Guidelines for Moderating Panels at AIAA Events

Provided by the AIAA Technical Activities Division

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Introduction and Thank You

- Thank you for volunteering to moderate a panel at an AIAA event!

- These slides provide a brief set of guidelines and suggestions for managing your panel and making the most of the discussion for the panelists and audience.

- Remember, a panel should be an interactive discussion among the panelists <u>and</u> audience! It should be a *discussion*, not a monologue.

General Guidelines for Successful Panels

- For a 2-hour panel, allow one moderator and 3-5 panelists max (use this as a guide for panel sessions of varying lengths).

- Allow each panelist 2-3 minutes for intro remarks.

- Moderator should ensure that each panelist is engaged and has the opportunity to answer questions.

- Moderator should engage the audience by taking questions.

- Moderator should have questions prepared in advance and ask questions throughout the panel (encouraging dialogue).

- The conference chair, session chair, or someone from the organizing committee (i.e., track chair) will provide the moderator with information such as day/time/location of the panel, theme of the event, scope/topic of the panel, and panelist names.

- Reach out to panelists prior to the event (via email or telecom) to engage them, provide any logistical information, and inform them of how you plan to run the panel onsite i.e., length of time for each speaker's opening remarks, format of Q&A session. At this time you should also request their bios to allow for a smooth introduction.

- Encourage panelists to keep their intro remarks short so as to allow the most time for dialogue between the panelists and Q&A from the audience.
  - Panelist intro remarks should take no more than 2-3 minutes each.

- If PowerPoint presentations will be used, encourage the panelists to keep them brief and specific to the topic. If possible, collect the PowerPoint presentations early to review slides prior to the event to ensure panelists are addressing the topic and to minimize duplication among the panelists' presentations.

- Moderators and panelists are encouraged to get together the week prior via telecon to finalize the panel.

During the Panel

- Your introductory remarks should set the stage for the panel. Be sure to tie into the overall theme of the event!

- Introduce all of the panelists, rather than before each one speaks.

- Have questions prepared, and you may start asking questions between speakers, rather than waiting until all speakers have finished their introductory remarks.

- You may pose a question to the entire panel, or just a few of the speakers, and ask where there is overlap, common thinking, different views, ability to share resources, etc.

- The moderator will also facilitate questions from the audience.

At the End of the Panel

- Wrap up the panel by summarizing the discussion in the context of the event theme and panel topic.

- Be sure to thank the panelists, audience, and organizers.

- Provide a written summary of the panel to the staff AIAA Project Manager to use in the post-event report that includes information such as estimated number of audience participants, brief summary of the discussion, and any conclusions/next steps recommended.

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