

Session Chair Onboarding

for the 75th ACA Annual Meeting in Lombard, IL

July 18 - 22, 2025



November 12 & 15, 2024

Thank You

Thank you for volunteering to be a session chair!

We appreciate the time & effort you devote to the ACA.



The annual meeting would not be possible without your dedication and support.



Session Chair Responsibilities

<https://acas.memberclicks.net/session-chair-information>

- 1) Write a session description
- 2) Invite speakers
- 3) Solicit session sponsorship
- 4) Monitor abstract submissions
- 5) Organize the session
- 6) Shepherd speakers
- 7) Chair the session
 - You must attend in-person
 - You must be a member of the ACA
- 8) Write a session summary for ACA Reflexions

1: Write a Session Description

- Finalize the title for your session
- Write a brief paragraph (1-6 sentences) describing the scope of topics for the session
 - [Link to Sample Session Descriptions](#)
 - Authors will use this to decide which session to submit their abstract to; be informative but concise
- **Due by Friday Dec 6, 2024**
 - [Link to Submit](#) your Title & Session Description to HQ
 - You will need to log in to the ACA website
 - Only ACA members can log in, so **if you are not currently an ACA member, you will need to join**. You will need to join as part of the meeting registration anyway (the non-member registration fee *includes* the membership fee), so you might as well join now

2: Invite Speakers

- 6 or 7 speakers are needed to fill a half-day session
 - 5 speakers minimum, 8 speakers maximum
- ~40% of talks should come from contributed abstracts
- For most half-day sessions, this means you should plan for
 - 3 to 4 talks by invited speakers (announce them!)
 - When they agree, send that information to HQ to help advertise the meeting
 - 2 to 3 talks from other contributed abstracts
 - Certain sessions will take ALL talks from contributed abstracts, such as the General Interest, Cool Structures, & Hot Structures session(s)

Recommended Timeline:

- Make a list of 4-6 potential speakers now (**Nov**)
- Contact top 3 speakers (**Nov**)
- Contact additional speakers as necessary (**Dec**)
- Secure 3 to 4 invited speakers by **Jan**

2: Invite Speakers

Speaker invitation policies:

- Speakers must attend the meeting **in-person**
- Speakers must be **ACA members** (or must join this year)
- Speakers can only submit one abstract
1 registration = 1 abstract
 - Exception: A 2nd abstract may be submitted to an educational session. Seek permission from the Meeting Committee before submitting
- All speakers must **BOTH register AND submit an abstract**
 - The ACA does NOT issue complimentary registrations, either to chairs or invited speakers
 - If you wish to offer a subsidy to any speakers, you must solicit sponsorship for your session. *You cannot subsidize your own fees
- **Strive for a diverse range of speakers**

3: Solicit Session Sponsorship

- [Link to How to Raise Sponsorship Funds](#)

- Ask early! **Begin now (Nov/Dec)**
- Target appropriate sponsors
- Identify the correct person to contact
- Write a persuasive letter on official letterhead
 - Include an appropriate amount of information
- Follow-up with a telephone call within 1-2 weeks
- Once a sponsor commits, ensure funds are transferred
- Write a thank-you letter



4: Monitor Abstract Submissions

- Ensure your invited speakers submit their abstract (**Jan/Feb**) [Link to Oxford Abstracts](#)
- Monitor the # of abstracts submitted to your session
- **If there are not at least 5 abstracts submitted to your session by the end of February, recruit more speakers**
NOT yourself!



- Abstract submission closes
March 31, 2025

5: Organize the Session

Session timing options

- Morning Sessions:

5 Talks		6 Talks		7 Talks		7 Talks		8 Talks	
Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time
8:30 - 9:00	30min	8:30 - 9:00	30 min	8:30 - 8:55	25 min	8:30 - 8:50	20 min	8:30 - 8:48	18 min
9:00 - 9:30	30min	9:00 - 9:30	30 min	8:55 - 9:15	20 min	8:50 - 9:10	20 min	8:48 - 9:06	18 min
9:30 - 10:00	30min	9:30 - 10:00	30 min	9:15 - 9:35	20 min	9:10 - 9:30	20 min	9:06 - 9:24	18 min
10:00 - 10:30	COFFEE	10:00 - 10:30	COFFEE	9:35 - 10:00	25 min	9:30 - 10:00	30 min	9:24 - 9:42	18 min
10:30 - 11:00	30 min	10:30 - 10:50	20 min	10:00 - 10:30	COFFEE	10:00 - 10:30	COFFEE	9:42 - 10:00	18 min
11:00 - 11:30	30 min	10:50 - 11:10	20 min	10:30 - 10:50	20 min	10:30 - 10:50	20 min	10:00 - 10:30	COFFEE
		11:10 - 11:30	20 min	10:50 - 11:10	20 min	10:50 - 11:10	20 min	10:30 - 10:48	18 min
				11:10 - 11:30	20 min	11:10 - 11:30	20 min	10:48 - 11:06	18 min
								11:06 - 11:24	18 min

- Afternoon Sessions:

