

Chair guidelines provided by the PME International Committee

General information

As a chair, you are responsible for assisting the presenter(s). You should

- Start with a brief presentation of the presenter(s) saying name and institution (in the SO session, also a brief explanation for the selection of the timing option);
- make a comment regarding photographing, audio- and videotaping the session (see below);
- monitor timing of the session;
- assist the presenter(s) during the discussion, by noticing who wants to ask a question, not overlooking anyone, keeping time, etc. Some presenters might prefer to handle the discussion themselves, others might want the chair to steer the discussion – please ask your presenter his/her preference;
- thank the presenter(s) for the contribution;
- make certain the room is ready in time for the next session.

Some presenters might present their work for the first time, or might not be accustomed to present in English, or simply be nervous. It might be helpful for the presenter to know you are there to assist. Please come to the scheduled room in good time and present yourself to the presenter. It is highly recommended that you take some time to read through the paper/abstract(s) of the session in advance.

Presenters should upload their presentations in the break before the session for maximum efficiency regarding time.

Sometimes the chair might need to open the discussion offering some feedback or a question to the presenter before other participants come forward. Please allow some time for the discussion to take place/start and do not end the session prematurely.

Regarding videotaping/audiotaping and/or photographing

Many people videotape/audiotape or photograph sessions. Please make certain the presenter(s) is aware of this and, before the session starts, make sure that the presenter agrees with videotaping, with the video to be used for personal purposes only (the same applies for audiotaping and photographing). Otherwise, inform the attendees that videotaping/audiotaping and/or photographing is not permitted.

Time management

Research Reports (RR)

For RR allow 20 minutes for the presentation and 20 minutes for the discussion.

Short Oral Sessions (SO)

In SO sessions, 10 minutes are allowed for each presentation. However, the remaining 30 minutes of discussion time can be organized in different ways. Please see reverse side for further information.

Managing Short Oral Sessions (SO)

For SO sessions, the IC recommends one of two timing options. Some sessions may contain presentations that are closely related, while for other sessions, this may be less the case. Based on your reading of the SO summaries, and after consultation of the three presenters before the start of the session, you can select the appropriate option.

Option 1: Joint discussion at the end for presentations with related themes:

After each presentation, there is the opportunity to clarify immediate questions for at most 5 minutes. 15 additional minutes of discussion are in the end of the session.

Option 2: Separate discussions for presentations with separate themes:

The chair starts 10 minutes of questions and discussion directly after each 10-minute presentation.

At the beginning of the session and when possible, the chair will briefly state the points of similarity of the three presentations and give an overview of the session timing. The attendees will be asked to remain in the room throughout the whole session for conducting the presentations and discussions fruitfully.

Option 1: Joint discussion at the end <i>for presentations with related themes</i>
● Very short introduction
● Presentation 1 (10 min)
● Short Questions (at most 5 min)
● Presentation 2 (10 min)
● Short Questions (at most 5 min)
● Presentation 3 (10 min)
● Short Questions (at most 5 min)
● Questions and Discussion (15 min)

Option 2: Separate discussions <i>for presentations with separate themes</i>
● Very short introduction
● Presentation 1 (10 min)
● Questions and Discussion (10 min)
● Presentation 2 (10 min)
● Questions and Discussion (10 min)
● Presentation 3 (10 min)
● Questions and Discussion (10 min)

Please note that 10 minutes for each presentation include the time it takes for changing presenter, getting ready, etc. You might need to time this. It is the duty of the chair to keep a strict timing. Try to motivate all participants to make concise statements.

In Option 1, after each presentation questions are possible that aim to clarify unclear points in the presentation. Questions should not be too general. If there are no further questions at that time, the next presentation can begin.

During the 15 minutes for the end discussion, please make certain that questions and comments are made for all presenters. You might need to request the attendees to direct their questions to a specific presenter if the other two presenters have had several questions already. Also, stimulate questions and comments with a more general focus, since detailed questions about individual presentations should have been dealt with after each presentation.