Submitting a Successful APBS International Conference Presentation Proposal

Proposals submitted for the APBS International Conference call for proposals go through a blind peer review process, using a rubric (https://new.apbs.org/sites/default/files/conference-2019/files/rubric-for-apbs-proposals.pdf) to guide scoring. Proposals that are not accepted primarily fall into four categories: (a) the topic is not aligned with the APBS mission (http://www.apbs.org/about-apbs.html#mission); (b) the topic is not addressing content that is significant for the field or APBS's primary conference audience, (c) the content does not align with the principles or technology underlying positive behavior support; or (d) the proposal did not provide sufficient and/or clear information that would result in a high score.

To provide attendees with a broad array of presenters and presentation topics, there is a limit on the number of peer-reviewed proposal submissions from one lead author. Specifically, an author can be a lead on two presentations, one being an oral presentation and the other being a poster presentation. The lead author can be a co-presenter (second or later author) on one other submitted proposal. The lead author cannot be a lead presenter on two oral presentation or two poster presentations.

The purpose of this guide is to provide considerations for submissions other than pre-conference and post-conference workshops. The workshops (sessions requiring an extra fee for participants to attend outside of the general conference price) are primarily invited presentations using a separate process. Questions about workshops can be answered by referring to the section related to Workshop Protocol on the APBS Call for Papers website (https://new.apbs.org/conference/call-for-papers). Additionally, this guide does not apply to invited conference presentations or keynote presentations.

The first section of this guide provides bulleted lists of steps an author will take to prepare and submit a proposal. The second half will describe the components used for scoring proposals and explain how your proposal can consider the components while developing your submission. Before we move on to the steps and considerations for you to take when developing your proposal, it is important to note the APBS mission statement. Your proposal will be reviewed to ensure that its content is aligned with the mission of the organization. APBS' mission statement is as follows:

> The mission of APBS is to enhance the quality of life of people, across the life-span, by promoting evidence-based and effective positive behavior support to realize socially valid and equitable outcomes for people, families, schools, agencies, and communities.

More information about the APBS mission and approach can be found at
http://www.apbs.org/about-apbs.html#mission.

Section 1. Getting Ready to Submit Your Proposal

Plan Ahead

• The submission deadline is September 7, 2018. It is best to work backwards from that date to ensure you meet the deadline.

• Decide on the format of the presentation you will be submitting. You can indicate whether you will only present in the format indicated if your proposal is accepted or if the format selected is preferred. Keep in mind that if you select a format as "preferred", you may increase the chance that your proposal will be accepted. For example, if you selected 'oral preferred' and the reviewers indicated that you have a strong proposal that may be better suited for a symposium or a poster than an oral presentation, you may be notified that your proposal will be accepted if you are willing to do another format.

- o   Poster: Poster sessions occur during a conference reception on February 21st, 2019 from 6:30-8 pm and are visual presentations with posters occurring simultaneously at a specified time. Each presenter will be provided with a 8' x 30" table and a 3' x 4' tri fold poster board on which visual information is displayed. Poster presentations are best suited for content that may not yet be ready for a 75-minute oral presentation and can be visually displayed.

- o   Ignite: A session with several co-presenters organized around similar themes organized by the APBS Training and Education Committee. Each presenter will have 5-10 minutes to provide attendees with information on the topic. Proposals that do not have enough content for a 75 minute presentation but address real world applications of PBS principles and technology or provide interesting viewpoints of PBS approaches are suitable for this format.

- o   Symposium: A symposium provides several (sometimes contrasting) views on a single topic or issue. Three to four people each provide a 15-20 minute presentation related to an issue or a theme. The symposium may be submitted by an author, or authors can request that their talk be added to a symposium with other talks on the topic by the APBS Training and Education Committee. People choosing the latter option would check/indicate that they would be interested in having their submission considered for a symposium. Topics that can have various views

and generate ample discussion and questions are good matches for this format.

- o Oral: A 75 minute presentation addressing topics significant and relevant to APBS, inform practice or research, and aligned with the APBS mission statement. Information in the presentation should be based on sound concepts, theories or evidence.

