DEAR INTERACTIVE SESSION CHAIR:

Thank you very much for agreeing to serve as an **interactive session chair** at the upcoming AIB meeting. We are grateful that you are joining the community of volunteers who are absolutely critical for the conference success. The purpose of this message is to offer suggestions on how to chair your session, drawing upon past collective experience.

Session chairs are particularly important for the interactive sessions where papers are presented and discussed in a roundtable format. You have to plan and run the session in a way that would ensure a meaningful conversation across the individual presenters. We suggest the session starts with a brief introduction of the papers included. Most interactive sessions have eight papers, so the time for introducing each individual paper should be around 5 minutes. In case your session has fewer papers, you may allow more than 5 minutes per paper. Presenters should briefly talk about the key ideas and main contributions of their paper. **No formal PowerPoint or overhead presentation will be allowed**, however many presenters in interactive sessions will bring handouts with PowerPoint slides. The objective is to have genuinely interactive discussions among all participants. This is your responsibility and it is up to you to decide how to achieve this objective. Ideally, the brief author presentations should be structured as a conversation (i.e. short interventions and highly interactive), not as a sequence of monologues. This is not an easy task and I am particularly grateful to all of you who have agreed to be interactive session chairs.

Below are some **key recommendations**:

1. GET ACQUAINTED AHEAD OF TIME WITH THE PEOPLE IN YOUR SESSION

As session chair, you are expected to contact everyone in your session well in advance – please do this no later than end of May. You can see the participants in your session on the conference website: http://aib.msu.edu/events/2019/Program.asp . We suggest you download the information for your session (you can COPY and PASTE the text into MS WORD) for later reference. Starting May 15th, you will be able to download the manuscripts for your session by using the manuscripts' ID numbers which are written in parentheses in the detailed program. Alternatively, you can contact the authors and ask that up-to-date copies of the manuscripts be emailed to you.

Please check the time of your session and make sure you have it penciled in your agenda.

2. ENCOURAGE THE CIRCULATION OF THE PAPERS IN YOUR SESSION AHEAD OF TIME

Please encourage everyone in your session to read all papers before the conference, at the very latest, on the flight to the conference. This way, each participant can join the discussion in an informed way for a more cohesive and stimulating session.

We are sending out separate guidelines to the authors for all the sessions, but feel free to email them any additional or specific instructions, as the sessions do differ in length, numbers of participants, purpose and content.

3. ORDER OF PRESENTERS

Unless there is a problem, please keep to the order of papers, as outlined in the official Final Program.   Although we would prefer that people don't "hop" from one session to another, to listen to a particular paper based on the order shown in the program, in reality this will happen. However, we are asking that each presenter remains in the session in which they're scheduled throughout that session, in courtesy to the other speakers, and again to ensure a more coherent session.

4. MANAGE THE SESSION TIME

The physical layout of the room will be a roundtable in the center of the room with approximately 10 chairs for presenters and session chair that allow for direct interaction and then an outer ring of chairs for other participants that are more than welcome to join the discussion. There will be no computer projectors in the room. The handouts will be the main visual aids used during the presentations.

All sessions are one hour and fifteen minutes (75 minutes) long. As I have mentioned already, for interactive sessions I propose that you allow presenters only 5 minutes to briefly outline the key contribution of their paper. Also, it is important in these interactive sessions that <u>the discussion of each paper is held immediately after each presentation, or at the very least, after a couple highly-related presentations</u>. That way we can ensure that we are fair to each author in terms of the time devoted to their paper. The total amount of time for each paper in aggregate (presentation and comments) should be no more than about 9 minutes where there are 8 papers. It would be 10-11 minutes with 7 papers (75 minutes / 7 presentations), and so on. Since time will be so tight, you should strictly enforce the 5 minute limit on presentations, as well as discourage presenters from responding during the session itself to the comments they receive. Such comments are typically highly defensive, they add little to the discussion, and they merely reduce the time available for further feedback to the author, which is the whole purpose of these sessions. If they wish to continue the discussion they can do so informally later after the close of the session, and during the breaks.

Therefore, please do <u>enforce the time limits we have proposed.</u> Do not let a speaker run on and take time away from the speakers that follow, or from the feedback that they themselves will receive. Do not put your speakers in the untenable situation in which the time for the session is up and others need the room, but your session hasn't ended yet (you will be asked to leave the room at that point!) – watch the clock to see that everyone gets their fair share of the time, and the session can be adjourned on time.

Some interactive groups are naturally very interactive, and as a session chair you should then focus on making sure that each paper receives comments from the other presenters and/or from the audience, but doesn't exceed its allotted time. However, other groups are slower to get going, and in such cases I would ask you to be prepared to step in and to ask a question to initiate the discussion on that paper. <u>The aim is to allow all interested parties to make a comment, and for no individual, whether session chair, presenter or audience member, to dominate the discussion.</u>

5. HOW TO START A SESSION

As chair, it is up to you to start the session. The first thing is to start on time. This is often hard to do, especially first thing in the morning when people can straggle in, but it is important to start on time, even if others join the session late. The second thing is to simply introduce the topic and the speakers. Your whole introduction should take no more than 2 minutes. Try to introduce from the very beginning an informal first-name tone.

6. AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT

In interactive session rooms, there will be no audio video equipment. The authors are not expected to make a formal presentation, and as such they should not expect to find a computer or a projector.

7. OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Meet the participants of your session 10 minutes BEFORE the session starts so that everyone can be introduced, handouts can be distributed, and you have a chance to tell them how you wish to conduct the session. Please try to do this before the session starts, to avoid having to do this in the time of the session itself.

It also helps to give your session members your room number in the hotel or a mobile telephone number where you can be reached should an emergency occur. If that unwelcome emergency does occur please let your session members know as soon as possible, and make other plans. Please be prepared for the unexpected!

8. NO SHOWS

In common with other academic associations, AIB enforces a **"no show" policy**, to maintain the integrity and quality of the conference. This policy requires that at least one author of each manuscript listed in your session must register, attend, and present at the designated session. You can find more about this policy at http://aib.msu.edu/aboutnoshow.asp . Therefore, we would like to ask for your assistance in informing us if a paper was not presented at your session.

At the end of your session, please report any "no-show"s to either the AIB staff at the Registration Desk, or via an email to aib@aib.msu.edu.

I hope you find the above recommendations useful and look forward to seeing you all in Copenhagen!

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