5 Talks		6 Talks		7 Talks		7 Talks		8 Talks	
Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time	Slot	Talk Time
2:00 - 2:30	30min	2:00 - 2:20	20 min	2:00 - 2:20	20 min	2:00 - 2:20	20 min	2:00 - 2:20	20 min
2:30 - 3:00	30min	2:20 - 2:40	20 min	2:20 - 2:40	20 min	2:20 - 2:40	20 min	2:20 - 2:40	20 min
3:00 - 3:30	COFFEE	2:40 - 3:00	20 min	2:40 - 3:00	20 min	2:40 - 3:00	20 min	2:40 - 3:00	20 min
3:30 - 4:00	30 min	3:00 - 3:30	COFFEE	3:00 - 3:30	COFFEE	3:00 - 3:30	COFFEE	3:00 - 3:30	COFFEE
4:00 - 4:30	30 min	3:30 - 4:00	30 min	3:30 - 3:55	25 min	3:30 - 3:50	20 min	3:30 - 3:48	18 min
4:30 - 5:00	30 min	4:00 - 4:30	30 min	3:55 - 4:15	20 min	3:50 - 4:10	20 min	3:48 - 4:06	18 min
		4:30 - 5:00	30 min	4:15 - 4:35	20 min	4:10 - 4:30	20 min	4:06 - 4:24	18 min
				4:35 - 5:00	25 min	4:30 - 5:00	30 min	4:24 - 4:42	18 min
								4:42 - 5:00	18 min

6: Shepherd Speakers



- Ensure all talks will have at least 1 author in-person at the meeting to present
- Ensure all speakers are registered
- Ensure all speakers secure accommodations
- Answer speaker's questions between May – July
 - Forward any questions you can't answer to the Meeting Committee
- Check in with speakers just before the conference
 - Email them 1-2 weeks before the conference to answer last minute questions & ensure arrangements are final

7: Chair the Session

- Arrive 15 min before your sessions starts
- Project a slide with sponsor logos
- Help speakers load their talks
 - All talks should be loaded onto the provided ACA laptop before the session starts
- Begin the session
 - Introduce yourself, the session, & the sponsors
 - Ask the audience to take a seat & silence phones
- Introduce each speaker
 - Ask beforehand how to pronounce names
- Keep speakers on time
 - Give speakers warnings
- Facilitate questions after each talk
 - Solicit questions from the audience. Have individuals identify themselves
 - Prepare a list of questions for each speaker in case the audience has none
 - Cut questions off in time for the next talk
- Remember to take a group photo
 - With all session chairs and speakers



8: Write a Session Summary

- Session chairs should submit a session summary and any photos to the RefleXions editor within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the conference for inclusion in the Fall issue.
- Examples of past session summaries can be found in the fall issue of archived issues of [RefleXions](#).

ACA RefleXions
ACA REFLEXIONS



Timeline

- Nov/Dec ☐ Finalize session description, solicit sponsorship, secure invited speakers
 - Session description due **Friday Dec 6**
- Jan ☐ Registration & abstract portal opens
 - Ensure your invited speakers submit their abstracts
- Feb ☐ **Spring On-Boarding session (Feb 4 & 7)**
 - Ensure at least 5 abstracts have been submitted to your session. Recruit more as needed
- March ☐ **Abstract submission deadline March 31, 2025**
- April ☐ **Sessions to be organized by April 21, 2025**
 - [Link to Oxford Abstracts](#)
 - SIG chairs review and select Etter Award Winners by **April 11**
 - **All Etter Award Winners** should give an oral presentation
 - All sessions submit their speaker order by **April 21, 2025**
 - Oral authors notified by HQ via email of the date/time/session of their talk on or after **April 29**
 - **Poster abstract submission deadline April 30, 2025 (to be considered for a poster prize)**
- May ☐ Poster sessions organized
 - Poster authors notified on or after **May 9**
 - **Submit speaker reimbursement requests to the Meeting Committee**

Early registration ends May 31, 2024
- July ☐ Annual Meeting begins **July 18**
 - Submit photos and a summary of the session to RefleXions at the conclusion of the meeting

Communication

- **Email**
 - The predominate method of communication from ACA HQ is email
 - Please [safelist](#) the ACA to ensure timely delivery of emails, notices, deadlines
- **[ACA Session Chair Forum](#)**
 - **Accessible from the [ACA Session Chair Resources](#) page**
Great way to for session chairs to communicate about swapping abstracts during April
- **Slack**
 - The Meeting Committee also utilizes Slack: <https://aca-backstage.slack.com/>
 - Contact Samantha Powell (samantha.powell@pnnl.gov) if you need an invite to the workspace
- **Website: <https://acas.memberclicks.net/session-chair-information>**
- **Meeting Committee Members:**



[Anna Gardberg](#)

anna.s.gardberg@gmail.com

Will be replaced in Jan 2025

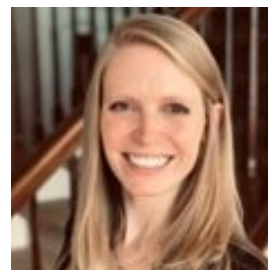
(21-24)



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Link to Session Chair Worksheet

<https://acas.memberclicks.net/session-chair-information>

