

Guidelines and Expectations for ICCB 2025 Symposia Organizers

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Symposium organizers address conservation challenges and facilitate insightful interactions with their audience. By inviting experts to present talks in their symposia, organizers are also in a unique position to help conservation professionals gain critical experience and exposure for their research in a prestigious conference setting. ICCB encourages proposals that prioritize equity, diversity and inclusion among invited speakers and organizers.

From submitting the symposium proposal through the day you host your symposium, the information in this guide will help you organize a successful session.

Please note that symposium organizers and their invited speakers are responsible for covering their own expenses to attend the Congress.

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Key Deadlines

Symposium organizers should be aware of at least three important deadlines, all of which are published on the ICCB 2025 website.

- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** The date by which you must submit your proposal to organize a symposium at ICCB.

- **Invited Speaker Abstract Submission Deadline:** The date invited speakers in your symposium must submit and link their abstracts to your accepted symposium.

- **Early Bird Registration Deadline:** The date by which the symposium organizer and their invited speakers must be registered for ICCB 2025 in order to guarantee the inclusion of the symposium in the ICCB 2025 Scientific Program.

ICCB Symposia: Structure & Length

Symposium organizers have some leeway in how their session is organized, including the order of invited speakers and how the discussion period is managed. However, all symposia are organized within a defined framework whereby talks are divided into 12-minute intervals for invited speakers to deliver oral talks and partake in a 2 minute Q&A with the audience. Symposia are designed to include time for audience discussion and interaction, usually facilitated by the symposium organizer. Discussion periods take place in 12-minute intervals for regular and extended symposia and are 20-minutes in length for Speed Talk Symposia.

The following symposia take place during the main scientific program:

- Regular Symposia are 60-minute sessions that feature four 10-minute oral presentations, each followed by 2-minute question and answer, and include a 12-minute general discussion period (4x12 + 12 = 60).

- Speed talk Symposia are 60-minute sessions that feature ten 3-minute speed talks (3 + 1 mins question/turnover) with 20 minutes discussion at the end at separate breakout spaces/tables (10 x 4 + 20 = 60).

- Extended Symposia are 120-minute sessions and require a special justification. They feature eight 10-minute oral presentations, each followed by 2-minute question and answer, and include a 24-minute general discussion period at the end (8x12 + 24 = 120).

- Flexible Symposia are 60- or 120-minute sessions that can be organized in any format, and provide an option for diverse ways of sharing knowledge (e.g. yarning circle, talanoa) that may be more culturally-appropriate for participants than traditional presentation formats. Unlike the predefined structures of traditional symposia (regular, speed, and extended), where organizers invite speakers to deliver timed presentations, organizers of Flexible Symposia design and implement session formats that best facilitate knowledge sharing within the session's cultural and thematic context. Learn more here.

- Lightning + Poster Symposia are a late addition to ICCB, created so that the congress can accommodate more sessions. Lightning + Poster Symposia will be scheduled immediately before the poster sessions at ICCB. They start with a ten-minute session where invited speakers present one-minute Lightning Talks summarizing their findings. Lightning Talks may include one PowerPoint slide to support the talk. Following the Lightning Talks, your invited speakers will move to their posters – grouped together at the ICCB poster session to maximize engagement – where attendees can engage directly with them. This symposia type requires a minimum of four or a maximum of eight invited speakers.

Proposal Review

ICCB encourages proposals that prioritize equity, diversity and inclusion among invited speakers and organizers.

All proposals will be peer-reviewed by at least two reviewers selected by the ICCB 2025 Scientific Program Committee. Applicants will be notified about the status of their proposals and any requested revisions within six weeks of the proposal submission deadline.

To increase the probability that your prop
osal will be selected, please consider the following criteria carefully:

- Merit of the proposal: contributions to the field of conservation, quality of the work
- Overall coherence of the session and logical linkage between the individual presentations
- Relevance to global conservation issues
- Novelty of the topic
- Diversity among invited speakers and organizers, as reflected in the positionality statement.
- Recognition of diverse knowledge systems relevant to conservation issues (e.g., indigenous, local, and western systems).

Definitions & Rules

It's important that symposium organizers understand the definitions and rules below as it will help them more efficiently organize and manage their symposium and support the overall conference organizing / scheduling efficiency.

