

Guidance for ICLR Workshop Proposals 2025

ICLR Workshop Co-Chairs

Adjí Bousso Dieng (Princeton University)

Luis Oala (Dotphoton)

Nezihe Merve Gürel (TU Delft)

Pierre Alquier (ESSEC Business School)

Yanan Sui (Tsinghua University)

This is the seventh year that ICLR will have workshops. With the rapid growth and interest in ICLR and its associated workshops, the competition for workshops has grown. To guide and support submissions, the workshop chairs have agreed on the following guidance for proposals to hold a workshop at ICLR 2025. Organizers of workshop proposals should take care to respect every piece of guidance provided here, and provide explicit answers to the questions implied throughout, as well as explicitly addressing the selection criteria listed below.

Timeline

- **Workshop Application Open**: 12 September 2024
- **Workshop Application Deadline**: 20 October 2024, 11.59pm AoE
- **Workshop Acceptance Notification**: 2 December 2024
- **Suggested Submission Date for Workshop Contributions**: 3 February 2025
- **Mandatory Accepted Paper Notification Date***: 5 March 2025, 11.59pm AoE
**This is the date by which you need to let authors who submitted to your workshop and us know which papers you accepted to your workshop. This date is critical for contributors to your workshop who applied for financial assistance with ICLR.*
- **Import Workshop Program and Accepted Papers to iclr.cc**: 5 March 2025, 11.59pm AoE

The global author notification deadline of 5 March 2025 will not be extended.

Selection Criteria

1. Degree to which the proposal is focused on an important and topical problem, and the degree to which it is expected that the community will find the workshop interesting, exciting, and valuable.
2. Intellectual excitement of the topic. Is it likely to break new ground, or reiterate past debates?
3. Diversity and inclusion. (See expectations below under *Other Guidance and Expectations for Workshop Proposals*.)
4. Degree to which the proposed program offers an opportunity for discussion.
5. Degree to which the proposal creates opportunities for under-represented, under-resourced, and budding researchers to engage with the community. (See requirements below under *Platform for Tiny or Short Papers*.)
6. Quality of proposed invited speakers (including expertise, scientific achievements, and presentation ability). Workshop organizers are required to confirm tentative interest from proposed invited speakers and mention this in their proposal.
7. Degree to which the organizers have offered means to engage in the workshop for those unable to physically attend given that the workshops will be in-person.
8. Organizational experience of the team.

9. Other dimensions in the expectations listed below.
10. Points of difference. What makes this workshop enticingly different to the ICLR workshops held previously?

Assessment Process

The workshop chairs will appoint a number of reviewers who will provide written assessments of the proposals against the criteria listed above. Reviews will be released to authors. Their reports will be considered by the workshop chairs who will jointly decide upon the selected workshops (subject to the notes on COIs listed below). The final decisions will be made by the workshop chairs via consensus and judgment.

Note that in contrast to the number of papers accepted at most conferences there is a natural limit to the number of workshops that can be accepted, dictated by the number of available rooms at the conference venue.

In response to the growing community interest to hold workshops at ICLR, reflected in the growing number of workshop submissions, we have negotiated more rooms for this year so that more workshops than last year can be accepted.

Hard Constraints/Workshop Requirements

1. Honor the Global Notification Deadline Prior until 5 March 2025

- a. By submitting a workshop proposal, workshop organizers commit to notifying those who submit contributions (including talks and posters) to their workshop of their acceptance status before 11.59pm, 5 March 2025. A timeline should be included in the proposal that will allow for this.

2. Managing Chair and Reviewer Conflicts of Interest

- a. Workshop chairs cannot be organizers nor give invited talks at any workshop, but can submit papers and give contributed talks.
- b. Workshop reviewers cannot review any proposal on which they are listed as an organizer or invited speaker, and may not accept invitations to speak at any workshop they have reviewed after the workshop is accepted.
- c. Workshop chairs and reviewers cannot review or shape acceptance decisions about workshops with organizers from within their organization. (For large corporations, this means anyone in the corporation world-wide).

3. Managing Organizer Conflicts of Interest

- a. Workshop organizers cannot give talks at the workshops they organize. They can give a brief introduction to the workshop and/or act as a panel moderator.
- b. Workshop organizers should state in their proposal how they will manage conflicts of interest in assessing submitted contributions. At a minimum, an organizer should not be involved in the assessment of a submission from someone within the same organization.

4. Platform Contributed Work

- a. Ensure that contributed work is well-featured in the program, and is given visibility through presentation slots and poster sessions. Additionally, your workshop program should effectively engage the audience by allowing for interactive components.

