal, or recommended the session by ranking it highest during their review.
- **There must be at least one primary endorser.** Proposal submitters may indicate up to two additional endorsers.
- Sessions that cut across three or more specialty areas of toxicology: Consider selecting the Specialty Section Collaboration Group as an Endorser.
- The endorser ranks proposals against other proposals of the same session type (Symposia, Workshops, etc.).
- The endorser provides **comments** on the relative importance of the proposal to toxicology.
  - Absolutely used by SPC!
  - May be favorable, neutral, or critical (sometimes with recommendations)
- The endorsing groups are given approximately 10 days to review, rank, and comment on proposals requesting endorsement.



# Soliciting Endorser Input

- Assess potential interest early (now!)
  - Provide endorsers with proposal and rationale as to why the proposal will be of interest.
  - Request feedback as to their level of interest; they will be ranking the proposal relative to other like proposals.
- All groups have different processes for reviewing and ranking proposals so don't expect each one to act the same way.
  - Many desire the ability for early review and the opportunity to provide feedback.
  - A blog will be distributed to SOT membership with pre-review dates by Specialty Section.





# Session Proposal Deadline: May 15

- SPC expects close-to-final proposals
- *Complete* abstracts
  - Overall abstract
  - Individual presenter abstracts
- All speakers and co-chairs should be confirmed (so they are not surprised).
  - Be sure they understand the proposal must be approved by the SPC prior to a final commitment
- Close-to-final proposals means less modifying during the resubmission period over the summer.



# Endorser Review Process/Timeline

- **Wednesday, May 15, 2019, 11:59 PM US Eastern time:** Proposal submission deadline.
- **Thursday, May 17 to May 28 (Tuesday after Memorial Day):** Endorsers (SSs, SIGs, SOT Committees and Task Forces) complete review of proposals online—entry of ranks and comments.
  - PDFs of the proposals requesting endorsement from that endorser and a list of all proposals will be sent to the groups' Presidential Chain/Committee Chairperson.
  - A form created in SurveyMonkey will be sent to the endorsing group Presidential Chain/Committee Chairperson, although one person from the endorsing group review committee should be designated to enter the formal details online.
  - SOT HQ will send complete instructions and guidelines on how to use the SurveyMonkey review form.
  - All questions on the review form are required. *The form may be edited until it has been submitted.*
  - If you **do not endorse** a proposal that has identified your group as an endorser, please write “we do not endorse this proposal” in the final comment box on the review form. **Do not leave the comment box blank. *The SPC values endorsing group comments on the merits of the proposal both in quality as well as the value to the endorsing group***



# Specialty Section Confirmed Sessions

- Specialty Sections will be able to select a single proposal which will be presented at the Annual Meeting on a rotating basis.
  - Process the same as prior years (including SPC review and potential requests for modification)
  - Proposal will be reviewed outside the routine ranking system and sessioned
- Three-year rotation schedule (9 per year)



# Rotation Schedule for Confirmed Sessions

2018 (San Antonio)	2019 (Baltimore)	2020 (Anaheim)
Regulatory & Safety Eval.	Risk Assessment	<i>In Vitro</i> & Alternative Methods
Repro & Developmental Tox.	Drug Discovery Toxicology	Immunotoxicology
Mechanisms	Neurotoxicology	Inhalation & Respiratory
Nanotoxicology	Occupational & Public Health	Molecular & Systems Biology
Food Safety	Carcinogenesis	Metals
Biotechnology	Biological Modeling	Cardiovascular Toxicology
Dermal Toxicology	Medical Device	Tox. & Exploratory Pathology
Clinical & Translational Tox.	Mixtures	Stem Cells
Ocular Toxicology	Comparative & Veterinary	Ethical, Legal, Forensic & Social Issues



# The 2020 Annual Meeting Proposal Site

- Launches first week of March.
- 2020 Session Proposal site: [www.toxicology.org/2020](http://www.toxicology.org/2020)
- 2019 Session Proposal site: [https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2019/preparing\\_proposals.asp](https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2019/preparing_proposals.asp)
- Proposal submission guidelines and detailed instructions for the online SS/SIG/Committee proposal review.
  - Description of all session types.
  - FAQs
  - Information about abstract submission for poster and platform presentations.
  - The link to this webinar recording and the slides.
  - Sample symposium and workshop proposals



# Questions

Send your questions or comments using the [Q&A](#) panel.

