HOW TO WRITE A CONFERENCE PROPOSAL

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INTESOL 2019

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INTRODUCTIONS

- Presenters
- Participants
QUESTIONS

Q: Who’s attending their first INTESOL conference?

Q: Who has written a conference proposal or abstract before?

Q: Who has been successful with having their conference proposals accepted?

Q: To what do you credit your success?

Q: To what do you credit a lack of success?
OUR GOALS TODAY

1. To share information about submitting proposals to INTESOL

2. To share tips for writing successful INTESOL proposals

3. To begin working on a proposal for INTESOL 2020 with you

4. To encourage you to submit your proposal to INTESOL or TESOL!
INTENDED AUDIENCE

- First-timers
- Presenters who’d like to improve proposal acceptance rates
- Teachers
- Graduate students
- Researchers
- Program staff and directors
- Other?
PROPOSAL FAQS

1. Why should I submit a proposal?

2. Does it cost anything to submit a proposal?

3. How long does it take to write a proposal?

4. What is the acceptance rate for INTESOL proposals?

5. Are professors preferred over students and teachers when it comes to getting proposals accepted?

6. When do I submit proposals?

7. Can I submit multiple proposals?

8. If my proposal is accepted, does INTESOL pay me to present my paper?

9. What if I can’t afford to attend the conference to present my session?
“When receiving your acceptance, you must immediately commit to attending (register for the conference) or rescind your proposal.”

For questions about Conference Proposal Submission, please email: vicepresident@intesol.org
PROPOSAL FAQs

1. What’s the difference between a proposal and abstract?
2. Are all conference proposals the “same”?
3. What are the differences between the presentation formats?
4. Is one format “better” than another?
5. Which interest section should I submit my proposal to?
6. Does my study or project have to be “finished” before I submit my proposal?
PROPOSAL FAQS

1. Can I submit the same proposal to multiple conferences?
2. What happens if my proposal gets rejected? Accepted?
3. Who reads the proposals?
4. What is the turnaround time for proposal review?
5. Do I get specific feedback on my proposal?
6. What qualities make a strong proposal?
WHAT QUALITIES MAKE A STRONG PROPOSAL?

- “Genre” with distinctive “moves”
  - See Swales & Feak (2009), *Abstracts and the writing of abstracts*

- Formulaic writing (not “creative writing”)

- Specific “rules” govern proposal writing
  - Premise: These rules *can* be learned!

- Crucial: Adhere to the conference’s stated criteria and directions
INTESOL 2020 PROPOSALS

- Call for Proposals not currently available

- See Website beginning appx. May 2020
  - INTESOL Twitter

- Deadline: September 1, 2020, 11:59 p.m.
  - No late submissions accepted
  - Online submission only
  - Two adjudicators (volunteer peers)
  - Blind-review submissions
  - Acceptance or rejection notification via email, early October 2020

- Follow submission directions precisely
## INTESOL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCESS

- Select appropriate Interest Section (IS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult/Community Programs</td>
<td>Brings together professionals who represent the knowledge, precepts, and skills of two distinct but compatible areas: adult or community programs and English as a second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy sessions</td>
<td>Discuss issues related to advocating for English Learners, TESOL, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Linguistics</td>
<td>Explores language learning and communication through the application of theory to real-world contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Education</td>
<td>Fosters recognition of ESOL as an academic discipline in elementary education, increases awareness of elementary ESOL educators’ needs, and develops new professional resources for teachers and their students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive English Programs</td>
<td>Addresses issues related to curriculum design and implementation, assessment, teaching standards, and research relevant to teaching English primarily to nonnative international students attending intensive and semi-intensive programs related to regular academic study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Concerns</td>
<td>Addresses the language, cultural, social, and legal needs (and their interconnections) of refugees at all ages and stages of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Schools</td>
<td>Represents professionals in the area of secondary education whose task is to ensure that secondary-level TESOL students develop the linguistic, cultural, and cognitive skills necessary for success in an English-speaking context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education</td>
<td>Discusses issues relevant to ESL/EFL teacher education, promotes professional development of ESL/EFL teachers, and formulates policy that will improve conditions of employment and learning for teachers and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Focuses on how educators use technology to teach English Learners or share research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/Higher Education</td>
<td>Advances effective instruction, promotes professional standards and practices, influences and supports policies of TESOL and other associations, determines needs, and considers all other matters relevant to ESL in colleges and universities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

- The proposal consists of:
  - Title (max. 40 characters)
  - Abstract (max. 50 words)
  - Summary (max. 200 words)

- Carefully address each of the 6 stated Proposal Evaluation Criteria
  - Total possible score of 30 pts.
PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA (GENERAL)

1. Proposal Title
2. Purpose & Session Type
3. Currency, Importance, and Appropriateness of Topic to the Field and the Interest Section
4. Focus and Organization of Content (based on the proposal type)
5. Clarity of Proposal & Participant Outcomes
6. (Research-based) Sessions: Theory, Practice, and/or Research Contribution to the Convention and/or the Field or Interest Section
1. PROPOSAL TITLE

- With a partner, rate the following titles on a scale of 1-5 (low - high)
- If you gave a title low score, suggest a stronger title

1. ESL for Children
2. Changing Attitudes Toward ELLs
3. Uses of Digital Media with EFL Learners in Asia
4. An Awakening in In-Service Teacher Training for English Language Learners
5. How I use my District’s ESL Textbook
6. Deconstructing Online Identity: A Self-Study of Three TESOL Professors
7. Hot Tips for Tired Teachers: Developing Effective Picture Files
1. **PROPOSAL TITLE**

- Create a title for your INTESOL 2020 Proposal

- **Consider:**
  - A current [research] project(s) you’re working on, and/or
  - Your current teaching or employment context:
    - A technique, tool, material(s), etc. to share with fellow teachers, and/or
    - An interesting “problem” you have encountered in your current teaching or work, and how you addressed/solved the issue
  - Other?

