

SMS Special Conference Tel Aviv: Interactive Session Facilitator Information

For: Facilitators for SC Tel Aviv Interactive Sessions (Common Ground)

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a facilitator of an Interactive Session at the Special SMS Conference in Tel-Aviv. The purpose of this document is to provide you with guidelines about your responsibilities.

The objective of the interactive session is to benefit from the advantages of both traditional poster and common ground sessions. The interactive session is designed to provide participants the opportunity to both visually present their research, using a poster, and the time and place to discuss it with colleagues.

When you login to our conference website, you will be able to see the session you will facilitate listed under the Tel Aviv **'mySessions'** tab, including the titles, abstracts, and authors of the papers assigned to this session.

We are pleased to provide you with a way to communicate beforehand with the presenting authors in your session. We added a **notes section** to each session's page on our conference website and invite you to post notes or comments on this page. It is intended to foster communication before the conference and make the session more productive for everyone involved. These comments will only be visible to authors and the facilitator.

The accepted proposals were grouped by topic. Each group of presenters has been reserved a designated room and a specific time in the program where the posters will be displayed. Posters presentations should include a clear research question, state the study's main premise, and explain its setting and results. At the designated time, presenters will stand by their posters and have 5-7 minutes each to present their work. A 5-minute presentation is appropriate when 7 proposals were assigned to the session whereas a 7-minute presentation is appropriate when 5 proposals were assigned. In the remaining time, after all presentations have been concluded, poster presenters will interact with the audience informally to discuss their research.

Your duties as a facilitator are as follows:

1. **Be prepared** - Get in touch with the presenters in your session a couple of weeks before the conference using the notes section explained above. Please introduce yourself, and make sure all presenters are working on their posters and presentations. Please ask presenters for any information that will make the session better, and develop an understanding of the topic and prepare some questions of your own.

2. **Get the designated area ready** – Please be at the designated area a few minutes before the starting time, and make sure all posters are present.
3. **Manage the process and time** – Please start the session at the time indicated in the conference’s program for the interactive session by welcoming everyone and reminding participants of the goals and objectives of the presentations and the dialogue. At the designated time, set the order for the presentations, and introduce the presenters and their topics. After all formal presentations are concluded, facilitate the discussion with the audience. Note that papers are discussed simultaneously. Interested members of the audience directly approach the presenters.
4. **Use open ended questions** – If at all possible, please try to ask presenters open-ended questions such as “what is your opinion about”, or “what are the theoretical implications of your findings?” rather than questions that can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”.
5. **Rephrase questions** – If questions are unclear or presenters do not respond, try asking the question a different way.
6. **Ask for examples and support for conclusions** – Probing deeper gets the discussion going.
7. **Summarize** - Provide a summary or conclusions as appropriate, at transition points during discussion and at the end.
8. **Remember** - the open, ongoing discussion is not limited in time, so as long as you are not late for the next session – enjoy the dialogue!
9. **Remember** - this is *their* show, not yours!
10. **Have fun!!!**

Thank you again for serving as a facilitator. We sincerely appreciate your contribution to the success of the conference!

Gary, Niron, Dovev, and Ithai
Conference Program Chairs