



Session Chair Handbook¹

Note of Appreciation

Thank you for serving as a session chair.

Your role is vital in ensuring that each presentation runs smoothly, on time, and in a manner that reflects DiGRA's values of respect, inclusivity, and professionalism.

As a chair, you set the tone for dialogue, welcoming diverse perspectives and ensuring every participant, onsite or online, feels heard and valued.

Purpose

This handbook provides guidance for all session chairs to help ensure that every presentation is managed fairly, inclusively, and efficiently.

It supports DiGRA's *Code of Conduct* and the *Behaviour Expectations White Paper* (Sections 5.3 and 6).

Chairs are expected to uphold accessibility and inclusivity throughout their sessions, encourage constructive dialogue, and intervene calmly when needed.

1. Before Your Session

Preparation

- Review the programme and confirm the order, timing, and duration of all presentations.
- Contact presenters in advance (if possible) to confirm equipment needs, and accessibility requests.
- Check with the technician or volunteer that the room setup is ready, including microphone, projector, pointer, captions, and livestream connection.
- Know the location of the Accessibility & Inclusion Desk or equivalent and Safety & Conduct Team.
- Familiarise yourself with the reporting procedure and contacts (see Section 4).

¹ Authorship and Acknowledgment: These appendices were prepared by Yekta Kalantar Hormozi, DiGRA Diversity Officer (2025–2027), as companion materials [to the DiGRA 2026 White Paper on Behaviour Expectations](#). They were developed with feedback and contributions from the DiGRA DEI Subcommittee, including Carlos Gabriel Kelly González, Stanisław Krawczyk, and Usva Friman.



Accessibility and Inclusion

- Ensure seating and podium arrangements accommodate mobility or sensory needs.
- Learn the correct pronunciation of presenters' names and use their affirmed pronouns.
- Remind presenters to use microphones and to give any necessary content or trigger warnings.
- Confirm that captions and hybrid connections are functioning before starting.

2. During Your Session

Opening the Session

- Welcome participants and remind them that all sessions follow the [DiGRA Code of Conduct](#).
- Mention that accessibility or safety support is available via the Accessibility & Inclusion Desk or equivalent or via Safety & Conduct Team.#
- Introduce each presenter clearly and keep introductions concise.

Timekeeping and Flow

- Keep presentations within their allocated time; use visible or verbal cues when needed.
- Allow short transitions between talks for setup.
- Reserve time for questions, either after each talk or collectively at the end.

Moderating Discussion

- Invite questions from both onsite and remote participants.
- Encourage concise, respectful, and constructive comments.
- Repeat or summarise questions into the microphone for accessibility.
- Step in calmly if discussions become disrespectful or off-topic.
- Prioritise a range of voices, including early-career researchers and participants from groups that are often under-represented or overlooked in discussions.

Hybrid Participation

- Monitor online Q&A or coordinate with the hybrid-support volunteer.
- Alternate between in-person and online questions when possible.
- Pause briefly after answers to allow remote participants time to contribute.

3. After Your Session

- Thank the presenters and audience.
- Ensure the next session chair or technician has what they need for setup.
Report any accessibility, technical, or conduct issues to the Safety & Conduct Team or **Local Organising Committee (LOC)**.
- Share any feedback or notes in the daily debrief or post-conference questionnaire.

4. Key Contacts

Purpose	Contact / Role	Email / Phone	Notes



Technical or AV issues	Technical Coordinator –via Registration Desk or any LOC member Online / Zoom issues Liang (Charlie) Xu liang.xu@dcu.ie	Ask Registration Desk or LOC member liang.xu@dcu.ie	Equipment / Livestream
Accessibility & Inclusion support	Accessibility and Inclusion Desk, located at the Registration Desk. Yekta Kalantar Hormozi	yekta.kalantar@mu.ie	Captions / Mobility help
Code of Conduct / Safety concerns	Safety & Conduct Team – LOC members, the designated responders (they have a sticker on)	digraireland2026@gmail.com	Confidential reporting
General conference info	Local Organising Committee	digraireland2026@gmail.com	Programme updates
Emergency services / Campus security	Emergency Services / Maynooth University Campus Security	112 or 999 for emergency services. +353 1 708 3333 for MU emergency. +353 1 708 3929 for MU Campus Security	For urgent assistance

Programme Committee	John P. Healy and EL Putnam	john.p.healy@tudublin.ie / el.putnam@mu.ie	Programme or scheduling questions
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5. Quick Reminders

- Start and end sessions on time.
- Reinforce an inclusive, respectful atmosphere.
- Use microphones and repeat questions aloud.
- Balance participation between onsite and online audiences.
- Report any issues promptly and confidentially.

6. Session Chair's Opening Script

Below is an example you may adapt for your own style.

It's designed to take around two minutes and set an inclusive, professional tone:

“Good [morning/afternoon], everyone, and welcome to this session of [Conference Name]. My name is [name], and I'll be chairing this session.

We'll follow the DiGRA Code of Conduct, which means we're committed to maintaining a respectful, inclusive, and harassment-free environment for all participants.

If you require any accessibility support or encounter an issue, please reach out to our Accessibility & Inclusion Desk or a member of the Safety & Conduct Team, who are clearly identified by their badges.

Each presenter will have [number] minutes for their talk, followed by [number] minutes for questions (unless this session uses a combined Q&A at the end) I'll keep time and provide gentle reminders to help us stay on schedule.

Please use the microphone when asking questions so everyone — including remote attendees — can hear.

Let's make this a constructive and engaging discussion.

Our first presenter is [name] from [institution], presenting '[title].' [Name], the floor is yours.”

Note: Key elements such as Code of Conduct reminders, accessibility guidance, and microphone-use instructions should be repeated in every session, even if chairs choose a shorter version of the script later in the conference.

7. Chair's Closing Script

Here is a brief example you can adapt to conclude your session smoothly and respectfully:



“Thank you to all our presenters for their insightful contributions, and to everyone here — onsite and online — for your thoughtful participation and questions.

Please join me in a round of applause for our speakers.

If you have additional comments or questions, you’re welcome to continue the discussion informally after the session or during the next break, or online.

A reminder that feedback on accessibility, inclusivity, or technical setup can be shared with the Accessibility & Inclusion Desk or through the post-conference questionnaire.

Thank you again for helping maintain a respectful and engaging space — and please enjoy the rest of the conference.”

8. If a Presenter Does Not Show Up

- Wait up to 5 minutes in case of delay, so the presenter can still deliver a shortened version of their talk if they arrive late.
- Check with a volunteer or Programme Committee member for updates.
- If confirmed absent, move to the next presenter or extend Q&A.
- Inform the audience briefly and professionally (e.g. “Our next speaker couldn’t join us today; we’ll continue with the next talk.”).
- Notify the Programme Committee so the schedule can be update

