

Guide for Submitting a Successful APBS Conference Presentation Proposal

Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide considerations for submissions of Single-Presentation Sessions, Multi-Presentation Sessions, Panel Discussions, and Poster Presentations. Ignite, Combined, and Mini-Skill Sessions are organized by the APBS Conference Committee based on the submissions received through the Call for Papers and not covered in this guide. For more information on these sessions, please refer to the [Call for Papers page](#) on the APBS website. Pre- and post-conference workshops are invited presentations and not covered in this guide. If you would like your topic to be considered for a workshop in future conferences, please refer to the section related to Workshop Protocol on the [Call for Papers page](#).

Proposals submitted for the APBS Conference Call for Papers go through a blind peer review process, using a rubric to guide scoring. Proposals that are typically accepted provide an explicit and compelling proposal that aligns with four overall categories of priority:

- a. Clearly addresses content that is significant for the field or APBS's primary conference audience and strongly aligns with the core features of the field and application of positive behavior support;
- b. Conceptually strong or empirically valid and reliable;
- c. Aligned to clearly stated objectives and balances the amount of content with the time allocation for the type of session;
- d. Explicitly aligned with and supports the [APBS Mission](#) and [Commitment to Equity](#)

Successful proposals are clearly written and organized, providing information pertinent to the above criteria throughout the proposal. Proposals that are not accepted primarily fall into four categories:

- a. the topic is not aligned with the [APBS Mission](#) and [Commitment to Equity](#);
- b. the topic is not addressing content that is significant for the field or APBS's primary conference audience;
- c. the content does not align with the core features of the field and application of positive behavior support;
- d. the proposal did not provide sufficient and/or clear information that would result in a high score.

Using the Guide

This guide is organized into three sections. The first section of this guide provides bulleted lists of steps an author will take to prepare and submit a proposal. The second half describes the components used for scoring proposals and explains how authors can consider and include these components in the development of the proposal. The third section describes the process for submitting your proposal online through Oxford Abstracts including information on how to submit for consideration of BCBA and NASP continuing education credits.

Author Guidelines

To provide attendees with a broad array of presenters and presentation topics, there is a limit on the number of peer-reviewed proposal submissions from one lead author. Specifically, an author can be a lead on two presentations. They can be a lead on a single presentation, multi-presentation, or panel discussion. The second lead can be a poster presentation. The lead author can be a co-presenter (second or later author) on one other submitted proposal. The lead author cannot be a lead presenter on two presentations (single, multi, or panel) or two poster presentations.

APBS Mission and Commitment to Equity

It is important to note the APBS mission statement and commitment to equity, as your proposal will be reviewed to ensure that content is explicitly aligned with the mission of the organization.

The mission of APBS is to enhance the quality of life of people, across the life-span, by promoting evidence-based and effective positive behavior support to realize socially valid and equitable outcomes for people, families, schools, agencies, and communities.

APBS is committed to equity, human rights, and social justice for historically marginalized and oppressed communities, families, practitioners, and students. Our work informs individuals, institutions, and organizations through systems development and strategies to disrupt interpersonal and structural forms of inequity, discrimination, and racism, in order to promote equitable and meaningful outcomes for all.

Section 1. Getting Ready to Submit Your Proposal

1. Plan Ahead

- The submission **deadline** is September 8, 2023 (midnight US Eastern Time). It is best to work backwards from that date to ensure you meet the deadline.
- Decide upon the **strand** that your proposal best fits. The strands and brief descriptions are on the [Call for Papers Page](#) of the APBS Website and include:
 - Early Childhood
 - Integration and Alignment
 - Individual Students & Tier 3
 - Classroom
 - Tier 2
 - School-Wide Systems (Tier 1)
 - Equity
 - Home & Community
 - Intellectual/Developmental Disability (IDD)
 - Families and Parent Supports
 - Mental Health
- Decide on the **preferred format of the presentation** you will be submitting. The APBS Conference will be accepting submissions online for four types of sessions: Single-Presentation, Multi-Presentation, Panel Discussion, and Poster Presentation.

Single Presentation Sessions

- One presentation focused on one topic relevant to positive behavior support,
- May include one or more presenters,
- 60-minute session with time allotted for Q&A,
- Scheduled during March 7th & 8th

Multi-Presentation Sessions

- Comprised of two to three separate presentations on one topic or a set or related topics relevant to positive behavior support,
- Organized by the multiple authors/presenters and submitted as one session (These sessions are not organized by the committee),
- May include a discussant, or final speaker, who highlights and synthesizes the primary themes of the presentations to advance the topic,
- Each presenter/topic devotes a large portion of their time to the topic being covered (vs. panel discussion where the focus is on

discussion between panelists and participants) while allowing for Q&A,

- 60-minute session with time allotted for Q&A,
- Scheduled during March 7th & 8th
- *Multi-presenter sessions will be given priority for acceptance and scheduling.*