- **Organizer:** Proposes the symposium and serves as its point of contact and organizer. The organizer receives all communications from ICCB about the symposium (i.e. acceptance / rejection notifications, registration reminders, etc). An organizer may double as an invited speaker (must still follow the ICCB one-talk rule, see below). Organizers may not submit more than one proposal in any one category (symposia, workshops, training courses, forums) or more than two proposals total (i.e. you can submit a proposal for a symposium and a workshop, but not for two symposia).

- **Co-organizer:** If applicable, a symposium organizer may identify a co-organizer. A co-organizer assists the main organizer in preparing the symposium. A co-organizer may double as an invited speaker (must still follow the ICCB one-talk rule, see below). There is no limit to the number of proposals an individual can be on as a co-organizer.

- **Invited Speaker:** Expert speaker invited by the symposium organizer to present an oral presentation in the symposium.

- **Proposal Rule:** You may submit a maximum of two proposals across four ICCB session types (symposia, workshops, training courses, forums). However, you may only submit one proposal per category. For example, you can submit one proposal for a symposium and one for a workshop, but not two proposals for symposia.

- **One Talk, One Poster Rule:** ICCB attendees are limited to one talk (oral or speed) or one poster presentation. Thus, an invited speaker in a symposium cannot present in a contributed session (see the ICCB sessions page for the rule).

If Your Symposium is Accepted / Declined

Accepted Symposium Proposals: If your symposium is accepted, the invited speakers you identified on your proposal will receive instructions on how to submit and link their talks to your symposium via the ICCB Submission Site. Organizers should follow up with their invited speakers to ensure they submit their abstracts to the accepted symposium by the abstract submission deadline for contributed presentations.

Abstracts from invited speakers are not subject to review but will be published in the ICCB program. Organizers are expected to ensure the basic quality of the abstracts of invited talks. Please quality check abstracts from invited speakers in your symposium who may not have experience writing abstracts or may need support with English language editing.

Declined Symposium Proposals: Proposals that are not accepted may be resubmitted as an abstract for a contributed presentation (oral or speed talk or poster presentation).

Please note: an accepted proposal is not guaranteed for inclusion in the scientific program until its organizer and all invited speakers register for the Congress by the ICCB 2025 early bird registration deadline (deadline noted on the ICCB website). If two or more speakers (or the organizer) of a symposium do not register for the Congress by the early bird registration deadline, the ICCB Scientific Committee may withdraw the symposium and refer registered speakers to appropriate contributed sessions. An organizer may source a replacement speaker(s) prior to the Early Bird Registration Deadline if their invited talk(s) withdraws from the symposium.

Responsibilities of the Symposium Organizers

In addition to submitting symposia proposals, organizers take specific steps to give their proposals the best chance for acceptance into the scientific program and—if accepted—to ensure their symposia are well-organized and successful.

Prior to submitting your symposium:

- Receive commitments from the speakers you plan to invite to your symposium (i.e. that they are willing to speak in your symposium and are likely to attend the congress). We recognize that your speaker lineup may be incomplete when you submit your proposal, or that it might change between proposal submission and the ICCB early bird registration deadline, but it's important that you've sourced as many speakers as possible upon submission and that you are relatively confident at that time that you're invited speakers can attend the Congress.

Between symposium acceptance and the early bird registration deadline:

- Register for ICCB by the early bird registration deadline
- Ensure your invited speakers register for ICCB by the early bird deadline
- Review your symposium and make any necessary edits / ensure that invited talks are arranged in the order they will be presented.
- Communicate regularly with your invited speakers. If an invited speaker withdraws, find a replacement speaker.

At the Congress / Day of Your Symposium

All presentations in your symposium should be uploaded at least 24-hours before the session starts via the presentation management platform. Specific instructions on presentation format and submission process will be provided once the scientific schedule and program are finalized.

- Arrive to your session early
- Introduce your session to the audience
- Moderate your session to ensure speaker presentations do not exceed 13-minutes (this includes the ten-minute talk, two-minute audience Q&A, and transition to the next speaker.
- Moderate / facilitate the discussion period(s)

Opportunities & Best Practices

- Promote the congress to colleagues and your conservation network.
- ICCB is a great opportunity for career development and networking. We encourage ICCB symposium organizers to recruit speakers with diversity and equity in mind. Symposium organizers have a great opportunity to give qualified but less experienced scientists or scientists from marginalized groups a leg-up in their careers / career paths.

Need Help? If you have any questions related to the program proposal submission process or ICCB, please contact ICCBteam@conbio.org.