5. Platform for Tiny or Short Papers

- a. This year, the [Tiny Papers Track](#) has been integrated into the workshops. The Tiny Papers Track was initially created in 2023 to attract under-represented, under-resourced, and budding researchers who may not (yet) have the resources to submit full papers. This year, we ask that Workshops extend this support to their participants directly. We encourage each workshop to establish a short paper track

to encourage the submission of late-breaking developments that would most benefit from feedback at ICLR, as well to make their workshops more accessible to potential authors outside the ML conference publication circuit. This short paper track should prioritize less-than-full-conference papers, welcoming submissions that, for example, present an implementation and evaluation of an unpublished but simple idea, a modest but self-contained theoretical result, a follow-up experiment or re-analysis of a previously published paper, or a fresh perspective on an existing publication. To assist workshop organizers with the OpenReview setup of this track in addition to others that the workshop may host, we will provide a venue configuration template that supports this feature.

6. Plan Well for In-Person

- a. Workshop organizers should strictly aim for hosting an in-person event. However, we strongly encourage the organizers to account for exceptional circumstances, such as visa issues or other constraints.

Failure to meet these constraints and requirements may result in the early rejection of the proposal or even lead to the cancellation of an accepted workshop.

Other Guidance and Expectations for Workshop Proposals

1. We encourage, and expect, diversity in the organizing team and speakers. This includes diversity of viewpoint and thinking regarding the topics discussed at the workshop, gender, ethnicity, affiliations, seniority, geographic location, etc. If a workshop is part of a series, the organizer list should include people who have not organized in the past. Organizers should articulate *how* they have addressed diversity in their proposal in each of these senses. While we discourage organizers from submitting multiple proposals, ultimately it is at the chairs' discretion to consider it in their accept/reject decisions.
2. Since the goal of the workshop is to generate discussion, sufficient time and structure needs to be included in the program for this. Proposals should explicitly articulate how they will encourage broad discussion.
3. Workshop proposals should list explicitly what the problems are they would like to see solved, or at least advances made, as part of their workshop. They should explain why these are important problems and how the holding of their proposed workshop will contribute to their solution.
4. Workshops should not primarily be a venue for work that has been previously published in other conferences on machine learning, including the ICLR main track. Organizers should make this clear in their calls and explain in their proposal how they will encourage the presentation of ongoing or novel machine learning work.
5. We encourage workshop submissions of varying lengths and scopes, in particular as an avenue for junior and new researchers to start participating in the ICLR community. Organizers should articulate what they hope to achieve from the format proposal beyond the talks listed.
6. With the extraordinary growth of ICLR, and noting the impossibility of accurately predicting attendance and time zone differences, organizers should explain how they will provide access to the content of the workshop for those who cannot attend in person. This might include recording of talks, publishing short working papers or posters on the web, having a follow-up special issue of a journal, curating and maintaining a web page with a range of content, or other ideas.
7. Workshops should allow for choice of attendance based on content. Good workshops will put talk titles up publicly prior to site publication and note the

archival status of their submissions. Organizers should articulate how they will do this.

8. Organizing a workshop is a complex task, and proposals should outline the organizational experience and skills of the proposed organizers (as a team). We encourage junior researchers to be involved in workshop organization, but prefer some collective experience in organizing a complex event.

Minimum Information Requirements

- **Workshop summary**
- **Tentative schedule**
- **Invited speakers/Panelists**
- **Organizers and biographies**
- **Anticipated audience size**
- **Plan to get an audience for a workshop (advertising, reaching out, etc.)**
- **Diversity commitment**
- **Virtual access to workshop materials and outcome**
- **Previous related workshops**

Example Successful Proposals

Successful proposals of the past year here can be found here:

https://openreview.net/group?id=ICLR.cc/2024/Workshop_Proposals#tab-accept

Frequently Asked Questions From Past Workshops

1. **Workshop Series**

We neither encourage nor discourage workshops on topics that have appeared before. Membership of an existing sequence of workshops is irrelevant in the assessment of a workshop proposal (it neither helps or hinders). Workshop proposals will be evaluated solely on their merits for this year's conference. Please indicate if your workshop is part of an ongoing series (ICLR or other conferences).

2. **Overlapping Proposals**

We will *not* forcibly merge proposals. If multiple strong proposals are submitted on similar topics, we will choose a single proposal to accept. We may then choose to reach out to the organizers of the rejected proposals to ask whether they would like us to share their proposals with the organizers of the accepted workshop. The organizers of the accepted workshop may then optionally initiate a merge.

3. **Workshop Modality**

This year, ICLR will host only in-person workshops. While all arrangements should be focused on the in-person format, organizers should be ready to accommodate situations where an author or speaker is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. For example, organizers could display posters on behalf of authors who cannot be present, or allow them to publicize their work through pre-recorded videos on the workshop website.