• Decide upon the strand that your proposal best fits. The strands and brief descriptions are on the APBS Call for Papers website https://new.apbs.org/conference/call-for-papers and include:

- o Early Childhood
- o Individualized Student Supports (Tier 3)
- o Classroom (Tier 2)
- o School-Wide Systems (Tier 1)
- o Equity
- o Integration and Alignment
- o Families and Parent Supports
- o Home and Community
- o Intellectual/Developmental Disability (IDD)
- o Juvenile Justice
- o Mental Health

• Decide upon the session category or type that best describes your proposal. There are three session categories/types.

- o Skill Development: This category is for proposals that intend for participants to learn specific techniques or gain proficiency or knowledge that may be immediately applied in authentic settings.

- o Conceptual: Proposals addressing PBS principles, technology, critical issues related to the mission or application of PBS, or describing potential applications of theoretical principles/technology would select this category.

- o Research: If your proposal is describing an original research study, this category will be selected.

Note: If you plan to submit a proposal based on original research, only submit the proposal if you are confident that your research will be completed in time to meaningfully present it by the conference date (February 20-23, 2019)

• Choose keywords from one or more categories to further specify the content of your presentation and for whom it will be most relevant. It is not a requirement to choose any keywords, but doing so will give you the best chance to connect with conference attendees who are most interested in your work (our 2019 conference app will allow for keyword searches). Options include:

- Audience: family members, teachers, practitioners, therapists or related service providers, administrators, researchers

- Focus: lifestyle change/quality of life, systems change, assessment and intervention, data-based decision-making, instruction, collaboration

- Setting: home, school, work, clinic, residential, vocational, juvenile justice, alternative school, other community

- Level: individual, group, system

- Professional discipline: education, social work, counseling/therapy, psychology, applied behavior analysis, administration, medicine

- Population (diagnosis): MI, ASD, IDD, EBD, neurotypical, adjudicated

- Population (lifespan): early childhood, elementary, adolescence, school-age, adult, aging

• If you will have co-presenters, determine who will be the lead presenter and make sure you know the correct names, titles, and affiliations of each co-presenter

Prepare the Abstract and Objectives

• Prior to going on-line to submit your proposal, it is wise to first develop your abstract including your learning objectives in a Word document. This will allow you to copy and paste into the on-line submission application and prevent many errors.

• Create a title that will entice conference attendees to come to your session, is descriptive of your topic, and is within the 12 word limit.

• Develop 3-5 learning objectives-100 word limit and ensure that the abstract explains exactly how it will meet the objectives.

• Write the 450 word abstract. Refer to the second section in this guide that provides information about each scoring component on which your proposal will be evaluated and given a score.

• Carefully organize your 450 word abstract and use clear, concise language to describe exactly what you will be presenting.

   o Begin with a brief introductory paragraph that provides an overview of your topic.

   o Describe the theory, concept, or research basis of your topic

   o Your proposal does not need to be a formal research study and can be oriented for practitioners and/or caregivers.

   o If it is practitioner and/or caregiver focused, the topic should be one that is based on sound theory or has been tested by others and not just a "good idea".

   o Describe exactly what you will be presenting including how you will be presenting it.

      o For example, if it will be an interactive presentation, provide a description of how it will be interactive (for example, "Participants will be given an opportunity to score their own multi-tiered process with the evaluation tool.)

   o Explain the impact your proposal has on the field and how it is aligned with the APBS mission

• When finished, carefully review it for spelling, grammar, and usage errors.

• Please keep in mind, if your proposal's focus is to showcase a product (e.g., materials, books, videos, or consultation services) for sale, you would not submit a proposal through the peer reviewed process. Instead, you will want to complete an application to become an exhibitor (https://new.apbs.org/conference/information-for-exhibitors).

Write a Summary (Short Session Description)

• Develop a 35 word or less description of your session. This will appear in the conference program and on-line and is what conference attendees will read.

