Dear Authors and Reviewers:

Below is some information you may find helpful. Below you can review the proposal criteria, a description of sessions, and some information about writing quality proposals. We hope you find this information useful.

Proposal Review Criteria

The essence of the Generalists in Medical Education national meeting includes sharing, learning, and interaction among professional medical educators. Interaction and participation are valued in all sessions.

Proposals (blinded as to author and originating institution) will be reviewed by a committee that includes Generalists with a wide range of experiences. Reviewers will be asked to evaluate proposals using the following criteria:

1. **Proposal Quality**: The written proposal is clear, complete, well organized.

2. **Purpose**: The proposal includes clear goals/purpose and describes the target audience.

3. **Importance/Contribution to the Field**: The proposed presentation offers important results, creative or innovative practice or development, or an opportunity to enhance insights on a relevant or timely topic or issue.

4. **Preparation**: The proposal is well-grounded in a theoretical/conceptual framework, prior work, and/or relevant literature.

5. **Presentation**: The proposal describes content, methods/activities, and planned use of time that will engage participants, encourage reflection and critique, and achieve the goals/purpose of the proposed presentation.

6. **Membership Appeal**: The proposal represents work or addresses a topic/issue that is relevant or important to members of the Generalists in Medical Education.
Description of Program Sessions

Problem-Solving Sessions

Problem-Solving Sessions are designed for intensive, small group discussion focused on a particular issue, theme or problem. The presenter introduces the sessions by providing stimulus material and is also responsible for organizing small group interaction on the topic. A variety of small group formats can be used to explore potential solutions or alternatives. At the end of the small group sessions, the groups share their ideas, and a summary statement is developed. Sessions may run for 1, 1.5 or 2 hours.

Skill Acquisition Sessions

Skill Acquisition Sessions are typically two-hour instructional sessions in which presenters teach particular skills or techniques. The session should accomplish specific learning objectives designed to provide Generalists with increased competence in some area of medical education. The session should include opportunities for practice and feedback. When this is not possible, the sessions must include time to discuss how skills can be applied in the participants' work settings.

Descriptive Sessions

Descriptive Sessions provide overviews or results of projects, programs, or strategies. The Program Committee will identify and group common topics among the selected proposals. A moderator will be chosen to coordinate the presentations and help facilitate discussion and exchange between the audience and presenters. Each Descriptive Session will include several 10-15 minute presentations with time allotted for audience discussion and exchange.

Panel Discussions

A Panel Discussion features several individuals presenting their ideas regarding a specific issue or topic and responding to questions. Panel Sessions may run for one to two hours. A moderator will facilitate panel comments and audience participation. Proposals for Panel Discussions should include identification of all panelists, an abstract by each panelist to clarify their perspective on the topic, anticipated total session time, and the method by which audience interaction will be facilitated.
Common Interest Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable discussions are topic-specific discussion groups typically conducted during the breakfast hour. The purpose of Common Interest Roundtable Discussions is to provide an informal mechanism for sharing experiences, ideas, even studies or curricula in progress. Leaders will briefly present the topics for discussion and then facilitate discussion among breakfast table participants. (No audiovisual equipment or flip charts will be provided, but presenters are encouraged to provide handouts.)

Digital Poster Sessions

The purpose of this session type is to have multiple presenters share unique programs, policies, measurement strategies, or projects that focus on medical education and its improvement. Digital posters may target a variety of topics, such as:

- Innovative educational and assessment strategies for students, residents and faculty
- Use of technology to support learning and development
- Inter-professional educational opportunities
- Curriculum and faculty development, testing and evaluation, and student services.

All accepted submissions will be formatted into no more than 3 slides, configured with a 30” width and 24” height. Each presenter will have 3 minutes to share the poster slide(s), which will be projected for a large group setting. After all presentations are introduced, attendees will be invited to learn more about the projects by joining authors for a roundtable discussion, allowing for a more in-depth examination of the topic. Presenters will be expected to provide handouts to participants. Proposals (blinded as to author and originating institution) will be peer-reviewed. All authors must submit accepted poster slides to the program chair prior to the conference.
Characteristics of Exemplary Conference Proposals

The following characteristics were compiled from proposal reviewers and session participants when asked:

- What are the top five characteristics of an exemplary proposal?
- What are significant shortcomings (errors of omissions/commission) of a poor proposal?
- Do you have any suggestions for improving the quality of proposal submissions?

