

Call for Symposium, Organized Oral Session, Special Session, and Workshop Proposals

19th Conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) International

2009 World Conference on Ecological Restoration

Perth, Western Australia, Australia

August 23 – 27, 2009

Call Open: July 15 – October 17, 2008

You are cordially invited to submit a proposal for a symposium, organized oral session, special session, or workshop for the 19th Conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) International – the 2009 World Conference on Ecological Restoration. The meeting will be held from Sunday, August 23rd through Thursday, August 27th, 2009 in Perth, Western Australia at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre.

Important Dates

15 July 2008	Call opens
17 October 2008	Call closes
21 November 2008	Acceptance notification to organizers (all four session types)
31 January 2009	Finalised summary description due for symposia only
1 March 2009	Submission of invited abstracts for symposia and organized oral sessions

Symposia

Symposia are half day or full day sessions on one organized topic. All speakers are invited by the symposium organizer. Symposia will be assigned premium meeting space and will serve as the cornerstone for assembly of the entire scientific program. Proposals addressing the meeting theme – **“Making Change in a Changing World”** – are especially welcome, but any timely and coherent subject of broad interest will be considered. Individual talks in symposia range from 15 to 30 minutes in length at the discretion of the symposium organizer. Time for synthesis, summary, and discussion is strongly encouraged.

Symposium Evaluation Process and Criteria

All proposals will be peer-reviewed and ranked by reviewers selected by the Organizing Committee and SER Program Chair. The Program Chair may accept or decline your proposal, or offer you the opportunity to present your work in an alternative forum (organized oral session, special session, or workshop). Decisions and alternative offers will be made by November 21, 2008.

Criteria for ranking symposium proposals include, as appropriate:

1. The overall symposium is scientifically sound and offers significant contributions to ecological understanding or the advancement of the field of restoration.
2. The overall symposium showcases innovative and original work, or novel collaboration.
3. The symposium is well organized and balanced with synthetic overviews or broad topical coverage, and not just a set of similar case studies.
4. Individual talks in the symposium contribute to the cumulative impact of the symposium.
5. The symposium is consistent with the meeting theme and/or will assist attendees in obtaining a deeper appreciation of the meeting theme.

6. The confirmed and prospective participants include leaders or rising stars in their respective fields.
7. The presenters are experienced or particularly engaging speakers.
8. The symposium includes broad perspectives on the topic, and is not overtly biased by the perspective of the organizer(s) and invited speakers.
9. The symposium will be of considerable interest and will probably generate a large audience (> 200 people) at the meeting.

Organized Oral Sessions

Organized oral sessions are organized around a specific topic with most of the speakers invited by the session organizer. These sessions are distinguished from symposia in that 1) there is less emphasis on breadth of interest and overall synthesis; 2) they may be comprised largely of related case studies; 3) talks are set at 15 minutes each, with 5 minutes following for discussion (as in contributed oral sessions); and 4) some time slots available in an organized oral session may be purposely left open for filling by the Program Chair, with related talks from the contributed abstracts. Organized oral sessions are either 5 or 10 presentations long. Proposals may be from any area related to restoration, but those that relate to the overall theme - **"Making Change in a Changing World"** - are especially encouraged. We also welcome proposals that explore connections with the social or natural sciences, or that are directed to education at any level.

Special Sessions

Special Sessions are a complement to the formal scientific program that provides an opportunity for extended dialogue and exchanges not usually possible in the regular scientific sessions. These sessions are not intended for the presentation of formal research papers. These sessions do not run concurrently with the symposium, organized oral, contributed oral, or poster sessions.

Special sessions do not conform to one structural standard. They may involve one presenter, a series of lectures or a panel, a film, video or illustrated lecture, or a discussion. The Program Chairs have the option of scheduling special sessions during the evenings when they would not be in competition with the symposia or contributed oral presentations. For the purpose of selecting an appropriate-sized meeting room, you must indicate the expected minimum and maximum attendance. Special sessions may involve a ticket for a drink or refreshments for the participants, but it is important to list that in your proposal. SER cannot be expected to provide refreshments for these sessions.

Workshops

Workshops also complement the formal scientific program. They provide an opportunity for extended dialogue and exchanges not usually possible in the regular scientific sessions. These sessions are not intended for the presentation of formal research papers. These sessions do not run concurrently with the symposium, contributed oral, or poster sessions.

