



National Wetlands Indaba

National Wetlands Indaba Conference guidelines for abstract submission and preparation for papers, posters, and special sessions or workshops

1. Session Types

Paper presentations

The symposium sessions will allow for oral presentations of papers, the abstracts for which need to be submitted via the online form on our website. These presentations will be 15 minutes in length, with 10 minutes for speaking and 5 minutes for questions. Speakers must keep their talks within the allotted time. Session chairs will cut off presentations that run over time so it is important that speakers practice their talks to ensure they keep to time. We recommend approximately 1 slide per minute.

Presenters will be required to submit their presentation materials before **30 September 2022**. Presentations should preferably be submitted as a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation file. Should you wish to use another programme, please also save your presentation in a pdf format to ensure compatibility.

Posters

Posters should be A0 (841x1189 mm) or A1 (594x841mm) size with either landscape or portrait orientation. The text and figures should be readable from approximately 2m away (suggested minimum font size for 'body' text is 24 pt). Posters should convey an overview of a research project, programme, technique, or achievement such that a viewer can read and understand the material in about two minutes. Posters need to include the author's name, affiliation, and email address. A photo of the poster author is helpful, but not required. Posters need to be printed ahead of time by the presenter and put up for display at the start of the conference. Lamination is recommended but not compulsory. There will be a poster session during which you will need to be present at your poster for delegates to engage with you.

Special sessions or workshops

A limited number of 1-1.5 hour sessions during the symposium can be made available for delegates to run a special session or an interactive workshop. The motivation and vision for the session should be described in an abstract submission using the same online form as the papers and posters. A special session could be a series of talks on a specific issue or area of research followed by facilitated discussion.

2. Abstract guidelines (for papers, posters and special sessions/workshops)

Abstracts for papers, posters, and special sessions or workshops must be submitted using the online submission form available on the conference website.

There will be a limit on the number of abstracts that are accepted for oral presentation and the number of special sessions or workshops that can be included. If you wish to submit an abstract for a paper or poster **and** a proposal for a special session or workshop, please do this by filling the online form twice, once for each submission. (However do *not* submit the same abstract twice for both an oral paper and a poster presentation, duplication will not be permitted)

Submission type: Specify in the submission form if you intend to give a paper or poster presentation or if you are proposing a special session or workshop. Please also specify on the form whether you are a student.

Word limits: The maximum length for the abstract text is 300 words (excluding title, authors, and keywords). The title should be no longer than 20 words.

Formatting: Your abstract text will be entered into the submission form. We recommend drafting and editing your abstract in a separate word processing document first.

Authors: The lead author or presenter's name, institution, and email address will be separately entered into the form. Co-authors' names should be written such that their first name appears first, followed by their last name, with their affiliation/institution in brackets after their name. *For example: John Smith (Department of Wetland Science, University of the Free State), Jane Doe (Auguring Anonymous)*. The names and affiliations of additional co-authors should be listed in the order you wish them to appear in the conference programme.

Session themes: Select one or more broad themes that best describe the subject of your presentation. Please be aware that the themes of the sessions in the symposium and the arrangement of talks will be finalised by the symposium committee based on the submissions received.

Keywords: A maximum of (5) keywords should be included in alphabetical order. These will help the symposium committee in grouping presentations into sessions and will appear in the programme to assist delegates in finding presentations and posters of particular interest. Please try to be specific, and avoid general keywords (e.g. wetlands).

3. Tips

Tips for presentations

- You will have limited time, so make sure that you focus on the most important points. Try to avoid placing too much emphasis on a very general introduction and then running out of time to present the important results and conclusions.
- A helpful rule of thumb is 1 slide per minute. Presentations with more than 20 slides

may therefore be queried by our conference organisers.

- Avoid too much text on slides. Slides are supposed to support and complement what you are saying, not duplicate it. Use short snappy bullet points to summarise your key messages.
- Illustrate messages with clear, relevant images or diagrams. Avoid low resolution images (what is a low resolution image? See page 6 of <https://apps.lib.umich.edu/files/services/exploratory/pdfs/preparingimages.pdf>).
- Make sure text and images are large enough and clear enough to read from the back of a room. The consensus on minimum body text font size is 24 pt (google it!).
- Make sure your text is in a contrasting colour to the slide background (light text on dark background or dark text on a light background).
- Use colour-blind friendly palettes where possible, but definitely avoid red on green (<https://venngage.com/blog/color-blind-friendly-palette/>).
- Avoid using auto sound effects or lots of animations in your slides - this can be highly distracting.
- Rehearse your talk and time yourself so you are comfortable and you are sure you can keep to the allotted time. For students: please practice with other fellow students.
- Have your presentation completed, rehearsed and backed-up *before* you leave for the conference.

There are many resources online that can give you further advice on presentation preparation. Here's an example: Avoiding "death by PowerPoint" from TEDex
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwpi1Lm6dFo>.

Tips for posters

- Identify your main messages before starting to design the poster.
- Avoid too much text. You can use bullet points to help keep the text concise. Use graphs and pictures where possible.
- Avoid including too much information in general. The viewer should be able to read and understand the material in roughly two minutes. You can provide references to papers and websites where people can find more information, and don't forget your contact details!
- Make sure your text is in a contrasting colour to the poster background (light text on dark background or dark text on a light background). Use colour-blind friendly palettes for your graphs where possible, but definitely avoid red on green (<https://venngage.com/blog/color-blind-friendly-palette/>).
- Test that your font sizes are readable from a distance by viewing portions of your poster at 100% zoom on your computer and standing at least 2m away from the computer screen. (Suggested minimum body text font size is 24 pt).
- Have colleagues or friends take a look at your draft poster to see if they understand it easily before you finalise and print.
- Proof-read your poster for any spelling or grammatical mistakes.

There are many resources online that can give you further advice on poster preparation. Here's an example:

<https://www.animateyour.science/post/how-to-design-an-award-winning-conference-poster>.