



Participation in Scientific Meetings or Conferences

Scientific meetings, workshops, or conferences come in various sizes and scopes and occur all over the world, throughout the year. These meetings are special events designed to bring together many stakeholders in a particular research field in a single place to communicate advances and recent developments in the field of interest. These conferences may be attended by students, faculty, clinical professionals, industry employers, government officials, or vendors from industry. The level of expertise is often diverse at such meetings and they present a unique opportunity for the presentation of research through poster sessions, oral presentations, or design competitions.

Goals for Attendees of Scientific Meetings:

1. Observe and learn the current state-of-art in your respective field of research
2. Meet potential collaborators with synergistic expertise to pursue further research goals
3. Present/disseminate scientific research
4. For students: Meet potential employers or future research advisors
5. For Faculty: Meet potential student researchers

Scientific conferences can be a tremendous opportunity for professional development and growth as a researcher. Many of these meetings can be large in number of attendees and potential sessions.

Below are several tips for making the most out of these opportunities.

1. Establish a major objective for attending the meeting (i.e. recruiting, learning about research, etc.) While several objectives may be important, have a primary objective may help to organize the time spent at each part of the conference.
 2. Develop a plan, using the program guide, for people with whom you would like to meet and/or sessions you would like to attend. This can be done during the first day at the conference, or before arriving.
 3. Create a short summary of each item on your personalized agenda. If you attend a session, write some short notes about what you learned. If you meet with a colleague, write down some notes about the happenings of the meeting and steps moving forward.
 4. When exchanging business cards, make a note on the front or back of the business card that will remind you of the topic of conversation and how you need to follow up with this person.
 5. When attending sessions or viewing posters from other researchers, make a list of questions to ask in follow up communication. Because of the large volume of information and attendees, it may be difficult to ask all of your questions in the moment. Following up with the presenter is a good way to build collaborations and have more in-depth conversation.
1. In addition to program guides, many scientific meetings publish a record of the presentations given during the meeting in a document called a Conference Proceeding. The Conference Proceeding is published by an editorial board like a scientific journal, and in many cases, the process of peer review (see Peer Review materials in the Scientific Community Module) is similar for acceptance of a conference abstract. Proceedings have a wide range of formats, including short abstracts, one-page abstracts, short articles (< 4 pages), or full articles. These proceedings serve the important purpose of disseminating the research at the conference to those that were not able to attend physically.

Potential Assignments



Research Experience and Mentoring

Scientific Community Handout 2: Scientific Meetings or Conferences

1. Find an upcoming conference online and see what it would take to participate. You can use an online search tool or search the university library website for databases concerning conference proceedings.