• Make your session description inviting so that people will want to attend. Some tips to keep in mind:

   o Describe what participants will get out of your session or how it can be used in authentic settings relevant to the topic.

- Describe the problem(s) that your session will address.

- Make sure your description is accurate in what you are truly covering so that attendees will know what to expect. For example, if you are only going to talk about your research and not about application, don't promise in the description that you will describe effective practices to be used.

- Do not use up your 35 word limit by using phrases such as "In this presentation, we will…". Get right to the content.

- The summary is what "sells" your presentation to conference attendees – make sure that your summary is strong and intriguing.

The next section provides more detail on the components you will want to consider while writing your abstract and objectives. This section, while not guaranteeing that your proposal will be accepted, will enhance the likelihood that your proposal may be scored favorably.

Section II. Aligning the abstract with the scoring rubric:

The abstract describing the proposal submission is the most important component. Successful proposals describe clearly and completely in 450 words or less what will be presented and how the content of the presentation is significant to the field of APBS. The following areas all relate to the proposal scoring rubric.

Significance of Content to the Field

A successful proposal aligns with the core features of PBS as articulated by Carr and colleagues (2002): comprehensive lifestyle change and quality of life, lifespan perspective, ecological validity, stakeholder participation, social validity, systems change and multicomponent intervention, emphasis on prevention, flexibility with respect to scientific practices, and incorporation of multiple theoretical perspectives. It also describes how the topic will support individuals in reducing behavioral challenges, increasing independence, and developing behaviors that will improve quality of life through in the areas of social relationships, employment, academic achievement, functional life-skills, self-determination, health, and safety. A successful proposal provides conference attendees information that is noteworthy and can be new information, reinforcement of current information, or adaptation of current information. The content that the proposal addresses is important to the field.

When putting together your proposal, you will want to consider your 3-5 learning objectives that describe exactly what participants will gain attending your session. The best objectives are those that start with observable action verbs that describe the skills or knowledge to be acquired. You

will want to draw a clear connection between the objectives and the description of what you are going to present and how you will be presenting it.

As an example, APBS receives a large number of submissions that address implementation of Tier 1 PBS in school settings. Unless the topic provides content that adds to the implementation of Tier 1 or addresses a specific challenge when implementing Tier 1, chances are the proposal will not receive a high score in the content area. Merely proposing to describe how a school or a district implemented Tier 1 will not provide the field with significant content that is new to the field and/or that other practitioners or attendees could use to further strengthen PBS approaches in their settings. However, focusing the content on how community partnerships were formed to enhance buy-in and/or effectiveness or focusing implementation for an underserved population (e.g., autism, intellectual disabilities, diverse cultures) or focusing on implementing Tier 1 in specific school settings (e.g., alternative schools, urban high schools, rural units) or in different settings (e.g., juvenile justice, residential facilities), would be considered content that could advance practitioner's implementation of Tier 1. In addition, proposals addressing current issues and problems through the implementation of PBS technology and principles are more likely to score high in this area. For example, using PBS techniques to address disproportionality or cultural diversity would be examples of current challenges that face not only schools but other settings.

Conceptual or Empirical Strength

Your proposal can be focused on a research study or can be a practitioner-based or family-focused presentation. If it is a practitioner-based or family-focused proposal, reviewers will be looking for evidence that what you plan to present is drawn from a sound theoretical and/or research base. For example, if you plan to present information on how to actively engage caregivers/family members, reviewers should be able to discern how you selected practices that promote active engagement of caregivers or literature that supports active caregiver engagement. Proposals describing concepts or ideas that sound good but are untested (i.e., does not have a theory or conceptual basis on why the idea would or should work) will typically result in a low score on this component. For example, you may submit a proposal describing use of technology such as computer-assisted instruction, smart phone or tablet application in a school implementing Tier 2 supports. To receive a high score on this component, you would need to provide a clear description on how your use of technology was based on sound practices and that you evaluated the outcomes. You are not required or expected to have formal research data; however, you do need to provide some content that clearly shows you evaluated what you are presenting. Only describing what or how you did it will most likely be insufficient.

