



Call for Session Proposals - In Person Symposia

**ESA Annual Meeting
August 6 – 11, 2023
Portland, Oregon**

**Thursday, November 3, 2022
5:00 PM Eastern (2:00 PM Pacific)**

All ESA Annual Meeting proposal and abstract deadlines are 5:00 PM Eastern so that technical support and ESA staff assistance will be immediately available when submitters need it. If you begin your submission very close to the deadline, you are choosing to take a risk, and we will not make an exception if you are unable to complete your submission in time. The form automatically closes at 5:00 EST / 2:00 PST whether you have completed your submission or not.

Proposals that are incomplete or received after the deadline will not be considered.

ESA meetings, open to ESA members and those interested in ecology, are among the most respected meetings of ecologists in the science community. ESA is committed to providing a safe, productive and welcoming environment. All participants including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, ESA staff, service providers and others are expected to abide by the [ESA Meetings Code of Conduct](#). This Code of Conduct applies to all ESA meeting-related events including those sponsored by organizations other than ESA but held in conjunction with ESA events, in public or private facilities. In addition, ESA members and authors of ESA publications must adhere to the [ESA Code of Ethics](#).

How to Submit

You must submit your proposal using the online submission form. Proposals sent by email will not be considered.

Click the link below to begin by selecting which type of proposal you would like to submit. You will be able to return to the proposal to edit it until the submission deadline has passed. Information on how to do so will be included in two automated emails you will receive, first when you begin and then when you complete your submission.

To submit a proposal, you will need to log in using an ESA member account. If you have been an ESA member or registered for an ESA meeting in recent years, you should already have an ESA member account. Your username and password to log in for the meeting are the same as for your ESA member account. If you have not been an ESA member or registered for an ESA meeting in recent years, you will need to create an ESA member account before you can submit. You do not need to pay membership dues to create an ESA member account or submit for the meeting.

[Begin a proposal submission](#)

About In Person Symposia

Symposia are the scientific centerpiece of the meeting. These sessions are organized around a specific topic and include 4 speakers, all of whom are invited by the organizer at the proposal stage. Symposia are distinguished from other organized sessions in that they are more explicitly integrated, provide an overall synthesis on their topic, and have broad enough appeal to generate large audiences at the meeting. Proposals are encouraged to address the meeting theme, [“ESA for All Ecologists”](#), if appropriate, but doing so is not necessary. Any timely and coherent subject of broad ecological interest will be considered. We also welcome proposals that explore interdisciplinary connections with areas of social and natural science outside of ecology or that relate to ecological education at any level.

Each symposium consists of 4 talks, each scheduled for a 20 minute timeslot (15 minute talk + 5 minutes for Q&A). Proposals listing more or fewer than 4 confirmed speakers will not be considered. The session will end with a 10 minute discussion.

All speakers for an in-person symposium should plan to present in person in Portland. We are unable to accommodate remote presentations for this session type. If you plan to have some speakers present remotely, please submit a proposal for a hybrid symposium.

Beginning in 2023, all paper sessions will have a student volunteer who replaces the role of session moderator. A student volunteer will help each presenter load their slides, introduce them, and signal how much time is remaining for each talk. They will also manage Q&A and the discussion period at the end of the session.

Abstract Fee

All speakers who submit an abstract for an accepted symposium will be required to pay an abstract fee of \$60 USD at the time of abstract submission. Speakers who lack funding to pay the fee will be able to opt out at that time.

Career Track

All sessions included in the career track will be highlighted throughout the program and scheduled to minimize conflicts. Submitters proposing a session about career options, skills and development will be able to indicate that they would like to be included in this track.

Proposal Format

Most fields are required. The broader benefits description is optional.

- **Submitter agreements.** The submitter must agree to abide by the [Code of Conduct for ESA Events](#), the [ESA Code of Ethics](#), and the [ESA Diversity Statement](#).
- **Session title.** A short and descriptive title works best.
- **Organizer** (Name, institution, email). This person is the point of contact for the session and responsible for communicating with speakers.
- **Co-organizers** (Name, institution, and email for each). There can be any number of co-organizers, including zero.
- **4 Confirmed speakers** (Name, institution, email, and tentative talk title for each). Only speakers who have been contacted and have committed to the session should be listed.
- **Session description** (up to 400 words): Should focus on the theme of the session. May include background information, goals, objectives, importance, and interest to the membership of ESA. The description should avoid overly specialized language. Any ecologist attending the meeting should be able to understand it. It will appear in the online program and be read by attendees deciding whether or not to attend the session.

- **Session justification** (up to 400 words): The justification should focus on how the review criteria are met by the proposal. It should not simply repeat the description.
- **Diversity description** (up to 400 words): Describe how this session involves diverse perspectives and voices as elaborated in the [ESA Diversity Statement](#), beyond or in addition to career stage and disciplinary diversity.
- **Broader benefits description** (up to 400 words, optional): Describe how this session benefits broader society (for example through education, public policy, communication/public engagement, application to commercial technology, national security or international cooperation).
- **Career Track:** Would you like this session to be considered for inclusion in the Career Track? Yes/No
- **Linked sessions:** Is the session intended to be linked to another session or social event? If so, which one, and how?

Review Criteria

All proposals will be peer reviewed and scored by reviewers selected by the ESA Program Committee. The Program Committee may accept, decline, or offer an opportunity to present the proposed work in a more appropriate session type. Session organizers will be notified of decisions by January 5, 2023. Proposals will be assessed using the following criteria. The weight of particular criteria may vary depending on the nature of proposals.

