



The IAS 2013 Abstract Mentor Programme

Terms of Reference for Abstract Mentors

1. Introduction

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is an independent association of HIV professionals who are striving to build a global movement that works together to end the HIV epidemic through scientific evidence-based research and showcase best practices at every level of the HIV response.

The IAS is custodian of the International AIDS Conference and the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention. The conferences are unique platforms that provide opportunities to identify gaps, share experience, and increase knowledge and expertise of professionals working in HIV/ AIDS.

The actions of the IAS are guided by the strategic plan that is defined by its members every four years. The current strategic plan, covering 2010-2014, emphasizes the need to support professional development of the HIV workforce through the conferences.

The Abstract Mentor Programme is one of the tools used to accomplish this goal. This programme is targeted at less experienced and early-career abstract submitters who plan to submit an abstract to the IAS conferences.

2. Abstract Mentor Programme

Introduced at the IAS 2007 conference, the objective of the programme is to help less experienced submitters improve the quality of their abstract writing. AMP mentors answer questions on practical issues, such as formal requirements on abstract writing and on the quality of the data collected.

The programme aims to provide submitters with a better opportunity of having their abstracts accepted as either oral or abstract presentations. Over the years, the programme has been proven to increase motivation and acceptances of abstracts from developing countries and early-career researchers.

3. The Mentors

The programme is entirely dependent on volunteer experienced researchers. Conference attendance is not a pre-requisite to being a mentor. All mentors receive a certificate of participation.

▪ Who are IAS 2013 abstract mentors?

The Abstract Mentor Programme is composed of IAS Governing Council members, IAS members, past track-chairs of the IAS or the International AIDS Conference and other HIV professionals with proven experience of abstract writing.

▪ Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible to be a mentor, individuals must fulfill the following two criteria:

1. Have had at least two abstracts accepted at international scientific conferences
2. Co-authored at least one manuscript accepted by a peer-reviewed scientific journal

4. Responsibilities

Mentors provide input to abstracts submitted to the Abstract Mentor Programme and may respond to questions on practical issues, such as clarity of writing and formal requirements of the abstract, as well as any methodological or scientific questions that may arise from the abstract content. The feedback will guide the abstract submitters through edits and improvements to the abstract before they submit it to the conference for review. Mentors may not write, translate or make the changes to the draft abstract on behalf of the abstract submitter.

Matches between mentors and abstracts are primarily selected by track. However, the IAS aims, wherever possible, to take specific expertise into account in order to maximize the impact of the programme.

4. Process

- Abstract submitters are invited to send their draft abstract to a mentor before submitting it to the conference.
- Draft abstracts are received through the online submission system.
- The IAS Secretariat screens the abstracts and forwards them to mentors with expertise in the relevant track.
- Mentors receive an email with a link that will direct them to a webpage where they can access the draft abstract and provide their feedback.
- Mentors are asked to commit to supporting 1-4 abstracts and to sending their feedback within 5 working days of receiving the abstract.
- If mentors do not provide feedback within 5 working days, the abstract will be passed on to another mentor for review.
- The IAS Secretariat is responsible for ensuring that the mentor's feedback is forwarded to the submitter.

5. Timeline

The Abstract Mentor Programme opens on the **22 November 2012** and closes on **11 January 2012**. The mentoring programme will conclude 13 days before the deadline for abstract submissions.

6. Conflicts of Interest

In order to ensure impartiality of the programme, the identity of the abstract submitter and the mentor will be anonymous.

Mentors should notify the IAS of any competing interests they may have in relation to the research of a draft abstract they receive that may directly or indirectly influence their impartiality. These include financial or non-financial conflicts of interests.

It is not possible for IAS 2013 abstract reviewers to be AMP mentors.

Please note that participation in the mentoring programme will not prevent mentors from submitting their own abstracts.