- Share with 2 partners and solicit suggestions
2. PURPOSE AND SESSION TYPE

- Write responses to the following:

1. What are your goals/objectives for your presentation?
2. What do you want participants to “do” or learn?
3. What will you share, and how will you share it?
4. How will you make your content compelling?
# CHOOSE YOUR PRESENTATION TYPE

Which format would be most appropriate for your intended audience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Type</th>
<th>Session Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion Group</strong></td>
<td>An opportunity to discuss a hot topic in TESOL in a structured roundtable format. The discussion leader(s) should have a strong knowledge of the designated topic and should include the audience in the discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(45 minutes, 3 presenters max.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Panel Presentation</strong></td>
<td>Two or more individuals speak, leaving at least 10-15 minutes for audience questions and responses. In one format, each speaker may present 15 to 20 minutes. In another format, each speaker may make brief opening remarks (for example, 5 minutes) before the panel enters into a moderated discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(45 minutes or 90 minutes, 2 or more presenters)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Poster Session</strong></td>
<td>A visually explanatory exhibit that allows for short, informal discussion between the presenter(s) and attendees, as attendees circulate within the poster-session area. Poster sessions serve as an important and interactive forum for sharing professional ideas and for receiving feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(45 minutes, 2 presenters max.)</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice-Oriented Presentation</strong></td>
<td>A session that shows, as well as tells, a technique for teaching or testing. The presenter should spend no more than 10 minutes explaining the underlying theory.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(45 minutes, 3 presenters max.)</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research-Oriented Presentation</strong></td>
<td>An oral summary with occasional reference to notes or a text that discusses the presenters’ topic and work in relation to theory and/or practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(45 minutes, 3 presenters max.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Roundtable Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Peer-to-peer facilitated discussions with a small group of attendees. The facilitator should have a strong knowledge of the topic and be able to engage everyone in the discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(45 minutes, 1 presenter)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Workshop</strong></td>
<td>A carefully structured, hands-on professional development activity. The presenter(s) and participants tackle a problem or develop specific teaching or research techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(45 minutes or 90 minutes; 6 presenters max.)</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. PURPOSE AND SESSION TYPE

Discuss with a partner:

How could you revise the following sentence to make its purpose clearer and link it to a session type?

We will share some tips to help teachers learn about working with ELLs.
3. CURRENCY, IMPORTANCE, AND APPROPRIATENESS OF TOPIC TO FIELD AND INTEREST SECTION

- What topics might be of interest to colleagues in your area?

- What are current “hot topics” in your area?
  - How do you find out what’s “current” in a particular area?

- What are “older” topics that continue to be of interest to contemporary audiences?
  - Does this invalidate those topics for possible presentation?

- How can you “position” your topic to show its importance?
  - Write 1-2 sentences to demonstrate this for your topic
4. FOCUS AND ORGANIZATION OF CONTENT

Logical progression is essential:

- **Move 1**: Background, introduction, problematization, outline
  - Topic, “problem,” or issue, and what others have said/done about it

- **Move 2**: Justifying present research/purpose
  - How your “slant” is new or unique, appeals to your audience, replicates previous work, or contributes to knowledge

- **Move 3**: Methods, materials, procedures

- **Move 4**: Results, main findings

- **Move 5**: Highlighting the outcomes, results

- **Move 6**: Implications, limitations, applications, etc.
  - Concludes with real-world relevance and/or applicability of topic

- Now, write Moves 3-6 for your topic and share with a partner

(Adapted from Swales & Feak, 2009)
5. CLARITY OF PROPOSAL & PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

- Important: grammar, spelling, syntax, overall presentation, etc.
  - Always have someone proofread your proposal!

- Explicit statement about what participants will gain from attending presentation
  - How is this different from your “goal” or objective?

- Write one sentence about your outcomes for participants
  - Begin the sentence with “Participants will...”
6. THEORY, PRACTICE, AND/OR RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVENTION AND/OR THE FIELD OR INTEREST SECTION

- Is this presentation relevant to INTESOL?
- Is there an application to teaching practice?
- Is there a clear, useful, or “new” contribution that the presentation makes?
- Does the topic relate to a particular IS or the conference theme?
  - Q: What is INTESOL 2020’s conference theme?
- Research sessions: Have you related your work to existing theory/research?
ACTIVITY (HANDOUTS)

- Cite the line(s) in the sample abstracts where each of the following criteria are addressed, and
- Rate them on a score of 1-5 (low-high)

1. Proposal Title
2. Purpose & Session Type
3. Currency, Importance, and Appropriateness of Topic to the Field and the Interest Section
4. Focus and Organization of Content (based on the proposal type)
5. Clarity of Proposal & Participant Outcomes
6. Theory, Practice, and/or Research Contribution to the Convention and/or the Field or Interest Section
Because writing is not always a linear process, you may find it helpful to:

1. Write your summary first, then borrow from it to compose the abstract

2. Create a helpful or catchy title after writing the summary and abstract
PROPOSAL WRITING RESOURCES

- See TESOL 2020 Proposal Writer’s Guide on Website:


Q & A

- Questions? Comments?
- Individual assistance with proposals