



Abstract Review Guidelines: First Round

For the First Round, Review Committee members are asked to evaluate abstracts and rate them on a scale of 1-4 using the criteria below. Reviews are due by October 26.

Access your Assignments

Log in to your dashboard at <https://culturalheritage.secure-platform.com/annualmeeting/> and navigate to “My Reviewing Assignments.” Click OPEN next to General Abstract. You will see a list of your assigned abstracts. Click on any abstract to begin. The abstract details will be on the left, and the reviewer form will be on the right.

Scoring Process

When considering each abstract, please use the guidelines below while also balancing them with the goals of your particular session. Our first round of review this year will specifically ask you to grade the abstracts on a scale of 1 to 4 based on their strengths. You may wish to take notes about the abstracts you prefer and share those with the session chair.

Note that abstracts with a low grade will not be forwarded to the next round. **Do not use a low grade to indicate the paper is not a fit for your session.** You can recuse yourself from the assignment if the topic does not fit your expertise.

You will choose the grade you wish to assign from these options:

- Grade 4 = the abstract is of excellent quality.
- Grade 3 = the abstract is of good quality.
- Grade 2 = the abstract is okay, but the author(s) might need some guidance.
- Grade 1= the abstract is not ready to be presented in any form at the conference.
- Recuse = this abstract is outside the scope of this session.
 - In the Reason for Recusal box, please enter:
 - I am an author or co-author of the abstract
 - I work or have worked with the submitters of the abstract
 - The abstract does not apply to my session
 - Other reason

Additionally, you will have options to check these boxes:

- ☐ Webinar: We would like to reserve this for a webinar if the author is interested and another group does not select the paper.
- ☐ Poster: This abstract would also work as a poster and should be invited if the paper is not selected by another group.
- ☐ Tip Session: Indicate if this abstract should be considered for a Tips session. This abstract would also work as a tip and should be invited if the paper is not selected by another group.
- ☐ Sensitive or Contested Materials: The author did not indicate that their topic may cover sensitive or contested materials but should have. This abstract should be reviewed for sensitivity.

In the next round, the session chair will finalize selections and slot them into a draft schedule.
You primarily need to grade for abstract quality in this round!

Abstract Review Considerations

Not all of these considerations will be relevant to the abstracts you review.

Relevance/Significance of Topic

- Is the subject matter new or innovative or of deep interest to the conservation/preservation community?
- Does the abstract address the theme of the meeting or subthemes outlined in the call?
- Does the paper/poster demonstrate creative problem-solving, important information of use to the field, or include informative case studies?
- Does the subject matter focus on the art/culture of underrepresented groups (BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, or PWD)?
- Is the project especially relevant for a local, regional, or national community?
- Does it involve diverse stakeholders or focus on community collaboration?
- Does the topic represent an opposing point of view, or a viewpoint not often considered in conservation?
- Is the topic in keeping with the theme of the meeting?
- Has the author published this work or presented a similar paper at other conferences? (Please note that we are seeking new work that has not previously been presented.)

Purpose/Hypothesis/Outcomes

- Is the purpose of the presentation or hypothesis of the research clearly stated?
- For research yet to be completed, will the outcomes be useful regardless of results?
- Does the abstract highlight a work in progress in need of collaborative input?

- Is the author list appropriate? (E.g. If scientific analysis forms the basis of the talk, is the scientist listed as an author? If the work is community-based or focused? Does the author list include key community collaborators?)

Writing and Presentation Style

- Is the content of the paper communicated adequately and clearly in the abstract?
- Do ideas flow logically and are appropriate terms used? (Note that some variation is expected and acceptable, especially when reviewing abstracts from non-native English speakers or those that reflect regional dialects.)
- Is the title descriptive of the content? Will it attract attendees? (Note that we can suggest changes to improve the title.)
- If you have heard an author present before, please feel free to share any relevant information with the committee (e.g. “great speaker,” or “always goes over time,” etc.)

Tips for Considering the Sensitive or Contested Materials Question

From the [AIC Equity & Inclusion Committee \(EIC\)](#)

Abstract authors were [provided with reflection questions](#) to facilitate dialogue—both for the authors and in their presentations, posters, or talks—on responsible research and knowledge sharing.

These reflection questions for reviewers are similarly created to foster ongoing dialogue within the field of cultural heritage. The purpose is not censorship, but to start a larger shift towards a more respectful conservation practice, and to make room for mistakes along the way.

Contested cultural heritage (see our definition below) is an incredibly broad term, thus not all questions within the author or reviewers guide may be relevant. If you have additional questions, or would like additional support in reviewing a specific abstract, the Equity and Inclusion Committee is available. You may email the EIC Chair, Maria Olivia Davalos Stanton, at mhd7598@nyu.edu.

Terminology:

- **Indigenous cultural heritage** may include Indigenous belongings, cultural knowledge, sacred and ceremonial objects, funerary objects, human and animal remains, landscapes, stories, music, and other materials and information connected to Indigenous Nations, Tribes, and communities.
- **Contested cultural heritage** refers to objects, sites, or narratives whose custody, interpretation, or display is disputed due to histories of colonialism, conflict, displacement, or other inequities. Examples may include cultural heritage removed during foreign occupation (e.g., the Parthenon Marbles), artworks displaced during World War II, human remains, or materials connected to historical or ongoing conflicts and territorial disputes.

Reflection questions:

1. Does the author explicitly acknowledge the emotional, spiritual, and/or ethical stakes in regards to the subject matter?
2. Does the author appropriately credit all individuals, communities, and knowledge holders who contributed to the work, whether in the abstract or by listing them as co-authors?
3. Specifically when dealing with Native American cultural belongings and knowledge, does the author engage with NAGPRA when appropriate?
4. Do you feel the author has spent time considering the author's guide on contested cultural heritage? If not, do you feel the author would benefit from additional support in incorporating the guidelines into their work?

If you feel the abstract does need to flag these topics but the author did not offer context, you can indicate that using the checkbox in your review form. Any accepted abstracts with this box checked will be shared with EIC so they can offer guidance to the author.