



ANS Symposia Policy and Guidelines for the ANS 2021 Meeting

Call for Symposia

- ☐ The ANS Executive, via the Conference Executive Chair, will open the call for symposium proposals on Monday 15th February 2021 and submissions will be accepted until Friday 19th March 2021.
- ☐ The Professional Conference Organiser (PCO) and ANS secretariat will oversee membership notification of submission dates via emails and on the Society and conference webpages.
- ☐ ANS Council will advertise the symposium call on social media and in the newsletter.
- ☐ Symposium proposals will be submitted via the online portal on the conference website.
- ☐ The Conference Executive Chair will notify the proposers of the success of their application approximately four weeks after submission closure.

Symposia Proposals

- ☐ Symposia must consist of **four** speakers and **two** co-chairs. **Co-chairs are excluded** from presenting in the symposium.
- ☐ Each speaker will have a total of 20 mins for their presentation, followed by 5 mins question time. Co-chairs will introduce the symposia (5 mins) at the start and lead an interactive 'Big Picture' discussion (15 mins) at the end.
- ☐ ANS Council and the Local Organising Committee seek to maximise in-person attendance at the ANS 2021 meeting in Melbourne. Prior to the submission of a proposal, it is required that the proposer obtain email confirmation from all Australian and New Zealand-based speakers that they agree to attend the meeting in person, unless prohibited by government-mandated COVID-19 travel restrictions, in which case they agree to participate as a virtual (online) presenter.
- ☐ Virtual attendance will consist of a pre-recorded digital presentation followed by live online Q&A session. Virtual presenters must agree to submit their pre-recorded presentation to the conference secretariat no later than five days prior to the conference start date.
- ☐ A proposal may include no more than **one** international speaker (i.e. speaker from outside Australia or New Zealand) who must agree to participate in the symposium as a virtual (online) presenter. International speakers are welcome to attend the meeting in person but ANS will not provide finances to support their travel to the 2021 meeting.
- ☐ The Society wishes to emphasise it is not necessary for symposia to have an international speaker. High quality proposals with only Australian and New Zealand speakers are most welcome, especially in light of current international travel restrictions.
- ☐ It is a requirement that each symposium:
 - include speakers from different institutions and geographic regions of Australia



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or New Zealand

- achieve gender balance for both speakers **and** co-chairs
 - include at least one early or mid-career researcher (EMCR) as speaker **and** at least one EMCR as co-chair. EMCR here is defined as a researcher at any level but with no more than 10 years post PhD experience at the time of the meeting.
- ☐ Proposals will be submitted online and include the following information:
- research theme
 - symposium title
 - names and contact details of the proposer (must be an ANS member) and two co-chairs (the proposer can also serve as one of the co-chairs)
 - a brief synopsis of the topic, its significance with respect to the field and to the ANS membership (500 words max)
 - names and contact details of **four** speakers, the title of their talk and a brief summary of content and significance (200 words max/speaker)
 - citations of up to 5 papers published by each speaker over the past 5 years
 - financial support for symposium proposals is **not** required. However, if applicable, details of confirmed or potential financial support should be detailed under "Additional Information". Sponsorship status will **not** influence the selection of symposia.
- ☐ **All Australian and New Zealand proposers, co-chairs and speakers must be current members of ANS.** It is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure that all are ANS members, although exceptions can be made with appropriate scientific justification.
- NOTE:** It is required that only the proposer is an ANS member at the time of submission. All participants of successful symposia must hold an active ANS membership prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- ☐ It is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure that all speakers register and submit their abstracts by the abstract deadline.

Support for international speakers

- It is anticipated that in-person attendance of international speakers (from countries other than Australia and New Zealand) will not be possible at the ANS 2021 meeting, in light of COVID-19 travel and quarantine restrictions. Thus, ANS will **not** be supporting travel and accommodation costs for international speakers.
 - Invited International symposia speakers (not working at Australian or New Zealand institutions), who participate remotely, will not incur a conference registration fee.
- ☐ No Society funding will be available to support the costs of Australian or New Zealand speakers, co-chairs or proposers.

Selection Process and Criteria

- ☐ Symposia will be selected by the full ANS Council, ANS Programming Committee and two members of the LOC via an anonymous voting system.
- ☐ Final selection of successful symposia will be determined after discussion to



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ensure that selected research areas are of relevance to the ANS membership, and are of high scientific quality and significance.

- ☐ Proposals will be considered primarily on scientific merit. However, the following aspects will be taken into consideration:
 - geographic distribution of speakers
 - alignment with principles of diversity and inclusion (see statement below)
 - balance of topics such that all ANS research themes are represented
- ☐ Where the same proposer, co-chair or speaker is associated with multiple symposia, the Council will rule on eligibility and determine whether one or all of the symposia are accepted.
- ☐ Proposals will be ruled **ineligible** if:
 - the proposer fails to obtain formal agreement from all Australian and New Zealand-based speakers that they will travel to Melbourne to attend the meeting or attend in a virtual capacity if travel is restricted
 - a co-chair is also a speaker in the symposium
 - if any Australian or New Zealand participant is not an ANS member
 - the submission form is incomplete
- ☐ If a speaker withdraws after the symposium has been accepted, the proposer must immediately notify the Conference Executive Chair who will then determine whether the symposium will remain in the program. This decision will be based on the quality of the substitute speaker and the content of their proposed talk.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

- The Society is committed to ensuring that the ANS 2021 meeting reflects the rich diversity of the Australasian neuroscience community. When considering speakers for symposia please take a moment to reflect on the extent to which your selection promotes the principles of diversity and inclusion.
- **Diversity** reflects both the social and professional identities of individuals. Social identity may be influenced by attributes including indigenous background, cultural background, physical appearance, age, gender, neurodivergence, caring responsibilities, disability status, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status and socio-economic background. Professional identity reflects an individual's professional training e.g., medical doctor or medical research scientist, education level, work experiences, organisational level e.g., professor or postdoc, functional area, department, and location.
- **Inclusion** refers to engaging with the diversity of people within an organisation.