Guidance notes for Invited session organisers

These notes are intended to assist you in completing the session proposal form and provide guidance on the role of the session organiser.

Titles and Formats of sessions

Invited sessions will be a standard 80 minutes long but can take any format – two or three speakers with or without discussant, panel discussion, workshop, consultation session, etc. The organisers welcome innovation in the format of sessions.

Please note workshops may be best placed in the professional development stream (which have a mixture of 60 and 80 minute sessions) and consultations may be better scheduled in lunch breaks.

With any highly technical topics we would expect the session to include either an introductory talk or a discussant.

While the titles of sessions should be as descriptive as possible, short and snappy titles are to be preferred (the same applies for individual talk titles) to assist with marketing.

Which topic stream does your session fit within?

The 2018 Conference will be organised into streamed topics:

- Applications of Statistics
- Communicating & Teaching Statistics
- Data Science
- Environmental & Spatial Statistics
- Industry & Finance
- Medical
- Methods & Theory
- Official & Public Policy
- Social Statistics
- Professional Development

Each stream is curated by two members of the RSS Conference Board (see annex for list and contact details) who you should liaise with over the content and who will be able to advise on the suitability of your topic for the selected stream (and suggest an alternative if appropriate).

Please note that the support of a conference board member for your proposal does not automatically mean the full board will accept it for inclusion in the conference programme.
Speakers and their availability

Please let us know if there are known restrictions on your speakers’ attendances at the conference. Typically, the first invited sessions take place from late morning on the Tuesday (4th) and the final invited sessions will be on the Thursday afternoon (6th).

At this initial stage, all topic streams are scheduled to run throughout the conference, however the length may be revised in light of the number of proposals which are accepted.

Sessions will be allocated to relevant slots by the end of December and it may be difficult to reallocate sessions after this.

Please note that we encourage diversity in the composition of our invited sessions. Please consider the balance of you suggested speakers in terms of gender, career stage etc.

Registration discounts and expenses

The normal situation is that we do not offer discounts/expenses to invited speakers and they are responsible for payment of conference fees and their own expenses in the same way as other delegates. This enables us to organise a wide range of invited sessions/workshops across the conference themes.

However, we do not wish monetary considerations to be a barrier to invited speakers presenting at the conference. If this is an issue, speakers are invited to make a case for one of the following:

- one-day discount on the conference fee
- one night’s accommodation reimbursed up to a maximum of £120 per night
- reasonable standard/economy class travel expenses

Requests for a discount/expenses of this nature for a speaker should be made when the invited session/workshop is being proposed. Budgetary planning means that requests made at a later stage in the planning process may not be possible to accommodate.

Once a session proposal has been accepted the RSS Conference office will contact the speaker concerned to obtain details of the case being made.

Priority for expenses and discounts will be given to speakers coming from professions outside of statistics.

In exceptional cases we will consider making more than one type of expense available or can agree an expenses package for a session.

Final decisions on the cases presented will be made by the Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of the Conference Board.

Session organisers requesting additional speakers’ expenses are likely to be looked on more favourably if they have successfully generated new sponsorship for the conference, whether through direct sponsorship of the session they are organising or by encouraging a new exhibitor or advertiser to participate.

Please note that there are no expenses or fee discounts available under any circumstances from the conference budget for session chairs or session organisers.
**Session chairs**

It is not compulsory to name your session chair at this stage but if you have someone who has agreed to perform this role please indicate this. The last date for appointing a chair is **3 July 2018**. The session organisers must appoint a chair who is registered or will be registering to attend the conference – if you do not name a chair the conference organisers will assume you are chairing the session.

**Future liaison and communication**

As there are likely to be well over 40 invited sessions at the conference, you will be asked to assist the conference organisers by ensuring/ reminding your speakers to:

- Submit their abstracts
- Register for the conference

The conference office will inform the session organiser about the scheduling of the session and details of the submission of the final presentation. You will find details of the various deadlines at the end of this document – these deadlines must be adhered to. In particular if a speaker misses the deadline for abstract submission their talk title may be omitted from the final programme and the abstract will not appear in the booklet.

If you are not the chair of the session, the conference office will also liaise with the chair nearer the time of the conference.

Please provide email addresses for all speakers and the agreed chair.

Session organisers will be responsible for ensuring that their speakers are given a clear briefing on the format and timings of the session.

Session organisers are also responsible for ensuring that the conference office is kept up-to-date with any changes to speakers and talk titles.

**Marketing**

The RSS centrally will be marketing the conference through various media, however this will generally be at a broad level rather than focussing on specific sessions. You (and your speakers) are therefore encouraged to promote your session – if doing so via twitter please tag @RSSAnnualConf and use #RSS2018Conf.

The RSS is always looking for new ways to reach a broad audience for the conference so if there are particular mailing lists etc you would recommend for either promoting the conference as a whole or specific streams/topics please let us know via the relevant box on the submission form.
Key Deadlines

24 November – initial deadline for session proposals
By 8 January – confirmation of the session’s provisional scheduling within the programme
Before 31 January – initial conference programme published
16 April – 16 July – period for submission of invited talk abstracts
5 June – first registration deadline (20% discount)
3 July - last date for appointing session chairs
31 July – second registration deadline (10% discount)
## Annex

### Conference Board contacts (by stream)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stream</th>
<th>Board contact 1</th>
<th>Board contact 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications of Statistics</td>
<td>Bex Newell\n[<a href="mailto:bex.newell@beis.gov.uk">bex.newell@beis.gov.uk</a>]</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating Statistics</td>
<td>Sara Hilditch\<a href="mailto:ns.hilditch@sheffield.ac.uk">ns.hilditch@sheffield.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>Maria Sudell\<a href="mailto:nm.e.sudell@liverpool.ac.uk">nm.e.sudell@liverpool.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Science</td>
<td>Mark Briers\<a href="mailto:nmark.briers@gmail.com">nmark.briers@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Linsay Gray\<a href="mailto:nLinsay.Gray@glasgow.ac.uk">nLinsay.Gray@glasgow.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental/Spatial Statistics</td>
<td>Michelle Stanton\<a href="mailto:nmichelle.stanton@lstmed.ac.uk">nmichelle.stanton@lstmed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry &amp; Finance</td>
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<td>Neil Spencer\<a href="mailto:nN.H.Spencer@herts.ac.uk">nN.H.Spencer@herts.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
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<td>Rhian Daniel\<a href="mailto:nDanielR8@cardiff.ac.uk">nDanielR8@cardiff.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods &amp; Theory</td>
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<td>Axel Gandy\<a href="mailto:na.gandy@imperial.ac.uk">na.gandy@imperial.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Official Statistics &amp; Public Policy</td>
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<td>Scott Heald\<a href="mailto:nscott.heald@nhs.net">nscott.heald@nhs.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Statistics</td>
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<td>Neil Spencer\<a href="mailto:nN.H.Spencer@herts.ac.uk">nN.H.Spencer@herts.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Professional Development</td>
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<td>Maria Sudell\<a href="mailto:me.sudell@liverpool.ac.uk">me.sudell@liverpool.ac.uk</a></td>
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