

Preparing and Presenting An Abstract for a Conference

Graduate Student Success Week 2019

Haley Vecchiarelli, MSc, PhD Candidate in Neuroscience (she/her)

I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta and to acknowledge that Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

Rising Leaders Forum

Thursday, May 9, TFDL Gallery Hall
refreshments at 2, panel from 2:30-3:50

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The panelists are:

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Dr. Jorg Denzinger Associate Professor, Dept. of Computer Science

Dr. Rebecca Haines-Saah Assistant Professor, Cumming School of Medicine

Jeremy Klaszus Founder and Editor of *The Sprawl*

Dr. Jennifer Leason Assistant Professor, Dept. of Anthropology and Archaeology

Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Classify appropriate academic conferences
- Identify ways to finance their conference travel
- Create abstracts and presentations that are accessible, relevant and interesting

Finding An Appropriate Conference

Finding An Appropriate Conference

- Ask!
 - Your supervisor, colleagues, twitter/social media
- Adverts
 - In scholarly journals, publications

Too Good to Be True?



Pain-Rheumatic2019 conference <info@bio-congress.com>

to me ▾

Tue, May 7, 8:21 AM (1 day ago)



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DEAR COLLEAGUES

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to attend [The International Congress on Controversies in Chronic Pain in Systemic Rheumatic Diseases \(Pain-Rheumatic2019\)](#) which will take place **25-26 September 2019 in Amsterdam**, The Netherlands.

Pain, a complex phenomenon influenced by a series of genetic, biological, psychological and social factors, is a major component of many systemic rheumatic diseases and the result of physiological interactions between central and peripheral nervous system signalling. The many different aspects of pain mean that rheumatologists and other clinicians need to have enough expertise to diagnose the

Too Good to Be True?

Register Now and Save! 2nd Int'l Congress on Controversies on Cannabis-Based Medicines  Spam  



Med-Cannabis2019 Congress | Barcelona <info@bioevents.info>
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English 

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Too Good to Be True?



25-26 June 2018 | Vienna, Austria

The International Annual Congress on **Controversies on Cannabis-Based Medicines**

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CONGRESS PROGRAM

Monday, 25 June

08:00-17:20	Registration
08:50-09:00	Welcome and Opening of the Congress Congress Chairs: Silviu Brill, <i>Israel</i> Winfried Häuser, <i>Germany</i>
09:00-10:30	Session 1: Basic Science: Cannabis – A Treasure Chest?

Too Good to Be True?

Dubious conferences put the ‘pose’ in ‘symposium’

By **Adam Ruben** | Nov. 23, 2016 , 10:00 AM

It was a proud moment for me as a scientist. A few years ago, on a random Tuesday morning, I opened my laptop and found an email inviting me to speak at an international scientific conference in Dalian, China.

“Wow!” I thought. “Someone has heard about my work! I’ve never been to China! This will be a life-changing, career-benefiting experience!”

I was so excited that I showed my colleague at the next desk. “Look!” I said. “I’ve been invited to speak in China!”

Without saying anything, she quickly searched her own email. The result was a whole “Deleted Files” folder full of invitations for her to speak at international conferences.

“These are like junk mail,” she explained. “I get these every day. I think a lot of scientists do.”

I didn’t understand. Of course I know about junk email—nearly everyone does, except maybe my mother, who forwards me anything with the subject line “This simple step could save your life!” But this was something new and confusing, at least to me. Junk conferences? How would that even work? Were these scams intent on pocketing registration fees, or did they lead to actual conferences one could attend?

Science, 2016

Too Good to Be True?

- Effusive greetings
- Excessive flattery
- Be particularly careful if the field is written as “[insert field here]”
- Cut and paste reference to something you’ve been published in
- Overselling importance of the conference
- Boastful list of scientists who’ve committed financially and emotionally to supporting the meeting
- Itemization of what you as an attendee will receive
- Urgency in seeking your response

From Adam Rubin, Science, 2016

What to Look For In a Conference?

- Big vs. small?
- All academics or industry representation?
- Annual meeting vs. biannual vs. every 4 years
- Posters vs. talks vs. mixture
- Predominantly talks by established “big names” or highlights junior faculty and/or trainees
- Location (local, national, international)
- Networking opportunities
- Professional development opportunities
- Child and dependent care facilities
- Safety (harassment policy w/ consequences; safe spaces)
- Accessibility

When to Go to a Conference?

- You have to be strategic! Especially if limited funding opportunities
- Might be good to go early on, get an idea of what the field is like, without pressure of presenting
- Might be good to go midway through a project, get feedback, meet with potential reviewers, before publication
- Maybe better to go towards the end, looking for a PhD position, postdoc position, faculty job, industry job

Find a Conference!