✔ **Clarity and succinctness of writing**
  - clear and concise explanation of topic, goals and format
  - no jargon or “insider speak”
  - clarity of thought shown in the description
  - readable
  - clear proposal structure
  - concisely stated objectives
  - understandable content for someone not familiar with the work
  - evidence of thought given to content and session plan
    - and how the plan will accomplish the objectives
  - communicates precisely what will happen in the allotted time
  - underlying concepts/theories are clearly stated
  - written in the active voice

✔ **Organization and completeness**
  - organized in content and plan
  - purpose, format and content fit the session type
  - time allotment is realistic based
  - author has followed the written instructions
  - all required materials are included
  - typed, clean copy, no errors
  - well-defined audience activities
  - title and abstract are relevant, original, intriguing
  - title matches description and abstract

✔ **Academic merit**
  - methods match intended purpose of study
  - concept and conclusions are theoretically grounded
  - suggestions are offered for further study/activity
  - study objective and plan are provided
  - summary of study is succinct
  - strengths and weaknesses of study are included
  - demonstrates knowledge of current literature
  - generalizable and portable (useful to others)
  - demonstrates authors having “wrestled” with topic
  - data and results are well supported
  - cite appropriate literature
Shortcomings of Poor Proposals

- Absence of characteristics listed above
- Weak knowledge base
  - unacknowledged methodological problems
  - evidence that the author is not current on important issues
  - lack of familiarity with previous writings on the topic
  - no literature citations; unoriginal work
  - lack of or a weak theoretical base
  - limited generalizability - too limited to one school/program
- No plan to engage audience (for most session types)
- Presentation seems too long/too short for session type
- Lack of clarity/thoroughness
- Failure to follow directions for proposal submission
- Evidence of hasty preparation
  - Typographical and/or grammatical errors (no proofreading)
- Inadequate supporting data
  - indications that data has been collected but not analyzed;
  - no preliminary results are necessary
- Presentation seems too long/too short for session type

Suggestions for Improving the Quality of Future Submissions

- tighten requirements for acceptance to counteract the perception that it’s “easy” to get a proposal to the Generalists accepted
- provide advance notice during the conference about next year’s proposal deadlines
- schedule a “brainstorming” session for those who only see each other once a year to work up an idea for the next conference
- include an ideal proposal with the Call for Proposals; include annotations to point out most effective aspects
- include handout, “Characteristics of Exemplary Proposals” with the Call for Proposals
- consider having only 2 types of session categories: descriptive and workshop; define each clearly in the instructions
- revise the “proposal review form”
## Proposal Writing: Getting Started

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing about and choosing a presentation format</td>
<td>Dictate initial ideas - in the car, on an airplane with no distractions etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding the time and place to do it</td>
<td>Think about content and session outline before writing it down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why am I doing this?</td>
<td>Get a first rough draft on paper, then plan time to polish it later</td>
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<td>What have I done that would be interesting and would contribute</td>
<td>Involve a colleague in brainstorming and/or writing the proposal</td>
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<td>to medical education and/or to the work of other Generalists?</td>
<td>Assign tasks to collaborators- agree on deadlines</td>
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<td>Doing a literature search and finding time to review sources</td>
<td>If you were the reviewer of your proposal:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need for perfection</td>
<td>- Is the topic interesting?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowing what to include and what to exclude</td>
<td>- Would you want to go to this session?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Is there enough time to cover the proposed material?</td>
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<td>- Did you complete all sections on the submission forms?</td>
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<td>- Can you imagine how the session will flow?</td>
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<td>- What other questions would you have as the reviewer?</td>
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<td>- Does the proposal/topic have a theoretical base?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Let go - deal and understand the drive for perfectionism</td>
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<td>You may not need to cover all aspects of the topic.</td>
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<td>Narrow the topic if necessary. Could it be divided into two or more proposals?</td>
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