Criteria for a strong Symposium proposal

Scientific strength

- offers significant contributions to ecological understanding.
- presents innovative or interdisciplinary approaches, including novel collaborations or syntheses across subdisciplines of ecology or with other related disciplines.
- has broad enough appeal to generate large audiences (>250 people) at the meeting.
- benefits broader society (for example through education, public policy, communication/public engagement, application to commercial technology, national security or international cooperation).

Structure and organization

- is explicitly more integrated than other oral sessions.
- provides strong overall synthesis or overview; they should not be simply a set of related case studies.
- avoids taking a narrow perspective on the symposium topic (organizers carefully avoid the appearance of biases toward their own perspectives).
- builds a well-integrated whole (each talk should have clear relevance to the overall synthesis provided by the symposium).

Speakers

- lists 4 confirmed speakers (speakers who have been contacted and have committed to the session).
- includes a specific title for every speaker's talk.
- involves diverse perspectives and voices as elaborated in the [ESA Diversity Statement](#), beyond or in addition to career stage and disciplinary diversity.

Other details to consider

In the interest of broadening participation, an individual can be the lead organizer for only one invited paper session (symposium, organized oral session, Inspire session).

One presentation rule

Speakers who commit to speaking in a symposium should be aware that the one presentation rule will be enforced. Anyone who is the presenter in the session cannot also present a talk or a poster in another scientific session (symposium, organized oral, contributed talk, contributed poster, latebreaking poster). Organizers are responsible for notifying any speakers they recruit about this rule. The one presentation rule does not apply to participants speaking in Inspire sessions, special sessions, short courses, workshops, or a plenary.

There is an exemption to the one presentation rule for an author submitting an abstract for a second presentation IF the second abstract is primarily focused on education or outreach. If a speaker is unsure whether an exemption would apply in their case, they are welcome to ask the Program Chair in advance.

Meeting registration

All speakers are required to register for the conference. Organizers are responsible for making this clear to their speakers early on when it is easier to replace speakers.

If Your Proposal is Accepted

After acceptance decisions have been made and the scheduling for the meeting is underway, cancellations and schedule changes are very disruptive to meeting planning. It is therefore very important that session organizers obtain firm commitments from their invited speakers before submitting their proposal. If a proposal is accepted, the organizer will be required to submit an up-to-date version of the session details and confirmed speaker list within a few weeks of acceptance.

Communication with speakers

If a proposal is accepted as a session, it is very important that the organizer communicates with speakers starting with the acceptance of the session and continuing throughout all stages of program development. This includes communicating with speakers about session acceptance, abstract requirements and deadlines, session scheduling, and expectations for participation in the conference. Ongoing and clear communication will be especially important this year given the uncertainty of current events that could affect the meeting format and structure.

Other helpful information

Here are a few details that all speakers should know up front. Miscommunication about them can disrupt session planning later in the process.

We are unable to honor scheduling requests. When asking speakers to commit to the session, organizers should inform them that the session could be scheduled any day Monday through Thursday. We cannot schedule or move a session to accommodate the availability of speakers.

Speakers who fail to submit an abstract on time will be removed from the session. It is the responsibility of the session organizer to make sure each speaker submits an abstract for their talk using the unique link that will be emailed to each speaker in late January. It is important to make sure all speakers are aware of the abstract submission deadline early on.

All speakers are required to register for the conference. Organizers are responsible for making this clear to their speakers early on when it is easier to replace speakers.

Bulletin report

With the acceptance of your symposium for inclusion in the annual meeting, you and your team also must prepare a report on the symposium for the ESA Bulletin by November 10th, 2023 (after the August meeting). If this is an inconvenience, we can negotiate the next deadline at February 10th, 2024.

The report should be informative of the main points made in the symposium. The format can be of your choosing either reporting on what individual speakers said or a synthesis of the main points. The length can be up to 5 to 10 typed pages although longer can be discussed with the Editor in Chief. Pictures and graphs are encouraged. We look forward to your submission. Submission is by scholar1 on the ESA Bulletin manuscript submission site. If you have acted as a co-author or reviewer on an ESA Journals manuscript in the past five years, you will already have log-in credentials.

Cancellations

For session organizers

Once a session has been accepted and listed online, cancellation imposes a serious burden. Do not submit a proposal if you are uncertain that you will be able to fulfill your obligation to organize and conduct the session. Once a session is accepted by the Program Chair, cancellation by the session organizers will preclude the organizers from being allowed to submit any proposals for sessions for the 2024 ESA Annual Meeting.

For presenters

When submitting an abstract, presenters should be reasonably confident that they will attend the meeting and give the presentation as scheduled. We understand that planning ahead is particularly challenging this year, but the presenting author should notify ESA Meetings as soon as possible if a presentation needs to be cancelled. Please cancel by May 2 if possible, to help us minimize gaps in the final meeting program as well as receive an abstract fee refund if you paid the fee.

Important Dates

November 3, 2021	Deadline for submitting a proposal to ESA.
January 5, 2023	Notification of acceptance sent to organizer.
January 19, 2023	Deadline to submit session revisions and reaffirm speaker lists.
February 23, 2023	Deadline for speakers to submit abstracts.
May 1, 2023	Deadline for speakers to cancel presentations.

Questions?

Tim Nuttle PhD CSE CWB
2023 Program Chair
Principal, Oikos Ecology LLC
412-867-1299
nuttle.tim@gmail.com

Meetings Team
Ecological Society of America
meetings@esa.org