Panel Discussions

- Organized by a chair who moderates the presentation,
- Offer rich audience interaction with three to four panelists speaking about a particular theme or topic,
- Panel Discussions may include a brief introductory remark about the topic but should not include lengthy presentations (vs. multi-presentation where each presenter devotes a large portion of their time to the topic),
- 60-minute session is focused on engaging discussion between panelists and participants,
- Scheduled during March 7th and 8th

Poster Presentation

- Visual presentations that provide opportunities to share research projects and results related to Positive Behavior Support or applications of positive behavior support in authentic situations and outcomes,
- Best suited for content that can be visually displayed, and may not be ready for other session formats,
- Presenting authors are available during the session to discuss their work and answer questions,
- Scheduled during the conference reception on Thursday evening (March 7th) from 6:30pm – 8:00pm,
- Presenters will be provided with an 8' X 30' table and a 3' X 4' poster board on which visual information is displayed

Decide which other formats you would be willing to present:

- Single Presentation, Multi-Presentation, Panel Discussion, Poster Session
- Additional options include: Ignite Presentation Session, Combined Presentation Session, Mini-Skills Presentation. See the <Call for Papers page> on the APBS Website for descriptions of these formats.
- Decide upon the **area of emphasis** that best describes your proposal. There are four session categories/types.

Skill Development: This category is for proposals that intend for participants to learn specific techniques or gain proficiency or knowledge that may be immediately applied in authentic settings.

Conceptual: Proposals addressing positive behavior support principles or technology by making connections between positive behavior support and application in authentic settings or describing potential applications of theoretical principles/technology would select this category.

Research: If your proposal describes an original research study, this category would be selected. **Note**: *If you plan to submit a proposal based on original research, submit the proposal only if you are confident that your research will be completed in time to meaningfully present it by the conference date (March 6, 2024)*

Policy: Select this category if your proposal is describing the development, implementation, or impact of local, state, or federal policies related to positive behavior support.

- If you will have co-presenters, determine who will be the lead presenter and ensure you know the correct names, titles, email address and affiliations of each co-presenter.

2. Prepare the Abstract and Objectives

- Prior to going on-line to submit your proposal, it is wise to first develop your **abstract** (including your learning objectives) in a Word document. This will allow you to copy and paste into the on-line submission application and prevent errors.
- Create a **title** that will entice conference attendees to come to your session, is descriptive of your topic, and is within the 95-character limit.
- Develop 3-5 **learning objectives** within the 100-word limit and ensure that the abstract explains exactly how it will meet the objectives. **Note**: *if you are requesting to provide Type 2 BCBA CEUs or NASP CDPs, your objective must align with the BCBA Task List or NASP Domains of Practice respectively.*
- Write the 450-word **abstract**. Refer to the second section in this guide that provides information about each scoring component on which your proposal will be evaluated and given a score.
 - Carefully organize your abstract using clear, concise language to describe exactly what you will be presenting.
 - Begin with a brief introductory paragraph that provides an overview of your topic.
 - Describe the theory, concept, or research basis of your topic.

- Your proposal does not need to be a formal research study and can be oriented for practitioners and/or caregivers. If it is practitioner and/or caregiver focused, the topic should be one that is based on sound theory or has been tested by others and not just a “good idea”.
- Describe exactly what you will be presenting including how you will be presenting it. For example, if it will be an interactive presentation, provide a description of how it will be interactive (for example, “Participants will be given an opportunity to score their own multi-tiered process with the evaluation tool.”)
- Explain the impact your proposal has on the field and how it is aligned with the APBS mission.
- When finished, **carefully review** your proposal for spelling, grammar, and usage errors.
- Please keep in mind, if your proposal’s focus is to showcase a product (e.g., materials, books, videos, or consultation services) for sale, you would not submit a proposal through the peer reviewed process. Instead, you will want to complete an application to [become an exhibitor](#).

3. Write a Summary (Short Session Description)

- Develop a 75 word or less **description of your session**. This will appear in the conference program and is what conference attendees will read.
- Make your session description inviting so that people will want to attend. Some tips to keep in mind:
 - Describe what participants will get out of your session or how it can be used in authentic settings relevant to the topic.
 - Describe the problem(s) that your session will address.
 - Make sure your description is accurate in what you are truly covering so that attendees will know what to expect. For example, if you are only going to talk about your research and not about application, don’t promise in the description that you will describe effective practices to be used.
 - Do not use up your 75-word limit by using phrases such as “In this presentation, we will...”. Get right to the content.
 - The summary is what “sells” your presentation to conference attendees – make sure that your summary is strong and intriguing!

