

Conservation Paleobiology Symposia Guidelines

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What is this Document?

- This is a guide for symposia that will support the aims of the Conservation Paleobiology Network (CPN).

- It has been prepared by the chairs of the CPN Conservation Paleobiology Symposia Committee (CPS committee), with input from the entire CPS committee.
- The document is not designed to be a list of protocols or rules, but rather a summary of the conceptual ideals that members of the CPS committee would like to see applied to future meetings associated with the CPN.
- The guidelines in this document will evolve as the needs for the network change, and as the context for meetings change.
- Changes to this document will be made by members of the CPS committee, with input from other CPN members and other interested parties, especially local groups tied to individual meetings who may not be members of the CPN.
- Ultimately, these guidelines can be reconsidered by individual meeting organisers as necessary, but only in consultation with the CPN steering committee.

General Aims of the Conservation Paleobiology Symposia

- Annual symposia will support the aims of the CPN.
- The long-term goal is to establish a lasting framework for periodic meetings for conservation paleobiology which should provide fora to assist in the translation of historical and paleontological science to the conservation of global biodiversity.
- Fora should:
 - Facilitate connections amongst CPN members to develop research and applications of CPN themes.
 - Facilitate and report back on application of Conservation Paleobiology (CP) to modern conservation practice.
 - Help extend the network by building bridges among sub-disciplines and geographic areas that are not adequately represented in the CPN.
 - Support young researchers, scientists and policy makers, especially those from under-represented groups.
 - Generate information, based on evidence from evaluation activities, aimed at supporting the decision-making and learning processes of the CPN.

CPS Committee Responsibilities

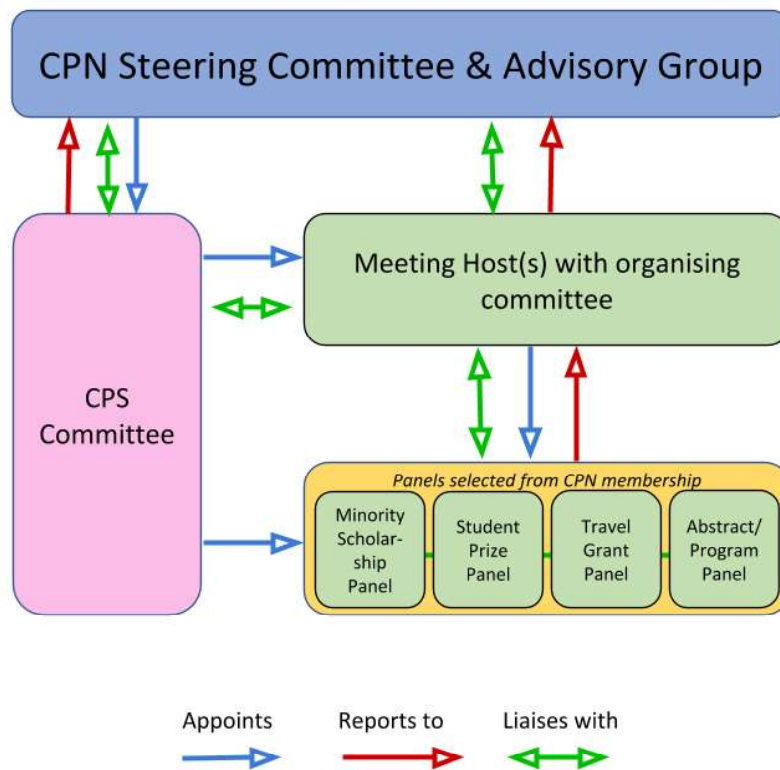
- The CPS committee is responsible for setting and updating as deemed necessary the guidelines and vision for the annual meeting structure, outlined in this document.
- The CPS committee will establish the host(s) and general locations for each individual meeting at least a year (preferably two) in advance.
 - The CPS committee will petition the CPN membership for proposals to host future meetings (see below).
 - From the possible venues, the CPS committee will vote on the subsequent host(s), with explicit consideration of geography, timing and accessibility (i.e., meeting venues should not be clustered in space).
- Once the host is selected, the CPS committee will work in conjunction with the host(s) to build an organising committee for each symposium. The organising committee will be made up of hosts, locals and CPN members.
- The CPS committee will also solicit the CPN membership to form panels for each meeting. These panels will be responsible for the functioning of key aspects of each symposium, including, but not necessarily limited to:
 - Abstract Review and Scheduling Panel