Workshops are focused on transferring specific knowledge or skills to others, with substantive interaction among participants. Workshops may involve one presenter, a series of lectures or a panel, or may involve computer-based training. Workshops are typically scheduled for full or half days and are usually held prior to the beginning of the formal scientific program, running concurrently with field trips – on Saturday or Sunday or, in some cases, on both days. Weekend workshops may occasionally also be linked with a scientific field trip. Proposals for 1.5 hour lunch break workshops during the week and 2 hour evening sessions will also be considered.

Organized Oral Session, Special Session and Workshop Evaluation Process and Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed and selected by the Organizing Committee and Program Chair. Proposals may be from any area, but those that relate to the overall theme - **“Making Change in a Changing World”** - are especially encouraged. We also welcome proposals that explore connections with the social or natural sciences, or that are directed to ecological education at any level. The primary criteria for acceptance include scientific merit, probable interest by meeting attendees, and a clearly written and compelling description and justification. Limits of space and time may make it impossible to accommodate all worthy submissions.

Presentation Rules

In the interest of broadening participation, an individual is allowed to be an organizer (either a principal organizer or a co-organizer) for only one symposium or organized oral session. Persons agreeing to present papers in a symposium, can also present a paper in an organized oral, contributed oral or poster session. To keep the flow of the sessions as smooth as possible, a moderator for any session cannot serve as a speaker in that session.

Application Format

Prepare your proposal in a word document, and follow the format provided below. Incomplete and inaccurate information provided may result in the proposal not being accepted.

- Title
- Principal Organizer (Name, institution or affiliation, address, phone, fax, e-mail)
- Co-organizers (Names, institutions or affiliations, addresses, phones, faxes, e-mails. Indicate in brackets [M] which of the organizers will serve as moderator. The moderator may not serve as a speaker in the symposium.)
- Speakers (Names, affiliations, and tentative titles. Indicate in brackets after speakers' names whether [C] = committed and confirmed, [T] = tentative, or [S] = suggested, but not yet contacted.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - etc.
- Description and justification of the symposium, organized oral session, special session, or workshop: Background information, goals, objectives, importance, and interest to the membership of SER in 300-400 words. **Keep in mind the evaluation criteria in preparing your description and justification.**

Submit your proposal to seri2009@bgpa.wa.gov.au on or before Friday, October 17, 2008.
Do not send proposals to SER Headquarters.

Applications must be received on or before **Friday, October 17, 2008**. When you submit your proposal, you will be notified of receipt by email to the address that you provide. If you do not receive such notification by Tuesday, October 21, 2008 please contact Deanna.Rokich@bgpa.wa.gov.au to confirm that your proposal was received. The preliminary scientific program should be on the SER website in May 2009, and each accepted symposium, organized oral session, special session, and workshop proposal organizer should check for exact time and location of his/her session. Organizers are responsible for notifying all participants in their session concerning the date, time, and place of the session.

If your proposal is accepted

After symposia, organized oral sessions, special sessions and workshops are accepted and the scheduling for the meeting is underway, cancellations and schedule changes are very disruptive to meeting planning. Hence, session organizers should obtain firm commitments from as many of their invited speakers as possible before submitting their proposal, minimizing the number listed as tentative or suggested (see below).

If a symposium proposal is accepted, the organizers must submit a final summary description of the symposium in the correct format no later than January 31, 2009. This summary will appear in the preliminary program and should be written so as to stimulate interest and promote attendance. This description must include a complete and current listing of organizers' names and their institutions, addresses, telephone, fax and e-mail addresses.

It is the responsibility of the symposium or organized oral session organizers to see that each speaker submits a properly formatted individual abstract of his/her talk by means of the Abstract Submission site (available in December 2008) by the March 1, 2009 deadline. Do not submit abstracts by any other means. Contact the Program Chair if your situation precludes use of the submission website.

SER is not able to provide any financial assistance, stipends, travel assistance or paid lodging to organizers and individual participants of symposia, organized oral sessions, special sessions, or workshops. Organizers are responsible for making this clear to the participants.

Cancellation policy

Once a symposium, organized oral session, special session, or workshop has been accepted and listed in the Preliminary Program, cancellation causes serious disruption of meeting planning. Do not submit a proposal if you are uncertain that you will be able to fulfill your obligation to organize and conduct the session.

For further information consult the SER website (www.seri2009.com.au) or contact the Program Chair, Bill Halvorson: bhalvors@ag.arizona.edu