The next section provides more detail on the components you will want to consider while writing your abstract and objectives. This section, while not guaranteeing that your proposal will be accepted, will enhance the likelihood that your proposal may be scored favorably.

Section 2. Aligning the abstract with the scoring rubric:

The abstract describing the proposal submission is the most important component of submission. Successful proposals describe clearly and completely in 450 words or less what will be presented and how the content of the presentation is significant to the field of APBS. The following areas all relate to the proposal [Scoring Rubric](#).

Significance of Content to the Field

The content that the proposal addresses is important to the field. The proposal provides a clear explanation of how the topic is linked to the mission of APBS. The proposal provides information of how the session will add to the significance of positive behavior support and is relevant to one or more of the core features of positive behavior support. The submission should expand upon current practices and/or policies. The submission may also expand upon areas of application to include settings across the lifespan (home, early childhood, K-12, adult programs and services, community programs and aging population).

As an example, APBS receives a large number of submissions that address implementation of Tier 1 positive behavior support in school settings. Unless the topic provides content that adds to the implementation of Tier 1 or addresses a specific challenge when implementing Tier 1, chances are the proposal will not receive a high score in the content area. Merely proposing to describe how a school or a district implemented Tier 1 will not provide the field with significant content that is new to the field and/or that other practitioners or attendees could use to further strengthen positive behavior support approaches in their settings. However, focusing the content on how community partnerships were formed to enhance buy-in and/or effectiveness or focusing implementation for an underserved population (e.g., autism, intellectual disabilities, diverse cultures) or focusing on implementing Tier 1 in specific school settings (e.g., alternative schools, urban high schools, rural units) or in different settings (e.g., juvenile justice, residential facilities), would be considered content that could advance practitioner's implementation of Tier 1. In addition, proposals addressing current issues and problems through the implementation of positive behavior support technology and principles are more likely to score high in this area. For example, using positive behavior support techniques to address disproportionality or cultural diversity would be examples of current challenges that face a range of settings.

Conceptual or Empirical Strength

Your proposal can be focused on a research study or can be a practitioner-based presentation. If it is a practitioner-based proposal, reviewers will be looking for evidence that what you plan to present is drawn from a sound theoretical and/or

research base. For example, if you plan to present information on how to actively engage caregivers/family members, reviewers should be able to discern how you selected practices that promote active engagement of caregivers or literature that supports active caregiver engagement. Proposals describing concepts or ideas that sound good but are untested (i.e., does not have a theory or conceptual basis on why the idea would or should work) will typically result in a low score on this component. For example, you may submit a proposal describing use of technology such as computer-assisted instruction, smartphone or tablet application in a school implementing Tier 2 supports. To receive a high score on this component, you would need to provide a clear description on how your use of technology was based on sound practices and that you evaluated the outcomes. You are not required or expected to have formal research data; however, you do need to provide some content that clearly shows you evaluated what you are presenting. Only describing what or how you did it will most likely be insufficient.

If you are presenting a research study, you will want to provide enough detail about your methodology so that reviewers will understand how you conducted the research and be confident that appropriate methodology was followed. You will want to briefly present the results of the study as well as implications for practices and how the results align with the mission of APBS. In some cases, you may be proposing a research study that is not completed at the time of submission. This is okay as long as you are sure you will have completed your study and analysis by the time of the conference. In these cases, you will describe how you will analyze your data and your expected outcomes. Unfortunately, sometimes accepted presenters end up needing to cancel their sessions due to not completing their study by the date of the conference. We urge you to submit your proposal only if you are sure that your study will be completed by the time of the conference.

Clarity of Proposal

Proposals should be clear on what will be presented during the session and how the authors will present the content. When putting together your proposal, you will want to consider your 3-5 learning objectives that describe exactly what participants will gain by attending your session. The best objectives are those that start with observable action verbs that describe the skills or knowledge to be acquired. You will want to draw a clear connection between the objectives and the description of what you are going to present and how you will be presenting it. When reviewers submit their scores and comments, the most frequent reason proposals may receive low ratings in this area is because the author did not provide enough detail or explain clearly what will be presented.

Support for APBS Mission and Commitment to Equity

A successful proposal aligns with the [mission](#) and [commitment to equity](#) of APBS and describes how the topic will support individuals in reducing behavioral challenges, increasing independence, and developing behaviors that will improve

quality of life in the areas of social relationships, employment, academic achievement, functional life-skills, self-determination, health, and safety. A successful proposal provides conference attendees with information that is noteworthy and can be new information, reinforcement of current information, or adaptation of current information.

Finalize

Before submitting, the proposal should be reviewed for spelling, grammar, and usage errors. Keep in mind that reviewers have many submissions to read and having a proposal that reads clearly and gets to the point, being concise but not terse is an advantage. Organization is key to developing a clear proposal. Successful proposals starting with a brief introductory paragraph introducing your topic and key issues will get the interest of the reviewer. The remainder of the abstract provides the description of what you will be presenting, how you will be presenting it, and how your topic is significant to the field and based on sound theory.