- Travel Grant Panel
- Equity Scholarship Panel
- Student Prize Panel
- Evaluation and Learning Panel

Symposium Host & Organiser Responsibilities

- The host and organising committee of each meeting will be responsible for the running of their meeting, including, but not limited to, the following tasks:
 - Decision of whether to run an online, in-person or hybrid meeting
 - On-site organisation, including consideration of equity and access (disability accommodations, child care, etc.)
 - Technological support
 - Catering
 - Social events
 - Fund-raising and sponsorship
 - Venue choice
 - Advertising and social media
 - Programme development
 - Scheduling
 - Workshops
 - Abstract book preparation (online with DOI recommended)
 - Photography
 - Keynote invitations
 - Abstract review via panel appointed by CPS committee (meeting specific)
 - Travel grants via panel appointed by CPS committee (meeting specific)
 - Diversity scholarships via panel appointed by CPS committee (meeting specific)
 - Student prizes via panel appointed by CPS committee (meeting specific)
 - Evaluation and learning via panel appointed by CPS committee (meeting specific)
- It is expected the host and organising committee of each meeting share experiences and tips with subsequent meeting hosts.

Structure of the CPS & Symposium Organising Committee



Guidelines for Selecting Future Meeting Locations

- The CPS committee will petition proposals for future meetings.
- Proposals should include the following:
 - Host name(s) and affiliation(s)
 - Location(s)
 - Proposed venue
 - Estimated date for meeting
 - Desired overall format for the meeting (i.e. online, in-person, hybrid, hub)
 - Proposed balance of contributed talks, invited talks, posters, and special symposia, and the representation of speakers in each category
 - A brief description of any workshops and field trips, and how they would contribute to the goals of the CPN
 - A single paragraph description of the benefits of the location (e.g. opportunities for students, connections with conservation resources, special expertise, logistical reasons, consideration of equity and accessibility, consideration of attendees' carbon footprints, etc.)

- The 2021 meeting will be held in Florida (date TBD), and the host will be Michal Kowalewski (University of Florida) and/or other members of the Planning Team located in Florida.

Guidelines on Meeting Format: Online *versus* In Person

- The CPS committee recognises the benefits of meeting in person, but feels strongly that international travel should be limited if possible.
- There are several approaches that could be adopted to achieve this. These options should be decided in advance by each individual Symposium Organising Committee, contingent upon venue facilities, expertise and financial support:
 - Alternate between in-person and completely online symposia
 - A hybrid model, such that local participants attend in person, and those further afield attend virtually, potentially via hubs
 - The CPN symposia could integrate with larger meetings, such that only individuals that attend larger meetings would be at these events. This is not preferable if the aim is to bring different groups together, but could work if the hybrid model is adopted
 - Fully online
- In person meetings should be focussed around oral presentations. The hosts determine if the meeting holds poster sessions.

Guidelines on Size of Symposia

- The concept of the *Conservation Paleobiology Symposia* held in Bologna in 2020 (<https://spark.adobe.com/page/Ffnuc5r9hxepo/>) was to build a small, friendly meeting that was accessible to young researchers, thereby allowing links to form across generations.
- The CPS committee currently feels strongly that symposia should retain this essence and remain relatively small (approx < 150) for in person attendance. Online attendance is less limited.
- Symposia host(s) should establish early the desired size of the meeting and think carefully about how to advertise the meeting and keep limits on space, if necessary.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Symposia

- The CPN is committed to increasing diversity and ensuring all CPN members are treated fairly and equitably.
- In this regard, the CPN will commit funds to support attendance at symposia for historically underrepresented students and young professionals (see section on 'Financial Aid' below).
- While the CPN develops its own code of conduct, annual symposia will follow the Paleontological Society's Code of Conduct: (<https://www.paleosoc.org/paleontological-society-policy-on-non-discrimination-and-code-of-conduct/>).
- The hosts should carefully review abstract selection and travel/attendance bursaries (see below) and make recommendations to improve diversity. This process can involve discussion with the CPS committee. Selected abstracts should reflect the diversity of submitted, quality abstracts. Every effort will be made to encourage and support participation from historically underrepresented groups.

