

Guidelines for Plenary Session conveners and Chairs

There will be four plenary sessions:

- Two on 'Dedicated Topics' - community-proposed subjects of broad appeal
- Two 'Showcasing Parallel Sessions' - featuring distinguished presentations proposed by parallel session conveners.

Sessions will be hybrid and so participation through oral, poster or panel discussion can be onsite or online.

1. *Convener* Guidelines for ***Dedicated Topic*** *Plenary Sessions*

The anticipated duration of the two Dedicated Topic Plenary sessions is 90 minutes. Session format will be:

- 5 minutes introduction by Lead Chair
- 2*15 minute scene-setting talks by Panellists (including change-over time; Q&A to be included in panel discussion time)
- 5 minutes (max) for introductory words from three/four panellists
- 45 minute panel discussion
- 5 minutes summary by Lead Chair

Two to four Chairs will be assigned for each of the sessions, including one Lead Chair, an experienced moderator.

After the session proposal call closes in March, the Programme Committee (PC) will select two plenary proposals and notify all proposers of the results in early April. Subsequently, the conveners will work on the sessions in preparation for ESWW in two rounds.

Round 1: selection of panellists and scene-setting talks, and acceptance of submitted abstracts, 13th April - 30 June 2026

13th April

Call for abstracts opens. Conveners will solicit (and/or select from the submitted 'Panellist' abstracts) three or four panellists and ask them to submit an abstract. Additionally, conveners will solicit two scene-setting contributions from among the Panellists. These contributions, such as talks or videos, typically provide a general introduction or review to the session's topic, offering key insights and context to frame the panel discussion.

Conveners are reminded to consider [EDI \(Equality, Diversity and Inclusion\)](#) in their planning. 'Panellist' or 'Poster' abstracts may be submitted to the two Directed Topic plenary sessions to be considered for selection. After the abstract deadline, conveners will select and confirm with the PC the panellists, while the remaining 'Panelist' abstract submissions will be considered for poster presentation.

11th May

Conveners of plenary, parallel, and TDM sessions will be invited to a meeting. This will serve to introduce the PC and LOC teams, and points of contact, clarify session arrangement procedures, and address any questions.

22nd May

Deadline for oral abstract submission.

23rd May

Conveners will have access to the reviewing system as reviewers. Instructions will be published on the website and the conveners will be notified by LOC.

May 28

Deadline for conveners to suggest any **rejection** and **abstract transfers** to other sessions (plenary/parallel). Information about the **rejection/transfer** must be **sent to PoC** (with CC to contact emails - see below) before the deadline.

5th June

The PC will allocate time slots for all sessions, and conveners will be informed of session duration by PoC.

10th June

Deadline for conveners to:

- Confirm the names of three or four panellists from submitted abstracts
- Confirm names of speakers for two scene-setting talks from the list of panellists.
- Accept remaining abstracts as 'poster' or reject.

Please note that

No panellist may participate in more than one plenary session, although they may have a talk in a parallel session as well. Following an EDI review of oral sessions by the PC, the panellists and speakers will be approved so that all abstract submitters can be notified in June and the ESWW programme subsequently released.

In the event that one or more panellists or speakers withdraw after the programme has been published, conveners should be prepared to reassign the opening to an abstract whose author is willing to participate in the session. To do this, please select 1 or 2 backup oral talks in advance.

June 22

Deadline for conveners to send to PoC the final oral program

June 26-28

The PC finalises the session plan with the inputs from the conveners

June 30

LOC notifies the authors about their contributions

July 11

Oral programme is published at the website

Round 2: Selection of abstracts for remaining poster presentations and appointment of Chairs, 14th September – 5th October 2026

14th September (inclusive)

Deadline for late-poster abstract submissions.

18th September (inclusive)

Deadline for conveners to **reject** abstracts and to suggest any **abstract transfers** to other plenary or parallel sessions

25th September (inclusive)

Deadline for conveners to:

- Accept/reject remaining posters submitted after the oral deadline.
- Appoint two to four Chairs (the Lead Chair will already have been assigned in the initial session proposal).
 - At least one Chair should be a convener.
 - At least one Chair will be attending in-person, in Florence.
 - At least one Chair will take responsibility to monitor online comments.