Take 5ish minutes and do the following:

1. Identify 3 conferences in your field (that you would want to go to!)
 2. For each conference, describe the benefits of attending
 3. For each conference, list one downside of attending (from an academic or PD perspective)
 4. Find one fake conference in your field
-

Share Your Conference!

Take 2-3 minutes per person and
do the following:

1. Share the conferences you've identified with a partner and their benefits and downsides
 2. Together pick the "best" conference for you right now
 3. Together pick the "best" conference for you during your degree (as in if you could only attend one)
-

**Let's Get This
Conference Paid
For!**

Conference/Professional Society Resources

- Register early with student rate and member rate
- Register early to be eligible for travel awards (always apply to every single one)
 - Conference travel awards are often due before the final submission deadline, so it is important to be on top of these
- Sometimes, panel speakers will get their registration waved, have your supervisor or you put in a panel (plus great exposure!)
- Offer to volunteer in exchange for free registration
- Ask for a fee waiver or reduced registration
- Sometimes associated organizations will want people to tweet or blog about the conference
 - If you can do this, only in exchange for registration/payment

Local Resources

- Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS)
 - Graduate Award Database lists all awards
 - Likely to get one FGS travel award per degree
 - Sometimes additional awards in specific subject areas
- Graduate Students Association (GSA)
 - Professional Development Grant
 - Up to \$750, once per academic year
- Student Activities Fund (SU)
 - Up to \$500, once a year (from date of conference)
- Department, Faculty, Institute
 - Always ask!

Budgeting

- Book registration and hotels as early as possible
- Flights based on window (different for different locations) or seat sale
 - UCalgary travel agent might be able to get you a deal
 - Especially if traveling in a large group
- Eat meals at the conference, buy breakfast at a grocery store, car share/public transit (as much as you feel safe to)
- Networking, particularly through meals/coffee, is an important part of the conference, so very important to include \$ for this in your budget

Let's Get You Funded!

Take 10 minutes to do the following:

- For the conference you chose in the previous exercise (either the best one right now or for your degree), develop a budget and a plan for applying for funding

Example

- Attending the International Cannabinoid Research Society Meeting, June 30-July 4, Bethesda, Maryland
- Budget (use the UCalgary Travel Handbook):
 - 600 USD registration
 - 800 CDN flights + travel
 - 800 USD hotel (find a roommate to split costs with!)
 - 75 CDN a day for food * 6 days (including travel days) = 450 CDN food
 - Total: \$2500
- Apply for:
 - ICRS Travel Award by Jan 15 (abstract needs to go to authors by January 8) - \$550 off registration
 - Student Activities Fund by May 10!! - \$500
 - GSA PDG in the Fall Term (retroactive) - \$750
 - Total Remaining: \$600
 - Ask supervisor, find a third roommate, FGS funding, ask program, ask HBI

**Getting People to
Your Talk/Poster!**

Writing a Good Abstract/Paper

Hook your audience

- a. Title is KEY
 - i. A lot of conference goers flip through titles/keywords before narrowing down based on abstract content
- b. Keywords are important
 - i. Conferences have apps or online program tools searchable by keywords
 - ii. Make them relevant!
- c. Don't just jump into the data/specifics
 - i. I like an hourglass method, general, big picture before details, followed by summary and significance
 - ii. Starting detailed and expanding out also works
- d. Have someone proofread it
 - i. Are you getting across what you want to?

Abstract Review

With your prepared abstracts (if you have them), in the next 5 minutes

Share with a partner, ask them to read your abstract and note the 1-3 salient points they get from it. Have them share it with you. Is that what you wanted readers to come away with?

Abstract Review

With your prepared abstracts (if you have them), in the next 10 minutes

Switch partners, do a deep reading of your partner's abstract. Is it coherent? Does it flow? Does the author convey with their data/research what they assert in their introduction or conclusions? Provide at least two strengths and two areas of improvement for the abstract.

Presenting Your Work

Demonstration: Successful Academic Posters

12:30 – 1 p.m.

Conference season is upon us! Academic posters are effective research communication and networking tools common to conferences. This session will cover the basics of creating and presenting them.

Learning outcomes:

After attending this session, participants will:

- Be familiar with the content and layout of academic posters
- Access templates and materials for creating academic posters

Presenter information

Jennifer Lee, MIST, Liaison Librarian, Libraries and Cultural Resources

Intended audience

Core (Sessions intended for any graduate student new to graduate school or new to the content area)

Suggestions

- Try to keep one point per slide
- Not a lot of text (although this is variable, and I find it less accessible, personally)
- Space is your friend (don't squish things)
- Double check accessibility (particularly for those with colour-blindness)
- Practice! But don't memorize

Questions?

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Quick Abstract Review