AURA 2025 Review Process

Modified from: bosc_materials/BOSC_review_process.md at master · OBF/bosc_materials · GitHub

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Reviewer requirements

Reviewers are invited by the AURA Organizing Committee.

Reviewers should be postdocs from the subjects represented in the AURA symposium, namely Biology, Geology, and Geography.

Timeline

The timeline for AURA 2025 reviewing is as follows:

- Abstract submission opens: December 1st
- Abstract submission closes: 5th January, extend to 12th January if needed
- Abstract – Reviewer Matching: 13th-18th January
- Abstracts sent to reviewers: January 15th
- Abstract reviews due: January 31st
- Authors notified if rejected/accepted: February 5th

Review Process

Confidentiality Policy

Abstracts are considered as unpublished works from submission of the abstract until the conference and should be treated as confidential. Therefore, reviewers should not share or discuss abstracts (or specific details about the abstracts) with anyone except members of the review committee without express permission of the abstract authors and the AURA symposium organizing committee. Accepted abstracts will be published on the AURA website.

Abstract assignments

Each submitted abstract will be reviewed by three reviewers. Sometimes, if an abstract is controversial (for example, reviewers disagree on its relevance to AURA), it will go through an additional review before authors are notified. All submitted abstracts must pass through this review process.

Each reviewer will receive several abstracts to review (typically, 4-6 abstracts). After the abstract submission deadline, the abstracts' titles and author lists submitted will be made available to all reviewers. Ensuring that the reviewer has no conflict of interest, they can each select 4-6 abstracts to review. Once an abstract has been selected by 3 reviewers, it will be taken off the list.

Judging criteria

To be accepted for a presentation, abstracts submitted to AURA symposium **must be**:

1. **Relevant**: Your abstract must describe how your work relates to some aspect of biology, geology, and geography. The audience for the symposium is a diverse group of researchers with differing interests and expertise across the disciplines of biology, geology, and geography. Please take note that abstracts as well as the consequent presentations must be comprehensible for individuals not in the same field.
2. **Impactful**: Please describe how your work fits into the research ecosystem of your field or the society at large. A few words about the current and/or projected impact of your project will be very helpful.
3. **Novelty**: Innovative approaches are interesting to hear about, but it's fine to build on existing research/methods/tools; you don't need to be novel to get a talk at AURA. If you can compare your approach with existing approaches, that's a plus.
4. **Updated**: If you presented this project at a previous AURA in any form (talk, demo, and/or poster), your abstract must describe progress since the last AURA presentation. If no mention of previous AURA presentation is made, reviewers will assume the project is being presented for the first time.
5. **Correctly formatted**: Abstracts must be in PDF format and are limited to 250 words. We want abstract PDFs to include the title and author name(s) and author affiliations.

If a reviewer determines that an abstract does not meet one or more of the requirements, they will note that in the review form.

Additionally, we welcome abstracts that describe early-phase projects and/or present a research plan. We have a separate pre-symposium session for these presentations (with posters potentially presented on both poster sessions). Some of the criteria mentioned above are relaxed for these abstracts, for example, we do not expect availability of analyses and results here.

Reviewer comments

Reviewers may sign their comments with their name if they wish to disclose themselves to the abstract author. All comments by reviewers are shared with the abstract authors except for those intended for the organizers. These confidential remarks are a way to communicate privately to the AURA Organizers regarding any concerns the reviewer has about the abstract, ethics, license, or other issues.

Scoring

The organizers use the scores from the reviewers to help decide (a) whether an abstract should be accepted or rejected, and (b) if accepted, whether it merits a long talk (12+3 min), a short (lightning) talk (3 min), or only a poster. Some abstracts may be of high quality, but may cover only a small topic (for example, a small pilot study/experiment) and thus may not earn a high "suitability for long talk" score.

We ask the reviewers to assign scores to two separate criteria for each abstract:

a) A quality score (ranging from 1: "reject", 2: "accept", to 3: "strong accept")
b) A score/recommendation that indicates how suitable the abstract would be for a long talk (ranging from 1: "only enough content for a lightning talk or poster", 2: "enough content for a long talk", to 3: "definitely merits a long talk").

Review of reviews

After reviewers have submitted their reviews, the organizing committee will evaluate all reviews to make sure they are appropriate, and to ensure the reviewer comments do not contain offensive messages.

If an author raises a complaint about a review or any communication during the review process, a subset of the scientific committee of reviewers will evaluate the complaint to determine the proper course of action, after first notifying the author that the complaint has been received and is being looked into.

Acceptance decisions

The reviewers' ratings (primarily) and detailed comments (secondarily) will be used by the AURA organizing committee to decide which abstracts to accept for talks and/or posters.

We try to be liberal with poster acceptances for any abstract that presents some research and/or plans. Typically, talk spots are much more competitive, and we are usually not able to offer talks to all of the good abstracts we receive.

A presenting author can only present ONE talk or poster. If authors want to present their work as both a talk and a poster, they have to do a separate poster submission with a different author.