

ISSDP Conference Style

<http://www.issdp.org>

The ISSDP conference is held in May each year. The aims of the ISSDP conference are to:

- Present original scientific research on drug policy;
- Create opportunities for vigorous discussion and debate about findings and methods;
- Provide an environment conducive for networking and the establishment of new collaborations;
- Provide a stimulus for delegates to publish their work in journals.

The conference is multi-disciplinary, as befits the study of drug policy. Many disciplines are represented, each having their own conference traditions. The ISSDP conference has drawn from these and follows the following conference style:

- Abstracts are submitted and peer review determines acceptance for presentation
- Written papers (for every oral presentation) are due to be submitted at least 6 weeks before the conference
- Delegates receive all written papers at least two weeks before the conference in order to read them (we aim to provide a USB to all delegates with the papers on it)
- Short presentations (max. 15 mins) are given because it is assumed that the paper has been read by all in the audience
- Discussants in each session draw together themes, challenges and issues.
- The majority of the time in each session is spent in discussion.

Why have we chosen this style of conference?

The advantages of this style of conference include:

- It maximises the opportunity for discussion, debate and interaction amongst delegates, which is the key reason for coming together face-to-face.
- It substantially encourages papers that are original work not previously published/presented.
- The written paper provides the opportunity for detailed introduction, methodology and discussion (more so than a 15 min oral alone).
- It provides delegates with the opportunity to write a paper.
- It provides for a higher quality of paper and subsequent discussion.
- Short presentations can focus on summative findings (rather than detailed methods etc).
- We select the best papers and then publish them in a special issue.

For presenters:

Given the ISSDP conference style, it is unwise to submit an abstract unless you are willing/prepared to submit a written paper (2500 words to 7000 words) in a style consistent with a journal article, at least 6 weeks before the conference. You can choose a poster presentation instead if you do not want to prepare a written paper.

Tip for presenters: write the paper and submit it, then separately prepare no more than 10 slides which summarise/highlight key points from the paper; focus on results and conclusions not on methods.

Role of the discussant

Every session has a discussant assigned.

The overall role of discussants is to provide a beginning to the interactive component of the session – provoke delegates to think about themes, aspects, critical issues in drug policy.

Generally the discussant will:

1. Offer reflections on each paper (unique observations; surprises; areas for further exploration; other relevant research; questions)
2. Summarise key themes across all the papers in the session (reflections across papers; issues for discussion).

The role is not to peer review the paper (but we hope that discussants comments would strengthen any revisions prior to publication)

For the discussants role to be effective and meaningful, all papers need to have been read beforehand. (Discussant's comments are derived from the written paper, rather than the oral presentation).

Discussants can use ppt (1-3 slides) with themes across papers summarised.

Timetable

The conference is held over two days (with a third day set aside for interactive workshops).

Sessions are 1.5 hours, with 3 presenters (15 mins each) plus 1 discussant (10 mins), allowing 30 mins for discussion/interaction.

No questions during the 4 presentations (ie run straight through).

Take questions/comments from the audience in groups of three – then refer to panel to answer all three.

Poster session: held during one of the meals breaks, with additional time allocated. Poster presenters 'staff' their posters (stand next to them; be available to summarise, answer questions etc.).

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