

Instructions for Session Moderators - TDWG 2026

Overview

Below are some basic pointers and instructions for being a moderator or co-moderator. You will also get more specific instructions from our local hosts. Please go over these before your session and have them handy during your session. You will also need to become familiar with the [Instructions for presenters](#).

One of the moderators needs to have a laptop (or at least a tablet) to be on Whova and monitor:

1. Questions from remote participants (posted in Whova Q&A chat)
2. To watch for virtual (online) presenters that come online to answer questions. The moderator should confirm their presence for the technician, who will enable their mic (if desired).

A private company, Avistic, will work with the Oslo Congress Center staff to provide technical support for all the conference sessions. They will ensure the broadcasting and recording of in-person and remote presentations for the four tracks in the larger halls during the conference. The working group sessions outside the four tracks will not be streamed online.

Session roles and tasks

Discuss this with your co-organizers beforehand to decide on a division of labor. This is just a guide.

- Depending on the length of your session and if you are speaking, please decide who will be a moderator, who will be managing questions for speakers, and whether a separate timekeeper is desired. A countdown timer should be visible to speakers at the podium, but additional reminders are helpful.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of your session to do sound checks with speakers and to get familiar with the staging and equipment, and to log in to Whova.
- Have your session agenda readily available. Learn how to pronounce the names of speakers for when you introduce them and find out if there are preferred pronouns to use (or allow speakers to introduce themselves).

- Communicate with speakers about how you will signal when time is drawing close and when time is up (e.g., playing a sound at 7 minutes, 9 min, and at 10 minutes, interrupt the speaker, remind the speaker about leaving time for questions).
- Please run your session to the times allocated. Remember that we have three rooms running sessions concurrently and audience members will be trying to room-hop to see individual presentations. That only works if all sessions adhere to the same time schedule.
- Questions can be posed during the session at a microphone (in person), or via the Q&A function for the session within Whova. One of the session organizers must monitor the online Q&A and relay any questions to the room.
- Keep in mind that the role of moderator may require recognizing and dealing with the inappropriate behavior often stemming from unequal professional status between a speaker and an audience member, which may require intervention.
- At the start of the session, please:
 - Introduce the session title and code (e.g., LT16 or SYM36).
 - Present the sponsors slide and thank our Sponsors for their support.
 - Remind attendees that the online Q&A in Whova will be monitored for questions.
 - Mention that links to on-demand viewing of the session will be made available to registrants as soon as they are ready.
- At the end of the session:
 - Please thank the speakers and the attendees.
 - Mention, again, links to on-demand viewing of the session will be made available to registrants.

If you are working with online participants, please ask them to:

- Use a headset for audio to prevent background noise and for best audio quality.
- Log into their session 15 minutes before the start to do last minute sound checks with the audio visual team.

Moderator script

{info}

- Enter your specific information where the red **XX**'s are.
- Consider downloading and customizing [this slide template](#) to summarize this information, which can run before the session starts and eliminates taking up valuable session time.
- Use the following naming convention for this slide: **SYMXX_00_TitleSlide.pptx** (or .pdf, not Google Slide; use two zeros between the underscores). For more information, see [Uploading your slides & pre-recorded video](#).
- If you did not receive the link to the upload to Google Drive, please email conf-organizers@tdwg.org with your session identifier (e.g., SYM01).

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The script

- Hello and welcome to the TDWG 2026 conference.
- This is Session **XX** entitled **XX** and I am your moderator **XX**. My co-moderator is **XX**. (if needed)
- This year's meeting was made possible, in part, by the generosity of our sponsors, especially our Gold sponsors. We are grateful to them.
- This session will be recorded for later viewing by registrants and eventually posted to the TDWG YouTube channels for public viewing.
- Please speak slowly and clearly for the benefit of all attendees.
- Thank you all for joining us and thank you to all the speakers in this session. Each presenter will talk for 10 minutes. There will be 3 minutes of questions at the end of each presentation and 2 minutes to transition between presenters.
- Speakers will have a timer on the podium that displays count-down time, as well as three lights: green, yellow at 5 mins remaining (start questions), and red at 2 mins to begin change-over. Moderators will also have a similar timer. Both display the same and are controlled by the tech.
- If you are attending virtually (online), please ask questions of the speakers using the Whova Q&A function for the session. A moderator will ask them of the presenters for you.
- If you are attending the session in person, please use the microphone to ask questions so that they may be heard by the online audience.
- The chat function has been made available for technical questions or for conversing with other attendees about the topics being presented. Please use this judiciously as any inappropriate use of the chat may result in you being removed from the session or the chat function being disabled.
- If you would like to continue the conversation online, continue using the chat function for the session in Whova.
- By participating in this conference, you agreed to abide by the [TDWG 2026 Code of Conduct](#).
- If technical difficulties arise, we appreciate your patience.
- Please enjoy the session.

Additional Considerations

- Be alert and have considered what you will do to defuse a situation, deflect attention from someone acting inappropriately, or support the speaker or a questioner from someone in the audience who does not act respectfully during the session. See also the [TDWG 2026 Code of Conduct](#).