Section 3: Submitting On-Line

ABPS proposals are submitted online through Oxford Abstracts. The steps for submitting follow.

Register

- If this is your first time submitting a proposal for an APBS Conference, you will need to register in the system.
- Create a username, a password, and provide the requested demographic information.
- This username and password will be your log-in information. You can log-in to submit proposals or to check and revise the proposals you have submitted for the current conference until the Call for Papers close date – September 8, 2023 (midnight US Eastern Time).

Submit a proposal (note: If you prepared your proposal in a Word document, you can copy and paste from your proposal into the on-line application)

- Select the format of your presentation. Within this section, you will indicate the format you are most interested in, but you will be able to indicate other formats that are acceptable to you. Keep in mind, indicating other formats may increase the chance that your proposal will be accepted. *Reminder, if you are submitting for a multi-presentation session, you will submit one proposal for your group.*
- Enter your title (95 characters or less).
- Enter your objectives.
- Enter the 75-word summary that is included in the program if your proposal is accepted.
- Enter your 450-word abstract.
- Enter presenter information (the individual submitting the proposal will be identified as the primary presenter):
 - First and last name
 - Email
 - Enter affiliation (Institution (university, school district, agency, etc.) name, City, State, Country).
 - Repeat this process for each co-presenter. Remember, you can be the sole presenter.
- The following items will be used to identify *keywords* for your session:
 - Select the primary strand of your proposal (Early Childhood, Integration and Alignment, Individual Students and Tier 3, Classroom, Tier 2, School-Wide Systems (Tier 1), Equity, Home and Community, IDD, Families and Parent Supports, Mental Health).
 - Select the Skill Level (Beginning Level, Intermediate Level, Advanced Level). Note: If you are planning to offer BCBA or NASP credits, your sessions must include Intermediate or Advanced level content).

- Select the Setting or Settings most relevant to your topic (Home, School, Community, Organization/Agency)
- Area of Focus (one or more) for which your presentation is relevant (Lifestyle Change/Quality of Life, Systems Change, Assessment and Intervention, Data-based Decision Making, Instruction, Collaboration)
- Indicate whether or not you provide permission for APBS to record your presentation for posting on the conference platform. **If your session is selected to be recorded and you are offering NASP credits, you will need to provide 8 multiple-choice post-test questions, per hour of content, prior to the beginning of the conference (by February 19, 2024)*
- Indicate if you are a current member of APBS and any APBS network(s) you might be affiliated with.
- Confirm that you are aware that should your proposal be accepted, all presenters must register for and attend the conference at their own cost.
- Indicate if your lead presenter is an Undergraduate or Graduate student.
- Indicate if you have a personal financial interest in this topic and/or any product, service, or company related to your presentation.
- Determine if you want your proposal to be considered for Type II BCBA CEUs and/or NASP CPDs.
 - If you answer 'no', your proposal submission is complete, and you will select the Submit button.
 - If you selected 'yes' for Type II BCBA CEUs you will need to answer the following questions that allow the CEU Coordinator to determine whether your proposal and your credentials meet the criteria for offering the CEUs.
 - Verify that the primary presenter is a BCBA in good standing.
 - Upload a Vita for the primary presenter.
 - Provide the primary presenter's BCBA number.
 - Indicate the skill(s) on the BCBA Task List for which your proposal aligns. Note: the objectives listed within the submission must align with the BCBA Task List item(s) you select.
 - If you selected 'yes' for NASP CPDs you will need to answer the following questions that allow the CEU Coordinator to determine whether your proposal and your credentials meet the criteria for offering the CEUs.
 - Upload a Vita for the primary presenter.
 - Identify the Domain of Practice that your session addresses. Note, the objectives listed within the submission must align with the NASP Domain(s) of Practice you select.
 - Verify that the primary presenter has training and/or experience qualifying them as an expert in the subject matter being covered. If you answer "no" to this question, your proposal cannot be considered for NASP CDPs.
 - Identify your agreement to comply with the NASP Principles of Professional Ethics.

- Identify your agreement that, if your session is selected to be recorded, that you will submit 8 multiple-choice post-test questions, per hour of content, prior to the beginning of the conference (by February 17, 2024).
- Upon completing the submission, you will receive an email confirming that your proposal was submitted and be provided with a proposal ID number. If you wish to edit your submission, you will use your username and password to enter Oxford Abstracts and select the proposal number that you wish to edit. You have until midnight (US Eastern Time) on September 9, 2023, to edit your proposal if you wish.

Good luck! We hope to see you at the 21st International Conference on Positive Behavior Support in Chicago, Illinois!