



Best Practices for Volunteer Chairs and Symposium Organizers at ACerS Meetings

Conference Chairs

The benefits to volunteering as a Conference Chair includes the opportunity to develop leadership, management, and communication skills; build a network of colleagues in your area of interest; and to promote and stay abreast of the latest developments in the field of materials science and technology.

Conference Chairs will work with ACerS staff to plan programming and recruit other volunteers for roles such as Symposium Organizer, International Planning Committee members, etc. for a specific conference that is to be sponsored and managed by ACerS. Conference Chairs will work closely with co-Chairs and ACerS staff to develop and submit a Call for Papers by the scheduled deadline as well as other important items outlined below:

- proposing symposia topics,
- recruiting and working with lead symposium organizers,
- inviting plenary speakers,
- promoting the participation of new and diverse symposia organizers, invited speakers, participants, and attendees,
- communicating with symposium organizers as needed to keep them on schedule, encourage abstracts submission, and provide other direction as needed,
- develop with ACerS staff the technical program including receptions, plenary and award lectures, other special technical programming, and social programming,
- coordinating any on-site activities such as welcoming attendees during the opening plenary session, introducing plenary speakers, announcing student awards, etc.,
- planning student activities and working with student groups as appropriate,
- assist in finding meeting sponsors (ACerS provides sponsorship forms) ,
- work with ACerS staff to distribute complimentary registrations and sponsorship funds in a way that best benefits the meeting,
- adhering to deadlines set by ACerS

Conference Chairs will devote approximately 40-60 hours to advance planning and promotion of the meeting plus 3 to 5 days to on-site management during the meeting. Time commitments vary based on the size and scope of the meeting.

Conference Chairs must be committed to diversity and inclusion (age, geographic, gender and industry/academic/government) to ensure that people from under-represented groups and people new to ACerS meetings are welcome and have a greater chance to be selected as organizers and invited speakers.

Symposium Organizers

The benefits to volunteering as a Symposium Organizer include the opportunity to develop leadership, management, and communication skills; build a network of colleagues in your area interest; and to promote and stay abreast of the latest developments in the field of materials science and technology.

The lead Symposium Organizer will work with ACerS Conference Chair(s) to develop symposia for the conference. Symposium organizers are responsible for:

- submitting a symposia title, scope and proposed session topics,
- recruiting and working with co-organizers,
- promoting the meeting and their symposium to colleagues and contacts, encouraging them to submit an abstract,
- promoting diversity amongst the speakers and participants,
- reviewing and making decisions on abstracts submitted,
- scheduling presentations,
- assigning session chairs
- coordinating any on-site activities
- adhering to deadlines set by ACerS

Organizers will devote 20-40 hours to advance planning and promotion of the symposium plus 2 to 4 days to on-site management of the symposium during the meeting. Time commitments vary based on the size and scope of the meeting and symposium.

Symposium organizers must be committed to diversity and inclusion (age, geographic, gender and industry/academic/government) to ensure that people from under-represented groups and people new to ACerS meetings are welcome and have a greater chance to be selected as co-organizers and invited speakers.

Session Chairs

The benefits to volunteering as a Session Chair include the opportunity to develop leadership, management, and communication skills; build a network of colleagues in your area interest; and to promote and stay abreast of the latest developments in the field of materials science and technology.

Session Chairs may or may not be a symposium organizers and are typically assigned this role by the lead Symposium Organizer. The role of Session Chair is important and includes:

- Arriving to your session room 10 to 15 minutes early to check for any changes to your session on the session sign posted outside the room; making sure the laptop and projector are working properly; and if needed, assist speakers with loading their presentation onto the provided laptop.
- At the beginning of the session: Welcome attendees; Thank speakers; Note any changes to the program; Let speakers know they are to keep their talks within their allotted time frame

- Announce ACerS photo/video policy: taking of photos or audio recording during a presentation is not permitted for any reason.
- Keeping the session on schedule, including providing speakers with a 5 minute warning; politely ask them to wrap up within the one minute if their talk runs over.
- If there is a cancellation or no-show do not skip to the next speaker. Instead, make the announcement and break or initiate topical discussion until the next scheduled talk.
- At the end of the session: thank the speakers again; thank the attendees for coming; and make announcements about other important meeting events, such as the Poster Session, Exposition, Banquet, etc.

Session chairs must be committed to diversity and inclusion regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, appearance, geographic location, career path, or academic level, to ensure that people from under-represented groups and people new to ACerS are welcome and provided equal volunteer opportunities.