- Effort will be made to ensure that keynote speakers reflect researchers from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and career stages.
- Efforts must be made to improve access options for CPN members to interact fully during meetings. We urge that all limitations and opportunities be indicated early in planning and invitation stages. Considerations include, but are not limited to, physical access to in-person meetings and captioning for on-line meetings.
- We recommend the meeting hosts adopt the local institution's misconduct reporting systems, if they are available. If unavailable, we recommend the host committee incorporates a clear and robust method of misconduct reporting before the meeting and ensures that all attendees are aware of how it works.

Guidelines on Funding Models

- The size, location and format of the meeting will dictate the funding model and should be established early by the host(s).
- The Bologna meeting was free to attend and supported by hosts' research funds and institutional funds. This approach made the meeting accessible to many students who would otherwise be precluded from attending a paid meeting. If the meeting has associated fees, the CPS committee strongly recommends comprehensive scholarships, liberal fee discounts, or fee waivers to attract students, researchers, and practitioners that would otherwise be unable to attend.
- Sources of funding will vary from meeting to meeting, but could include NSF, institutional grants, and the Paleontological Society. Host(s) should liaise with the CPS committee to discuss ways to fund meetings, including sponsorship opportunities from conservation agencies.

Guidelines on Scope & Theme of Symposia

- All talks, workshops, plenary talks, and field trips must have a conservation application (direct or indirect).
- Conservation paleobiology is currently limited by a lack of communication amongst different parties, and the meeting's organisers should be mindful of the ultimate aim of the meeting and the CPN as a whole is to connect across disciplines, approaches, and members of the CPN, and to engage with stakeholders groups.
- As such, themes are not recommended for the meeting as a whole, but workshops and fieldwork should adopt specific themes.

Guidelines for Abstract Review & Program Development

- The CPS committee will solicit volunteers from the CPN membership to serve on the Abstract Review Panel. This panel will petition and select abstracts to be presented at the annual meeting.
- The size of the panel depends on the preferred size of the annual meeting, but we suggest six individuals.
- The CPS committee will select six panel members based on balancing gender, ethnicity, career stage, subdiscipline, and study organism. To be considered, a CPN member must hold an undergraduate degree and, at minimum, be pursuing a Masters or PhD in a cognate discipline.
- Abstracts should be selected with the following in mind:
 - Novelty and rigour of research or thinking

- Applicability to conservation
- Balance of applied research and theoretical research in CP
- Ensuring a variety of CP applications, from the marine to terrestrial realm.
- Plenary speakers are recommended and should be selected on their ability to advance the field of CP with questions, research and applications that initiate new conversations and build bridges amongst CPN members, and between CPN members and stakeholder groups. Plenary speakers should also support the aims of the CPN, although speakers do not necessarily have to be CPN members.
- Special efforts should be made to invite plenary speakers from outside academia (natural resource managers, policy makers, conservation practitioners).

Guidelines for Student Prize Panel

- The CPS committee will solicit volunteers from the CPN membership to serve on the Student Prize Panel. This panel will decide those students to receive commendation for the quality of their presentations.
- We recommend separate prizes be awarded for poster and talk presentations, dependent on meeting size and presence of poster sessions.
- The panel will consist of approx. four individuals, depending on the size of the meeting.
- No students will be allowed to sit on this panel. The CPS committee will select the four panel members based on balancing gender, ethnicity, career stage, subdiscipline, and study organism.
- The panel should meet and establish funds for the prize as early as possible such that the prizes are published to attract students, and funding is sufficient to have a significant impact. We recommend avoiding ranking prizes (first, second, etc.), as students report they are uncomfortable with being ranked.
- We suggest that prizes are awarded on the following criteria:
 - Novelty and rigour of research or application (5 points possible)
 - Applicability of research to conservation using geohistorical records (5 points possible)
 - Clarity of oral communication (5 points possible)
 - Effectiveness of visual aids; e.g., slides, posters (5 points possible)

