PACIS 2016

Guidelines for Session Chairs

7 May 2016

Before the Session

Become familiar with your session
It is expected that a session chair has read the three papers that will be presented in the session. The session chair has to ‘craft a story’ for the session and is successful when the opening introduction sets the scene, the synergies between the papers are stressed and a closing summary clearly articulates the consolidated take away from this session.

Meet Your Speakers
Arrange to meet your speakers well before the session starts. Make sure that they are familiar with the resources available. If you cannot find all speakers for your session then check with the registration desk to see if any of the relevant paper authors have already arrived. Please let your TC or the conference organisers know if you are still unable to locate your speakers. Become familiar with the room and meet the technical support staff.

During the Session

Introduction to the Session
There should be an initial phase of making contact with the audience to get everyone's attention and to introduce the audience to the topic(s) that will be addressed in the session - don't assume that everyone is familiar with the topic already. The initial opening of the session by the session chair should briefly introduce the framework for the following speakers. This is also a good opportunity to present the format of the session, for example whether questions will be taken at the end or after each presentation.

Introducing the Speakers
The minimum introduction to a presentation should be a mention of the title and a few words about the speaker (read from the information provided on the paper). Some speakers might prefer to introduce themselves.

No Shows
If there is an expected, or unexpected, no-show, please leave the slot free so we stay within the advertised schedule. This will allow participants to come to the papers as advertised.

Time Allocation and Control
Cue cards with 10-, 5-, 2- and minute countdown will be provided in every room, but never rely on the speaker to have eye contact with you on a regular basis to determine how much speaking time is left. As a last resort you may have to speak up and remind the speaker that he or she is running out of time. If there is no sign of the speaker drawing their presentation to a close you should interrupt at least 2-3 minutes before their allocated speaking time is over in order to give them a chance to

wind up their presentation. Keep in mind that each time slot includes 20 minutes of presentation and 10 minutes of discussion. It may be reasonable to allow the speaker to continue for a few minutes overtime, however, if a speaker crosses the 25-minute mark, he or she should be notified.

Discussion

If the author does not explicitly do so after concluding their presentation, please announce that the floor is now open for discussion. If there are no questions the session chair should have one or two questions to ask, but in general questions from the audience should have priority. Please ask members of the audience asking a question to state their name and affiliation. If there are too many questions, the questions are too difficult to understand or answer, or a dialogue goes on for to long you may step in and remind the audience that such specific issues can be discussed after the session.

Closing the Session

It is good practice for the session chair to sum up the session after the last presentation. A few sentences summarising the content of the session and a final acknowledgement of all the speakers and the audience (for their participation) is expected. Remind the audience of the next item on the agenda (e.g. location for coffee break or upcoming keynote speaker).

After the Session

Let your TC know if there were any no-shows or any other problems with your session.

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