If you would like to speak select the raise hand icon below the panelist list and we will unmute your phone line.



If you do not have the chance to speak, submit questions and comments for later follow up.



# How Does the Scientific Program Committee WORK?



# 2020 Proposal Review Timeline

- **Early March (no later than March 7): SOT Session Proposal Site opens**
- **Wednesday, May 15, 2019, 11:59 PM US Eastern time:** Proposal submission deadline.
- **May 17–May 28:** Endorsers complete review of proposals online—entry of ranks and comments.
- **May 29 to mid-June:** SPC review of proposals and endorser ranks/scores/comments.
- **Late June:** SPC face to face meeting to discuss review decisions, scores, ranks, comments, and tentatively accept, or not accept, all proposals.
- **Early July:** SPC communicates formal “tentative acceptance” or “non acceptance” to proposal submitters. Letters sent to session organizer with endorsing group President/Chairperson copied. Latter must communicate details with full review group.
- **By mid-July:** Accepted session organizers must comply with requests from SPC—full contact information for ALL nonmember speakers, any title or content changes, etc.
- **Early July–August 13:** Chairs for tentatively accepted sessions asked to revisit the proposal site to finalize overall abstract, as suggested by the SPC liaison for the session. Changes may include title changes; abstract updating; speaker roster changes.
- **Mid-September:** Scientific Program Committee reconvenes to review the modified Invited Speaker proposals for the tentatively accepted sessions.
- **Late September:** Final Acceptance (or non acceptance) notices sent to session chairs.





# SPC–The Deliberation

- Proposals, and Endorser ranks and comments are sent to SPC and CE Committee within one week of Endorser review close.
- Committee members review the Annual Meeting proposal submissions
  - Provide a score: 1 (highest) through 5 (lowest).
  - Scores sent to SOT HQ and a mean for each proposal is calculated.



# SPC-The Review Process

- **2-day Face-to-Face meeting in late June:**
  - Worksheet provided with historical data and number of rooms available, as well as proposals listed based on mean score, divided into thirds.
    - Top third: most likely to be accepted; bottom third: most likely to be rejected; middle third: “on the bubble”
  - Discuss proposals:
    - More attention is focused on those on the bubble.
    - Competitive but duplicative proposals (decide).
    - Any on or below the bubble that an SPC member wants to champion for further consideration by the group.
    - SPC members recuse themselves during deliberations if a proposal list them as an organizer, speaker, or input solicited as SS/SIG officer.



# SPC-The Review Process (cont.)

- Provide reasons for nonacceptance for all proposals not tentatively accepted
- Provide any required input from SPC for tentatively-accepted proposals
  - Suggestions for broadening speaker sector, inclusion of specific perspective, fewer speakers from same institution, etc.
  - Assign SPC liaisons to all “tentatively accepted” proposals.
  - NOTE: Refusal to consider or adjust proposals based on SPC input may result in the proposal not receiving final acceptance in September. (This is why they are “**Tentatively Accepted**” when communicated in early July.) Work with your liaison!



# Chairs and Speaker Funding

- **Membership**

- The proposal guidelines require that the chairperson be a member of the SOT; the co-chair may be a member or non-member
- Full-funding support is limited to no more than three nonmember speakers (unless IAT or ITS designation is accepted)
- No funding support of any kind for SOT members



# Reasons for Proposal Nonacceptance

- **Endorsement (Ranking/Comments)**
  - Endorser comments were not considered supportive enough to merit acceptance.
  - Lack of enthusiasm, as evidenced by comments and relative ranking.