Conveners are reminded to consider EDI in their selection.

5th October

- LOC informs poster presenters about their contribution
- The full programme is released

2. Chair Guidelines for Dedicated Topic Plenary Sessions

The sessions will be chaired by experts in the field who are comfortable with moderating. The Lead Chair will be responsible for overseeing and moderating the session. Chairs are advised to directly communicate with panellists in advance of the session to ensure a well-organised discussion.

Chairs are encouraged to utilise technology/means to enhance audience engagement during the session and in the Q&A approach, such as smartphone apps and short video projections.

Instructions for uploading presentations will be provided nearer the time. Chairs are encouraged to ensure that any presentation material for the session, by themselves and contributing speakers, is uploaded well in advance of the start of the session; any issues should be discussed directly with the LOC.

During the session, at least one Chair must be responsible for monitoring online comments. Chairs are advised to start and end the session on time - making sure scene-setting talks do not over-run, introductions to panellists are kept to a minimum, and that the panel discussion is the focus of the session.

3. Guidelines for *Plenaries Showcasing Parallel Sessions*

Selected presentations from parallel sessions will be upgraded to plenary sessions. This exciting opportunity means that some of the most significant and high-quality presentations from the parallel sessions will gain additional visibility and recognition, promoting both the originating parallel session and the presentation to a broader audience. This upgrade not only celebrates the excellence of the work but also provides parallel conveners and presenters with enhanced exposure and potential valuable opportunities for networking and collaboration.

Contributions selected for the 'Plenaries Showcasing Parallel Sessions' will be officially recognised by the ESWW PC and a certificate will be awarded to the presenting author.

The anticipated duration of the two plenaries *Showcasing Parallel Sessions* is 50 minutes each. Session format will be:

- Short introduction by the Chair, including reference to the parallel sessions from which the talks originate
- 2 talks of 25 minutes each (including Q&A)
- Close

Two Chairs (PC members or other qualified individuals) will be assigned to each session to briefly introduce the speakers and their original session, and to monitor audience and online questions and comments.

Timeline

11th May PC/convenor meeting: parallel session conveners will be invited to a meeting to discuss session arrangements. They will also be informed that, after the oral deadline has closed, they will receive an invitation to propose one talk from their session to be upgraded to a plenary talk. This talk will be agreed upon by all conveners of the session.

After the May oral submission deadline: parallel session conveners will be asked to propose one talk from oral abstract submissions to their session, by 10th June. The final session plan will be announced on 30th June.

As a parallel session convenor, what benefits are there to proposing a talk upgraded to plenary?

- **Enhanced Visibility:** an upgraded talk will reach a larger and broader audience, giving greater visibility to conveners and their parallel sessions, and potentially increasing attendance in those sessions.
- **Extra Time:** you will not lose time in your parallel session as the talk moves to plenary, which will permit at least one extra talk on your session's topic.
- **Professional Development:** presenters can enhance their professional profiles by being associated with high-profile plenary sessions.
- **Networking Opportunities:** the speaker will gain more opportunities for networking and collaboration with a wider range of attendees.
- **Prestige and Reputation:** being selected for a plenary session is an honour and can enhance the professional reputation of the presenter, at the same time showcasing your expertise in selecting a high quality presentation.

I'm a parallel session convenor, what type of talk should we propose?

- **Relevant and timely:** the talk could cover cutting-edge research, impactful applications, emerging issues in the field or be a review talk or another topic that will interest the community.
- **Engaging and compelling:** the talk should be informative and engaging for the audience.
- **Contextually rich:** the talk should include sufficient contextual information for the broader audience. While the original abstract may not include this information, the presenter should have enough time to expand during the nominally 20 minute plenary talk.

By the end of June: the PC will rank the proposed talks based on factors such as quality, interest to the community, and considerations of EDI.

In early-July: parallel conveners/the PC will reach out to the presenters of the top-selected proposed talks to confirm their willingness to be promoted to plenary.

July: the confirmed talks will be finalised, and the relevant parallel conveners will make the necessary small adjustments to their sessions to accommodate a talk moving to plenary. The programme will be published.