Guidelines for Evaluation and Learning Panel

- The CPS committee will solicit volunteers from the CPN to serve on the Evaluation and Learning Panel. This panel will work with the symposium host and organizer to design and implement evaluation tools and activities relevant to the focus, audience, and context of the particular symposium, in alignment with the short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes identified in the logic model of the CPN.
- The panel will consist of two or three individuals, in addition to the CPN evaluator, depending on the size of the meeting.
- The CPS committee will select the panel members based on balancing gender, ethnicity, career stage, subdiscipline, and study organism.
- The panel should meet and decide on the evaluation focus and approach as early as possible to identify the evaluation tool(s) that will be needed and the appropriate procedure(s) to collect the information.

- The panel will work with the symposium host and organizer to develop an evaluation report from the event. This report will be shared with the CPN membership to support learning and decision-making across the organization.

Guidelines on Financial Aid: Scholarships and Travel Grants for People from Under-represented Groups

- The hosts will work with the various CPN committees to provide as much support to groups in need of financial aid to attend meetings, or—if online—to support their time.
- Depending on funding, we anticipate providing two types of scholarships to support attendance at annual meetings: a travel grant fund and a diversity scholarship fund for both students and young professionals.
- The CPS committee will solicit volunteers from the CPN membership to serve on both the Diversity Scholarship Panel and the Travel Grant Panel to select recipients of these awards. Each panel will consist of approximately five individuals.
- The CPS committee will select the five individuals, based on balancing gender, ethnicity, career stage, subdiscipline, and study organism. To be considered, a CPN member must hold an undergraduate degree and, at minimum, be pursuing a PhD in a cognate discipline.
- Scholarship recipients will be selected based on a (no more than) one-page statement on why the meeting would benefit them professionally and their CV. Applicants will be favored on the following criteria:
 - Presenting at the meeting
 - Research or application is directly related or relevant to CP
 - Benefit they will derive from attending the meeting

Guidelines on Connecting with Stakeholders & Practitioners

- Whether in person or online, thematic workshops could form an important part of achieving the goals of the symposium by building bridges, developing expertise, and creating real CP applications.
- Symposia could be used as venues to tackle a specific conservation problem or location, using paleontological data.
- Invitations for practitioners and conservationists to speak at the symposia could help facilitate this goal.
- The hosts may provide financial aid for invited practitioners ineligible for financial aid from their employer.

Conservation Paleobiology Symposia Committee Rotation

- Members of the committee can rotate every year.
- The panel is currently composed of 13 individuals (12 professionals and 1 student). We recommend maintaining a panel of around 12-13 individuals, with consideration of gender, ethnicity, career stage, subdiscipline, and study organism.
- Rotation is not compulsory and members are likely to remain for several rotations.
- New members will be petitioned periodically from the CPN, especially if a specific role is required.

CPN Membership Participation in Symposia

As outlined above, the CPS committee welcomes participation from the CPN membership to facilitate symposia in the following ways:

- Bids to host annual symposia.
- Participation on the CPN Conservation Paleobiology Symposia Panel.
- Participation on the Diversity Scholarship Panel.
- Participation on the Abstract Review Panel.
- Participation on the Travel Grant Panel.
- Participation on the Student Prize Panel.
- Participation on the Evaluation & Learning Panel.

Resources

<https://500womenscientists.org/inclusive-scientific-meetings>

Extra to follow up on:

Possible Questions to Poll the CPN

1. Should the long term aim of the network be to support
 - a. Online meetings?
 - b. In person meetings?
 - c. A hybrid model?
 - d. Rotational mechanism?

Ideas to develop in the future

Establishing a low carbon prize for attendees? (proposed by Catalina)