

**American Thoracic Society  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**ASSEMBLY PROGRAM COMMITTEE  
CHAIRS/CHAIRS-ELECT INSTRUCTIONS**

At the September meeting, the International Conference Committee plans and programs the Clinical Topics in Pulmonary Medicine Track, Critical Care Track, Scientific Symposia, Year in Review, Workshops, Sunrise Seminars, Meet the Professor Seminars and Thematic Seminar Series.

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

- ▶ **September 8-9, 2011 (Thursday-Friday):** International Conference Committee Planning Meeting. Planning of track sessions, scientific symposia, clinical workshops, seminars.
- ▶ **October 10, 2011 (Monday):** Deadline for all confirmed sessions (**online Workforms**) due in the ATS Office.
- ▶ **November 2, 2011 (Wednesday):** Deadline for Submission of Abstracts.
- ▶ **December 12, 2011 (Monday):** Preliminary Abstract Session Assignments due
- ▶ **December 15-16, 2011 (Thursday-Friday):** International Conference Committee Meeting. Planning of Abstracts Sessions.
- ▶ **January 6, 2012 (Friday):** Confirmation of Chairs, Featured Speakers and Facilitators for Abstract Sessions due in the ATS Office.

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**SESSION CHAIR(S) NOTIFICATION:**

The ATS Office will notify the session chairs that their sessions have been approved and will provide the following information:

- Date and time of the session
- Length of the session
- Session Organizer Instructions
- Session Speaker Instructions
- Reimbursement Policy and Guidelines

Session Organizers (Chairs) will also be notified that they are responsible for:

1. contacting prospective speakers to invite and discuss their participation (and do an initial, informal COI review)
2. finalizing their session agenda and speakers
3. submitting the online Workform by the October 10 deadline. The session organizer must indicate on the Workform that all session speakers have been confirmed.

As the Assembly Program Committee chair, you should also communicate this information to the session organizers of the sessions sponsored by your Assembly.

**MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI):**

As a provider of CME accredited by the ACCME, the ATS is responsible for the quality and scientific integrity of its CME activities, including compliance with ACCME requirements. Because of the large number of conference sessions and presenters, ATS must look to Program Committees, Session Chairs, and Session Speakers to carry out certain tasks. For 2012 these include:

**Step 1 – Initial Session Planning (Sept. – Oct. 2011)**

When inviting speakers, the Session Organizers must:

- Make an initial determination of potential speaker conflicts of interest (COI). The session organizer should ask if there are current or recent financial relationships with commercial interests that have products or business lines relevant to the session, or are tobacco industry entities.

- The objective of this initial, informal COI review is to identify at an early stage (i.e., before the October 10 Workform deadline) any highly significant conflicts that might warrant changing a speaker or a speaker's role in the session. Session organizers are instructed to follow the *ATS Procedure for Reviewing and Resolving COI in International Conference CME\**.
- Session organizers will be instructed to contact ATS COI Staff if they have any difficulty making this initial determination. ATS COI Staff will contact you as the Program Committee Chair of the sponsoring Assembly in event the session chair and staff are unable to resolve the matter.
- Reminders:
  - Persons with a tobacco industry affiliation in the 12 months preceding the end of the conference cannot serve as organizer, chair/moderator or presenter at the conference.
  - The ATS values the involvement of its members employed by pharmaceutical companies or other relevant commercial entities. The ACCME prohibits the use of employees of commercial interests as presenters in accredited CME activities if the content of CME that the employee controls relates to the business lines and products of its employer. Any sessions accepted by ATS that cannot meet this requirement will not be eligible for AMA PRA Category 1 credit.
  - ATS policy states that it is inappropriate to have industry-employed members who may chair or present in an ATS education session that has received funding from their employer

### **Step 2 – Formal Review and Management of Faculty Disclosures (Nov. 2011 – Jan. 2012)**

- Once ATS has received the names of confirmed speakers (i.e., once all Workforms have been submitted), ATS will email them instructions and deadline for completing or updating the online ATS COI Profile. All program committee members and session chairs will be notified similarly. (ACCME requires disclosure by “CME planners” in addition to presenters. Final review of “planner” disclosures will be by ATS COI staff, and will not require program committee chair involvement unless an unresolved conflict is identified.)
- Session Chairs will also be instructed to use the ATS COI website to (1) review a concise summary of each speaker's disclosure (no “description codes” will be used this year), (2) determine if COIs exist and which of the ATS “review action steps” will appropriately resolve the issue, and (3) use a simple drop-down menu to report the decision.
- Session Chairs will be instructed to contact ATS COI Staff if they have any difficulty with formal COI review and management. ATS COI Staff will contact you as the Program Committee Chair of the sponsoring Assembly in event the session organizer and staff are unable to resolve the matter. (Program Committee Chairs will also be notified in the rare instance where a change of speaker due to a COI issue becomes necessary.)

### **COMPLETION OF WORKFORM:**

The Society has developed an online Session Work Form to be used by the session organizers to report their confirmed program and speakers. To access their work forms, session organizers should use the same email and password they used to submit their proposals. Work forms **must** be completed and submitted to the ATS office online by **Monday, October 10, 2011.**

### **SPEAKER REIMBURSEMENT:**

**ATS Members** are not eligible for the reimbursement of their travel/hotel expenses for the Conference.

**Non-Members:** up to two (2) non-member speakers may be reimbursed per session for Clinical Topics in Pulmonary Medicine sessions, Year in Review sessions, Critical Care Track sessions, and scientific symposia. One (1) non-member speaker may be reimbursed per Workshop.

Speakers from North America will be reimbursed to a maximum of \$1,000 US. Speakers from outside North America will be reimbursed to a maximum of \$2,000 US.

The names of speakers needing reimbursement must be submitted to the ATS office for approval at the time of the work form submission. An Expense Voucher and the Reimbursement Guidelines will be sent to approved speakers. After the Conference the speakers must submit the voucher along with **original** receipts for reimbursement.

### **SUNRISE SEMINARS, MEET THE PROFESSOR SEMINARS & THEMATIC SEMINAR SERIES:**

Once the lists have been approved, the Society will extend invitations to the presenters of these seminars. Speakers participating in these seminars are not eligible for reimbursement.