# Reasons for Proposal Nonacceptance

- **Quality of the proposal**
  - The focus of the subject material was considered to be too narrow.
  - The extent of the coverage of the topic area needs to be improved.
  - The focus on methodology needs to be expanded.
  - The proposal was not fully developed. Additional information concerning the nature of the individual presentations is required.
  - The proposal addresses a topic that does not adequately focus on the toxicological sciences.



# Reasons for Proposal Nonacceptance

- **Other Issues**

- The SPC felt that this was a good proposal, but that the topic was too similar to one held at a recent SOT Annual Meeting.
- The SPC felt that this was a good proposal, but was unable to include it in this year's program due to the significant number of good proposals and space limitations.
- **Generally the SPC encourages resubmission, but this does not guarantee acceptance the following year.**



# Double or Triple-Booked Chairs and Presenters

- **SOT Annual Meeting Chair and Co-Chair Policy:**
  - One individual may not serve as Chair for more than one session per Annual Meeting or as Co-Chair for more than one session per Annual Meeting.
  - Same individual can serve as Chair of one session and Co-Chair of another session.
  - This is in response to many of the same members appearing as Chairs and/or Co-Chairs for different sessions. There is a concern about over-extended session participants during the Annual Meeting.
  - **Presenters** should also be limited to no more than one Monday through Thursday scientific session (not including CE). This policy is in place to ensure diversity regarding presenters at the Annual Meeting.





# The Review for Final Acceptance

- SPC members review individual abstracts against objectives stated in the overview for “tentatively accepted” proposals for which they were assigned as liaison.
  - Only the assigned committee member reviews the overview and individual abstracts for the tentatively accepted session.
- SPC members participate in a teleconference in September to confirm “Final Acceptance” of sessions, any nonacceptances, voluntary withdrawals/replacements.
- Face-to-Face meeting in early November to finalize schedule with the inclusion of Poster and Platform sessions.
  - Significant effort made to eliminate/minimize overlap.
- Possible presenter conflicts are evaluated and rectified, and the Scientific Program agenda is completed in December.



# Poster and Platform Abstracts

- SPC strongly encourages submitters to select the appropriate presentation type when submitting abstracts during the final submission phase.
  - Poster Only – presenter will only be considered for a poster session.
  - Platform or Poster – presenter will be considered for both presentation types. By selecting this presentation type, the Scientific Program Committee is able to develop dynamic platform sessions.



# Reasons for Abstract Nonacceptance

- The abstract reports no new data, knowledge, interpretations or applications.
  - The abstract may describe a proposal or work in progress, with no results to report at this time. This abstract may be resubmitted for a future meeting once results become available.
- The abstract is poorly written.
- The abstract presents a review of published literature and does not report new scientific interpretations or applications.
- The abstract fails to indicate the substance investigated in the study.
- The abstract promotes a commercial product of potential interest to scientific community. The Scientific Program Committee believes that presentation of this information would be more appropriate at the Exhibitor's booth.



# Reasons for Abstract Nonacceptance

- The abstract is one of several emanating from a single study and cannot form a separate presentation.
- The abstract raises ethical questions that need to be resolved or clarified before it can be accepted.
- The experimental design and/or interpretations are flawed or biased.
- The work as presented is fundamentally sound but it is unclear in its connection and relevance to toxicology.



# 2020 Session Proposal and Abstract Review Key Points

- Session proposal site for 2020 Annual Meeting launches during the first week of March.
- Proposal site will house today's webinar.
- Be sure to review the section “FAQs: Session Programming and Scheduling (“Why is that session then?”), for more insight on how SPC puts together the Scientific Program each year.
- *All scientific session and CE proposals must be received by May 15, 2019.*
- Poster and platform abstract site open August 15 to October 18, 2019.



# Questions

Send your questions or comments using the [Q&A](#) panel.

If you would like to speak select the raise hand icon below the panelist list and we will unmute your phone line.



If you do not have the chance to speak, submit questions and comments for later follow-up.



# Thank You for Attending!

- The recording of this session will be posted on the 2020 Session proposal website on March 1.
- [www.toxicology.org/2020](http://www.toxicology.org/2020)
- Contact David Rossé at SOT HQ with any questions.