If you are presenting a research study, you will want to provide enough detail about your methodology so that reviewers will understand how you conducted the research and be confident that appropriate processes were followed. You will want to briefly present the results of the

study as well as implications for practices and how the results align with the mission of APBS. In some cases, you may be proposing a research study that is not completed at the time of submission. This is okay as long as you are sure you will have completed your study and analysis by the time of the conference. In these cases, you will describe how you will analyze your data and your expected outcomes. Unfortunately, sometimes accepted presenters end up needing to cancel their sessions due to not completing their study by the date of the conference. We urge you to only submit your proposal if you are sure that your study will be completed by the time of the conference.

Clarity of Proposal

When reviewers submit their scores and comments, the most frequent reason proposals may receive low ratings in this area is because the author did not provide enough detail or explain clearly what will be presented. In addition, the proposal should be reviewed for spelling, grammar, and usage errors. Keep in mind that reviewers have many submissions to read and having a proposal that reads clearly and gets to the point being concise but not terse is an advantage. Organization is key to developing a clear proposal. Successful proposals starting with a brief introductory paragraph introducing your topic and key issues will get the interest of the reviewer. The remainder of the abstract provides the description of what you will be presenting, how you will be presenting it, and how your topic is significant to the field and based on sound theory.

Support for the mission of APBS

A successful proposal aligns with, and provides a clear explanation of how the topic is linked to, the mission of APBS. The reviewers will be looking for how your proposal intentionally and specifically addresses features of the mission, and will be paying attention for how the proposal could enhance the conference's diversity with respect to content and potential audience. This should be clearly connected to the overall content of your proposal and not appear as an afterthought.

For example, a submission primarily dealing with the application of PBS in outpatient community mental health clinics might describe how larger quality of life issues are handled in the context of discrete patient contacts.

Section 3: Submitting On-Line

ABPS proposals are submitted online through Oxford Abstracts. The steps for submitting follow.

Register

• If this is your first time submitting a proposal for the 2019 APBS International Conference, you will need to register in the system.

• Create a username, a password, and provide the requested demographic information.

• This username and password will be your log-in information. You can log-in to submit proposals or to check and revise the proposals you have submitted for the current conference until the Call for Papers close date – September 7, 2018.

Submit a proposal (note: If you prepared your proposal in a Word document, you can copy and paste from your proposal into the on-line application)

• Enter your 12 word title.

• Enter your 450 word abstract.

• Enter your affiliation (university, school district, agency, etc.)

• If you have co-presenters, enter their affiliations if they are different from yours. Remember, you can be the sole presenter.

• Enter each presenter's name and indicate their affiliation.

• Designate which author is the lead.

• Enter the 35 word summary that is printed in the program if your proposal is accepted.

• Enter your objectives.

• Select the primary strand of your proposal.

• If your proposal addresses more than one strand, select a secondary strand.

• Select the type/category of session you will be presenting.

• If you so choose, select keywords from any of several categories.

• Select the format of your presentation. Within this section, you can indicate if you will only accept the format chosen or if it is a preference. Keep in mind, if you indicate that the format is preferred rather than the only format you will accept for presenting, your chances for your proposal to be accepted may be increased.

• Determine if your proposal is geared for attendees who may be in the beginning stage of implementing PBS. You will answer 'yes' or 'no' to this question.

• Confirm that you are aware that should your proposal be accepted, all presenters must register for and attend the conference at their own cost.

• Determine if you want your proposal to be considered for Type II BCBA CEUs. If you select 'yes', you will need to answer the remaining questions that allow the CEU Coordinator determine whether your proposal and your credentials meet the criteria for offering the CEUs. If you answer 'no", your proposal submission is complete.

• Once completing submission, you will receive an email confirming that your proposal was submitted and providing you with your proposal ID number. If you wish to edit your submission, you will use your username and password to enter Oxford Abstracts and select the proposal number that you wish to edit. You have until September 7th to edit your proposal if you wish.

Good luck! We hope to see you at the 16th International Conference on Positive Behavior Support in Washington, D.C.!